# Études de Stylistique Anglaise

S S A

Société de Stylistique Anglaise

Style in Fiction Today
In Honour of Geoffrey Leech & Mick Short

2013
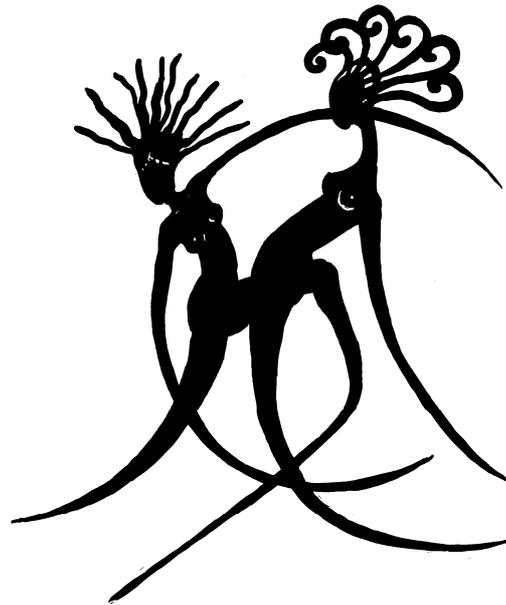
ESA N° 4

ORGANIGRAMME ET STRUCTURE DE LA SOCIETE

Siège social : Université Paris Ouest - Nanterre La Défense, UFR de « langues et cultures étrangères », 200 avenue de la République, 92001 NANTERRE CEDEX

Présidents d'honneur :
Robert ELLRODT
Henri SUHAMY, Président de la Société (1978 – 1992)
Gilles MATHIS, Président de la Société (1992 – 2003)
Wilfrid ROTGE, Président de la Société (2003 – 2007)
Monique DE MATTIA-VIVIES, Présidente (2007 – 2012)

Président :
Manuel JOBERT
Professeur des Universités, Université Jean Moulin – Lyon 3
Adresse personnelle : 36 le hameau des St. Etienne,
69460 SAINT-ETIENNE-DES-OULLIÈRES
manuel.jobert@wanadoo.fr

Trésorière : **Sandrine SORLIN** (Université Paul Valéry, Montpellier 3 / Institut Universitaire de France)

Secrétaire **:** Luc BENOIT A LA GUILLAUME (Université Paris Ouest - Nanterre La Défense)

Vice-Présidentes **:**
Simone RINZLER (Université Paris Ouest - Nanterre La Défense)
Nathalie VINCENT-ARNAUD (Université du Mirail – Toulouse 2)

Rédacteurs en chef **:** Manuel JOBERT et Simone RINZLER

Comité de rédaction **:** Nathalie VINCENT-ARNAUD, Linda PILLIÈRE

Webmestre :
Yan BRAILOWSKY (Université Paris Ouest - Nanterre La Défense)
(http://stylistique-anglaise.org)

Responsable de la rubrique « recensions » :
Nathalie VINCENT-ARNAUD (Université du Mirail – Toulouse 2)

SOCIÉTÉ DE STYLISTIQUE ANGLAISE
BULLETIN D'ADHÉSION :

NOM : Mme / Mlle / M.

……………………………………………………………………

ADRESSE (postale et électronique)

……………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………

COTISATION : **20 € (15 € pour les étudiants sur présentation d'un justificatif)**

ANCIENS NUMEROS : 10 €

RÈGLEMENT :
Libeller le chèque en euros à l'ordre de la *Société de Stylistique Anglaise.*

Adresser tout règlement à la Trésorière :
Sandrine SORLIN
1, rue Emile Bonnet 34090 Montpellier

La Trésorière vous saura gré de répondre aux appels de cotisation avec diligence et vous en remercie par avance.

DIFFUSION
 La diffusion du Bulletin est assurée par **Luc BENOIT A LA GUILLAUME** (lucbenoit2@free.fr), avec lequel il convient de prendre contact en cas de problème de distribution.

SOMMAIRE

FOREWORD

This collection of papers is the result of the first academic cooperation between the *Poetics and Linguistics Association* (PALA) and the *Société de Stylistique Anglaise* (SSA) that took place at the University of Lyon (Jean Moulin – Lyon 3) in September 2011. Surprisingly, these two associations had never collaborated despite common interests and aims. There are several historical reasons for that. French stylistics took the "pragmatic turn" much later than "Lancastrian Stylistics" and was mostly influenced by narratology and enunciative grammar. French stylisticians working in English Departments were *de facto* caught between these two traditions. However, the influence of British scholars such as **Geoffrey Leech** and **Mick Short,** with their world-famous *Style in Fiction*, published in 1981, has always been important but only too rarely institutionally acknowledged on this side of the Channel.

The purpose of this international symposium was two-fold. Firstly, it seemed important to acknowledge the influence of *Style in Fiction* thirty years on as it is still a must-read for all stylisticians. Secondly, it was a good opportunity to strengthen the links between PALA and SSA members. This is precisely what eighteen scholars, coming from Britain, The Netherlands, Denmark, Spain and France did in Lyon. **Michael Burke**, the then PALA chair, shared the same views and showed great support. As PALA Ambassador, it seemed to me it was important to set the academic wheel in motion.

In France, the University of Lyon (Jean Moulin – Lyon 3) seemed to be the ideal venue for such a symposium. Indeed, Professor **Jean-Pierre Petit**, who taught stylistics and English literature in the English Department for most of his career, had the foresight of choosing *Style in Fiction* as the standard textbook for final year students as early as 1981 and *Style in Fiction* is still on the syllabus today. Many PhDs in Stylistics have been completed in Lyon 3 and

it can safely be argued that *Style in Fiction* has, more or less directly, something to do with this.

The University of Jean Moulin – Lyon 3 has also established very close links with PALA members or Palans. Indeed, since 2008, twelve scholars have taught in Lyon 3 as part of our **Discourse Analysis Conferences** scheme.

Clara Mallier (Université Michel de Montaigne, Bordeaux 3), an active SSA and PALA member, was instantly enthusiastic about the project and kindly accepted to co-organise this event with me. It was only natural to associate **Dan McIntyre** to the publication of this collection of papers as, along with **Lesley Jeffries**, he showed great support and enthusiasm when I first mentioned this symposium at the 2009 Middelburg PALA conference.

Financially, this symposium was supported by the *Poetics & Linguistics Association*, the *Société de Stylistique Anglaise* as well as *Pearson - Longman*. Financial contribution also came from three research groups: CLIMAS – EA 4196 (Université Michel de Montaigne – Bordeaux 3), CEL – EA 1663 (Université Jean Moulin – Lyon 3) and CREA – EA 370 (Université Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense).

I would like to thank **Geoffrey Leech** and **Mick Short** again for instantly accepting to attend the symposium and be the keynote speakers. It was a great honour and an immense pleasure to have them both with us in Lyon. We welcomed them as international scholars and, if I may say, we parted as friends.

The board of the SSA decided that this special issue of ESA would be distributed to all PALA members. Please, feel free to join the SSA!

Manuel JOBERT
Professeur de stylistique anglaise
Université Jean Moulin – Lyon 3, France
Président de la Société de Stylistique Anglaise
http://stylistique-anglaise.org/
PALA Ambassador
http://www.pala.ac.uk/

Celebrating Style in Fiction

Style in Fiction was probably the most important book I read as an undergraduate student. I bought a copy at the end of the first term of my first year, with the hope that it might help me to write a coursework assignment that was due on the stylistics of prose fiction. I have to say that I wasn't optimistic about this, since most of the academic books I had read up to that point seemed dry, arcane and designed primarily to ensure that upstart undergraduates were left in no doubt about where they stood in the intellectual pecking order. It was a pleasant surprise, then, to find that *Style in Fiction* was different. For a start, it was easy to read. The argument was clear and the style (naturally) was engaging. It was also genuinely useful. Not only did it *tell* you about the stylistic tendencies of fictional prose, it *showed* you how to analyse style yourself. I remember particularly reading Chapter 3 ('A method of analysis and some examples') and being astounded. Here was what I had unwittingly been looking for throughout the two years I had spent studying A-level English Literature. It was a revelation to me that literary criticism didn't have to involve making pretentious proclamations that seemed to be grounded in nothing but elaborate rhetoric. Instead, you simply had to look at what was in the text and think logically about what interpretative consequences that might have. Like all good ideas it was simple in theory. It was also very much in line with John Sinclair's (2004) famous exhortation to linguists to 'trust the text'. Of course, in practice there was more to it than this and the book did (and still does) an excellent job of guiding the reader through the variety of analytical tools and techniques that enable the analysis and interpretation of style. But at heart, the message was clear: lay your analytical and interpretative cards on the table and make sure you have evidence for the claims that you make.

What made *Style in Fiction* all the more interesting to me was that it had been written by two of the people who were, at the time, attempting to teach me linguistics. Admittedly, it had taken me a while to realise this. My excuse is that not having had family members who had been to university, I was not familiar with what academics did besides give lectures. In truth, I suspect it was more a case of me simply being a bit dim. Whatever the reason, I found it

a surprising coincidence that we were regularly asked to read articles and books by two authors called Leech and Short, who just happened to have the same names as nice Geoff and Mick from the Department of Linguistics. I can't remember when the penny finally dropped but when it did I was suitably impressed.

Both authors are, of course, leading names in stylistics and have contributed much to its development as a discipline. Since the publication of *Style in Fiction*, for instance, Mick Short has invested considerable efforts in developing the model of speech and thought presentation originally outlined in Chapter 10 of the book. Short's work in this area has involved large-scale corpus-based projects designed to test the categories in a wide variety of text-types, including literary and popular fiction, tabloid and broadsheet newspapers, and serious and popular biography. This has led to both a refinement of the original categories and the introduction of an entirely new scale to explain writing presentation. The outcomes of Short's corpus work have led to new insights into the forms and associated effects of the speech, writing and thought presentation categories. For instance, the notion of discourse report is replaced in later work by the notion of discourse presentation, in order to avoid running together the concepts of presenting and reporting/representing. The formal structures of the NRS/T/WA (now NPS/T/WA) and IS categories are now more clearly defined, meaning that two-clause NRSA examples in the first edition of *Style in Fiction* are now reanalysed as indirect speech. What is particularly interesting about Short's contribution to this special issue is that it offers explanations for why some of these earlier decisions might have been made in the first place. For example, Short (this volume) explains that his reason for having described (in the first edition of *Style in Fiction*) a two-clause structure as NRSA rather than IS arose from the fact that the speech presentation in the example summarised more than one proposition; and since NRSA was the category most associated with summary, that was how the example was categorised. Summary, then, appears to be a slightly different issue from the kind of discourse presentation that was dealt with in the first edition of *Style in Fiction*, and it is an issue that is taken up by Short in this volume, in what is an intriguing development in discourse presentation studies.

Unlike Short, after the publication of *Style in Fiction* Geoff Leech moved away from the core business of stylistics, becoming increasingly involved in computational and corpus linguistics. He led the Lancaster part of the team that built the British National Corpus and his pioneering research in corpus linguistics led to such landmark publications as *The Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (Biber et al.1999) and, more recently, *Change in*

Contemporary English (Leech et al. 2009). However, through his corpus work he continued to pursue an interest in style, even if indirectly. For example, his work on grammatical change over time affords clear insights into stylistic developments. In addition to this work, he continued to write occasionally on stylistics, and in 2008 some of his best work in this area was published as *Language in Literature: Style and Foregrounding* (2008). Geoff Leech's contribution to this special issue draws on his expertise in corpus-based language studies by using the Wmatrix software package to analyse Virginia Woolf's story 'The Mark on the Wall'. Leech assesses Wmatrix's capacity for contributing to stylistic analysis and marks himself as a pioneer once more, this time in the burgeoning field of corpus stylistics.

In 2007 the second edition of *Style in Fiction* was published, including a new chapter assessing the state of stylistics 25 years on from the book's original publication. A further new chapter demonstrated some of the analytical techniques that have been developed since then. I still frequently read *Style in Fiction*, both the first and second editions, because Leech and Short's now classic work continues to inform the development of stylistics today. The articles in this special issue demonstrate the extent of its influence.

References

BIBER, Douglas, Johansson, Stig, Leech, Geoffrey, Conrad, Susan and Finegan, Edward. (1999) *The Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*. London: Longman.

LEECH, Geoffrey. (2008), *Language in Literature: Style and Foregrounding*. Harlow: Pearson/Longman.

LEECH, Geoffrey and Short, Mick. (1981) *Style in Fiction*. London: Longman.

LEECH, Geoffrey and Short, Mick. (2007) *Style in Fiction*. 2nd edition. London: Pearson.

LEECH, Geoffrey., Hundt, Marianne., Mair, Christian. and Smith, Nick. (2009) *Change in Contemporary English: A Grammatical Study*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

SINCLAIR, John. (2004) *Trust the Text*. London: Routledge.

Dan McINTYRE
Professor of English Language and Linguistics
University of Huddersfield, UK

Style in Fiction … Today

The papers in this collection explore the posterity and current relevance of a variety of critical concepts present in *Style in Fiction*: end focus and iconicity (Hamilton), mind style (Pillière, Mallier), speech and thought presentation (Short). They reflect on the modalities of reader involvement and/or empathy with the characters, in prose (Jobert, Jobert-Martini) and poetry (Jeffries), or on the role devoted to the narratee (Gay). The link between style and fiction formats (the novel, the short story) is also investigated (Toolan). Together, these articles clearly show that thirty years after *Style in Fiction* was published, stylistics is still an evolving field, as evidenced by the application of corpus-linguistic methods of analysis (Leech, McIntyre) or the development of cognitive stylistics (Jobert-Martini). However, while new tools and theories keep emerging and the definition of stylistics itself is still a source of reflection (Majola), one can still shed useful light on the functions and functioning of style with the help of William Labov's theory of the six stages of oral story-telling (Gay), or Roland Barthes's notion of "Neutral writing" (Rinzler); moreover, core issues like the subject of imitation (through mimesis of reality or intertextual borrowing) still raise aesthetic and ethical questions (Mounié). As for the authors of *Style in Fiction* themselves, they actively contribute to the continuing development of stylistics, be it by putting interpretative intuitions to the test of computer-based tools of analysis (Leech) or by adding new critical notions to such a central issue of stylistics as discourse presentation theory (Short).

Clara MALLIER
Maître de Conférences
Université Michel de Montaigne – Bordeaux 3

VIRGINIA WOOLF MEETS WMATRIX[1]

Geoffrey Leech
Lancaster University, U.K.

Résumé : Le logiciel WMatrix, créé par Paul Rayson, permet une analyse stylistique comparée d'un texte au regard d'un corpus de référence, c'est-à-dire un corpus représentant un « style d'anglais » pertinent pour la comparaison. Pour cette étude expérimentale, j'ai choisi la nouvelle de Virginia Woolf intitulée « The Mark on the Wall » (1917) comme texte soumis à l'étude. Cette étude s'est révélée assez concluante en ce qu'elle a permis de mettre en lumière des mots-clés ainsi que d'autres items que j'avais, de manière impressionniste, jugés pertinent d'un point de vue stylistique et thématique.

Mots-clés: WMatrix – corpus – analyse stylistique

Stylistic analysis is essentially a comparative process. An automatic method of comparing bodies of text in order to characterize their 'differentness' is provided by the Wmatrix software developed by Paul Rayson (for details, see Rayson 2008; also http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/wmatrix/). For my purposes, as I am interested here in the stylistic analysis of a single text, the comparison will be between that single text (the **focal text**) and a corpus (**the reference corpus**). The question is: How far can this automated procedure help to identify salient features of literary style? How far can phenomena which are statistically salient

---

[1] This article, although entirely written by me about research I undertook, was largely written as part of another paper which has been awaiting publication for three years: Geoffrey Leech, Nicholas Smith and Paul Rayson (forthcoming) 'English style on the move: changing stylistic norms in the twentieth century'. In Merja Kytö (ed.) *English Corpus Linguistics: Crossing Paths.* Amsterdam: Rodopi. I am grateful to my collaborators Paul Rayson and Nick Smith for their help, especially on the use of WMatrix.

in the text be considered foregrounded from the point of view of literary theme and appreciation?

1. Virginia Woolf's 'The Mark on the Wall': Our focal text

'The Mark on the Wall', written in 1917, might be described as a story in which nothing happens – where nothing happens, that is, except in the mind of the narrator. (We use the term 'narrator' here, although it is the *inner* voice of the narrator that we experience throughout the story.) The narrator, sitting down after tea, notices a mark on the wall. Her mind explores in a myriad ways the significance of that mark – what it might be, and where it came from. This train of thought leads her by digressions of memory and imagination to such topics as the preceding occupants of the house – the nature of life – life after death – the oddities of experience – the mysteries of existence – always following the stream of the narrator's consciousness. Every so often, however, the narrator's attention comes back to the mark on the wall – and at last, she learns what it is. To give the flavour of the text, here are its opening paragraph and the final few lines:

Opening paragraph:

Perhaps it was the middle of January in the present year that I first looked up and saw the mark on the wall. In order to fix a date it is necessary to remember what one saw. So now I think of the fire; the steady film of yellow light upon the page of my book; the three chrysanthemums in the round glass bowl on the mantelpiece. Yes, it must have been the winter time, and we had just finished our tea, for I remember that I was smoking a cigarette when I looked up and saw the mark on the wall for the first time. I looked up through the smoke of my cigarette and my eye lodged for a moment upon the burning coals, and that old fancy of the crimson flag flapping from the castle tower came into my mind, and I thought of the cavalcade of red knights riding up the side of the black rock. Rather to my relief the sight of the mark interrupted the fancy, for it is an old fancy, an automatic fancy, made as a child perhaps. The mark was a small round mark, black upon the white wall, about six or seven inches above the mantelpiece.

Ending:

... – but something is getting in the way ... Where was I? What has it all been about? A tree? A river? The Downs? Whitaker's Almanack? The fields of asphodel? I can't remember a thing. Everything's moving, falling, slipping, vanishing ... There is a vast upheaval of matter. Someone is standing over me and saying:

'I'm going out to buy a newspaper.'
'Yes?'
'Though it's no good buying newspapers. Nothing ever happens. Curse this war; God damn this war! ... All the same, I don't see why we should have a snail on our wall.'
Ah, the mark on the wall! It was a snail.

2. Comparing the focal text and a reference corpus

The focal text, 'The Mark on the Wall', will be compared quantitatively with a reference corpus which should be representative to some degree of the variety from which the text is taken. However, there are obviously different degrees of generality in defining the language variety meant to act as a reference standard. We have decided to use three different 'reference varieties' (the choice being determined, obviously, by the availability of suitable texts in electronic form):

(A) a rather specific variety, resembling the focal text in three ways: it consists of (1) fiction writing (2) by women writers (3) published in 1917. On the other hand, this reference corpus is limited in representativeness, as it contains only three novels, the work of three authors.[2]

(B) A more general corpus of fiction, consisting of category K (General Fiction) in the Fiction subcorpus of the B-LOB corpus (a member of the Brown Family of corpora representing written (printed) British English over the period 1928-1934). This is more widely representative than (A), as it contains 29 text samples by different authors. However, it is less closely matched than (A) in time of publication, as the samples date from 1928-34.

(C) A very general corpus, sampled from the written (published) English of roughly the same period and national variety (British English of the beginning of the twentieth century) as the focal text. For this we used a third of the as yet incomplete 1901±3 corpus of the Brown family, covering all four of the subcorpora Press, General Prose, Learned and Fiction.[3] The corpus is not closely matched with 'The Mark on the Wall' temporally – indeed it is a worse match than (B), but may be considered more broadly representative than the other two of the written prose of the period, containing 166 text samples across a wide range of fiction and non-fiction writing.[4]

---

[2] A selection of notable novels published in the same year as 'The Mark on the Wall' are listed at 'Literature in 1917', Wikipedia. The following three were found to be available from Project Gutenberg and other on-line resources: Florence Barclay, *The White Ladies of Worcester*; Mrs Humphrey Ward, *Missing*; Edith Wharton, *Summer*. Two of the authors are British and one (Wharton) American.

[3] The one-third 1901 corpus contained one-third of each subcorpus, and each text category in proportion to their representation in the Brown-family corpus when complete. Within each text category, the texts were also matched in topic and publication with the corresponding parts of B-LOB, LOB and F-LOB.

[4] In terms of Wmatrix word counts, the size of the focal text is 2,985 words, and the sizes of the reference corpora are: Three 1917 Novels: 269,842; 1901 Corpus: 342,448; B-LOB General Fiction: 56,703. Wmatrix word counts are generally slightly lower than other corpus tools because semantically meaningful chunks, e.g. idiomatic expressions, names, places, and phrasal verbs, are counted as one item.

In practice, none of our reference corpora are ideal; and one of the interests of this study was to discover how far the differences between the three reference corpora of increasing generality would produce different results.[5] So, what is the method of comparison?

The methodology employed by Wmatrix is broadly definable as an extraction from the data of **keywords**, or rather **key features**: that is, words or other features of the text which stand out or deviate, in a statistical sense, from the frequencies of the reference corpus. The statistical concept of **keywords** has become familiar in corpus linguistics since it was built into the popular corpus software package WordSmith Tools (Scott 2004), and has since been the basis of a considerable body of published research.[6] In the case of Wmatrix, however, this method has been extended further to grammatical word classes (parts of speech) and to semantic domains, as will be shortly explained. In other words, the comparison is not purely lexical.

To begin with keywords: by 'keyness' here is meant the words which are most distinctive of that text, as contrasted with the reference corpus. Keyness so understood is of variable strength, so that the output of this process of keyword extraction is a list, in which words are listed in order of keyness. Similar lists can be obtained for any other features of language automatically identifiable in the textual data. The general set of procedures involved in a research project of this kind can be listed as the four stages below:[7]

1. *Building the data*: corpus design and compilation (in the case of our Wmatrix investigation, this has already been sufficiently described in terms of our focal text and the three reference corpora).

2. *Annotating the data*: analysing the corpus linguistically, using particular annotation tools: in the case of Wmatrix, the two annotation tools used are

    (a) the CLAWS part-of-speech (POS) tagger, and
    (b) the USAS semantic domain tagger.

---

[5] In Leech (2008: 168-76) two widely differing reference corpora were used – (a) three novels of the 1890s and (b) the General Fiction text category (K) of the B-LOB Corpus, dating from 1928-34. In view of their disparity, it was surprising that the overall analysis was closely similar for both corpora.

[6] See the list of publications on Mike Scott's webpage
http://www.lexically.net/publications/publications.htm

[7] This is a simplified version of the five-stage process presented in Rayson (2008: 521).

Details of these tools are to be found on the UCREL (Lancaster) website at: http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/claws/ and http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/usas/.)[8]

3. *Retrieving*: extracting from the text data some analytic results, which may be displayed in a variety of formats for inspection or further processing. In the Wmatrix analysis, we are interested in three more or less standard listing formats:

(a) concordances, which list the occurrences of a particular word (or other feature) in their contexts of occurrence,

(b) frequency lists, which list words (or other features) in order of their frequency in a particular body of text data, and

(c) keyness lists, which list words (or other features) in order of their keyness in a given textual comparison.

4. *Interpreting*: This is the only stage of the process which is essentially non-automatic ('manual'), although it can be aided by automatic procedures such as using the 'Sort' and 'Collocation' facilities of corpus software. Whereas stages 3(a) and 3(b) above are quantitative, stage 4 is qualitative: it makes use of the human ability to interpret texts and to explain the phenomena observed in them. In the case of the Wmatrix investigation, we may be interested here in examining the textual material more carefully, using especially the concordance displays, in order to explain the stylistic phenomena observed in the analysis.

We now have to focus on the third, 'Retrieving' stage above, in order to explain in a little more detail what the software does. At the same time, we will avoid going into technical detail, which can be studied in Rayson (2008) and on the UCREL webpages already cited.

To take the most basic case, the list of keywords is arrived at as follows:

i) Two word frequency lists are compiled: a list for the focal text ('List X'), and a list for the reference corpus ('List Y').

ii) List X and List Y are compared. This means that each word in List X is measured in terms of *comparative frequency* with the same word in List Y.[9] 'Comparative frequency' means that the raw count of a word's frequency is adjusted to a standard measure relative to corpus size, which in Wmatrix is the number of occurrences of the word as a percentage of all occurrences of words in the text/corpus.

iii) Each word's keyness in the focal text is measured by a statistical formula, which calculates the degree to which the word is either 'over-represented' or 'under-represented' in

---

[8] Note that these tools do not produce error-free output. The accuracy of CLAWS is in the region of 96-7%, and that of USAS is c. 91%. These accuracy rates, however, are high enough to provide a sound basis for key feature extractions, given that the most salient results show high statistical significance (see below).

[9] The keyword list can include words which have 0 occurrences in List X or List Y. Negative keywords are normally less noticeable and interesting, but can be important – e.g. it is significant that 'The Mark on the Wall' makes very little use of third person pronouns such as *she* and *they*.

this text, as measured against the reference corpus. The normal understanding of keyness is that the word is *over*-represented, that is, is relatively more frequent in the focal text than in the reference corpus, to a certain high degree of statistical significance.[10]

iv) The words in List X are re-ordered in order of keyness. This means that the words at the top of the list are most distinctive of that text.

Concordance, frequency and key-feature lists of POS tags and semantic tags are extracted in the same way as the word lists described in 3(a)-(c) above. There are no particular difficulties in this, as the annotation (tagging) has meant that each word in each text is accompanied by label giving its grammatical and semantic classification.

3. Results: keywords, key POS tags, and key semantic domain tags

To begin with, Table 3 shows the top 12 keywords, in order, when 'The Mark on the Wall' is compared with each of the reference corpora.

Table 3 **Keywords: Words of abnormally high frequency in 'The Mark on the Wall'**

A. compared with three 1917 novels by women writers		B. compared with 1931 general fiction (category K of B-LOB)		C. compared with the ⅓ 1901±3 Brown-family corpus	
1. mark	7. worshipping	1. mark	7. of	1. mark	7. one
2. is	8. thoughts	2. is	8. nail	2. wall	8. I
3. one	9. of	3. wall	9. reality	3. Whitaker	9. Precedency
4. Whitaker	10. tree	4. thoughts	10. tablecloths	4. thoughts	10. mantelpiece
5. wall	11. Precedency	5. Whitaker	11. worshipping	5. tablecloths	11. nail
6. tablecloths	12. chancellor	6. one	12. tree	6. worshipping	12. tree

NOTE: Double underlining marks the words which are in the top 12 for all three comparisons. Single underlining marks the words which are in the top 12 for two of the three comparisons.

Perhaps the most striking result is the amount of agreement that the three reference corpora show, in spite of their very different composition. Comparisons with A and B share all of their top 10 key words (out of 12); A and C share 9 of the 12; and B and C share 11. Perhaps this is a mild reflection of the degree of generality of the corpora. It seems that the keyword methodology is robust in showing up the 'differentness' of a text without respect to the exact make-up of the reference corpus.

It is not surprising that *mark* is the 'keyest' of the keywords: it represents the theme of the story, as to a lesser extent does *wall*. These are words that, as

---

[10] The significance measure used in Wmatrix is log likelihood, which is considered preferable to the more familiar chi-square test, and which is explained in Rayson (2008: 527-8) and at http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/llwizard.html .

we might imagine, occur relatively rarely in the reference corpora, and therefore their repeated use in 'The Mark' is salient, both statistically and thematically. Of the other words which occur in all three comparisons, *one* (typically used in the generic human sense) is perhaps a personal stylistic favourite of Virginia Woolf, representing as it does the objectification of the narrator's personal experiences, as illustrated in the following passage:

> because *one* will never see them again, never know what happened next ... as *one* is   torn from the old lady about to pour out tea and the young man about to hit the tennis   ball   in the back garden of the suburban villa as *one* rushes past in the train.

We will not dwell on the items in this list, some of them uncommon words, like *Precedency*, which gain idiosyncratic prominence in Woolf's narrative – see Leech (2008: 168-71) for further discussion. But there are some interesting points to observe about the similarities and differences between the lists. For example, *is* is very much overrepresented when compared with the fictional reference corpora (but not with the more general reference corpus C), and this is probably because Woolf, in capturing the immediacy of the interior monologue, tells much of her story in the historic present, instead of using the past tense narrative convention of the majority of fictional writers. This choice of the present tense is understandably not so salient when compared with the full range of written texts (scientific, journalistic, etc.) in the 1901±3 corpus. On the other hand, the pronoun *I*, frequent in Woolf's first-person narrative, stands out as over-represented when compared with the cross-section of written texts in 1901±3, but is less salient in the two fiction reference corpora, where first person reference occurs frequently, for example in dialogue.

We move on now to the lists of key part-of-speech tags, reflecting the different grammatical choices made by Virginia Woolf as compared with the writers in the other reference corpora.

Table 4: **The most 'key' parts of speech in 'The Mark on the Wall'**

compared with three 1917 novels		compared with 1931 general fiction		compared with 1901 Brown family corpus (⅓)	
1. VVZ	7. DDQ	1. VVZ	7. VV0	1. PN1	7. NN2
2. NN2	8. PPIS1	2. NN2	8. AT	2. PPIS1	8. PNX1
3. PN1	9. PNX1	3. PN1	9. PNX1	3. VVZ	9. RGQ
4. VBZ	10. NPD1	4. VBZ	10. RPK	4. VVG	10. DDQ
5. IO	11. RPK	5. IO	11. RGQ	5. RPK	11. AT1
6. AT1	12. RGQ	6. DDQ	12. NPD1	6. VV0	12 PPH1

NOTE: As in Table 3, double underlining marks the tags which are in the top 12 for all three comparisons. Single underlining marks the tags which are in the top 12 for two of the three comparisons.

Key: AT – article neutral for number; chiefly the definite article *the*.
AT1 – singular article; chiefly the indefinite article *a/an*
DDQ – *wh*-determiner or *wh*-pronoun (e.g. *what, which*)
IO – the preposition *of*
NN2 – plural common noun (e.g. *tables, women, thoughts*)
NPD1 – singular weekday noun (e.g. *Sunday, Monday*)
PN1 – singular indefinite pronouns (e.g. *one, anything, nobody*)
PNX1 – indefinite reflexive pronoun (i.e. *oneself*)
PPH1 – third person personal pronoun *it*
PPIS1 – the first person subject pronoun *I*
RGQ – *wh*-adverb of degree (*how* when modifying another word)
RPK – *about* used in the expression *be about to*.
VBZ – present tense –*s* form of the verb *to be* (i.e. *is*)
VVG – *ing*-form of lexical verb (e.g. *saying, wishing*)
VVZ – present tense lexical verb ending in –*s* (e.g. *says, wishes*)
VV0 – present tense lexical verb not ending in –*s* (e.g. *say*, *find*)

The amount of shared 'key tags' between the comparisons here is the same: nine tags are shared by the top twelve in A, B and C. What brings A and B closer together, however, is the fact that the top four tags are the same and in the same order. As mentioned above, the present tense (represented in the keyness of the *s*-form of lexical verbs VVZ as well as of VBZ and VV0), is a distinctive feature of 'The Mark', as opposed to fiction written in the more conventional past-tense narrative. More difficult to explain is the second-keyest tag, the plural noun tag NN2; however, the following passage illustrates how Woolf's style may favour plural nouns in describing the multitudinous particularity of her experiential world:

> let me just count over a few of the *things* lost in one lifetime, beginning, for that   seems always the most mysterious of *losses* – what cat would gnaw, what rat would nibble – three pale blue *canisters* of book-binding *tools*? Then there were the bird *cages*, the iron *hoops*, the steel *skates*, the Queen Anne coal-scuttle, the bagatelle board, the hand organ – all gone, and *jewels*, too. *Opals* and *emeralds*, they lie about the *roots* of *turnips*.

It is striking, also, that this passage contains four examples of another key tag, IO (representing the preposition *of* in the tagging system). The word, of course, has many functions – but its main function, in the most general terms, is to signal the interconnectedness of things. It is noticeable in this list that IO stands out as a key tag in relation to the fictional reference corpora A and B, but not in relation to the most general reference corpus C, which is predominantly non-fictional. Elaboration of noun phrases by means of *of* is likely to be a characteristic of informational texts, which oddly here seem to be more akin to Woolf's own elaborative style. Of the other key tags, we will comment only on PN1, PNX1 and RGQ. PN1 chiefly represents the pronoun *one* already noted as favoured in 'The Mark'; and PNX1, normally a very rare tag (representing the word *oneself*) stands out in this text even though there are

only two occurrences of it. RGQ represents the adverb *How* as a modifier, in this text especially associated with exclamations:

How readily our thoughts swarm...
How shocking, and yet how wonderful it was to discover...
How peaceful it is down here.

This construction may, indeed be another authorial favourite of Virginia Woolf, indicative of the narrator's (or a character's) characteristic emotional involvement in her subject matter.[11]

The third level of analysis, that of semantic tagging, produces lists of key semantic domains as follows:

Table 5: **The most 'key' semantic domains in 'The Mark on the Wall'**

compared with three 1917 novels	compared with 1931 general fiction	compared with 1901 Brown-family corpus (⅓)
<u>1.</u> General & abstract (*thing, things*) <u>2.</u> Evaluation: authentic (*real, reality, really* <u>3.</u> Plants (*tree, roots, stalk, flower*) <u>4.</u> Life and living things (*life, lives*) <u>5.</u> Colours & colour patterns (*blue, light, colour*) <u>6.</u> Mental object; conceptual (*thought, thoughts, ideas*) <u>7.</u> Smoking and non-medical drugs (*cigarette(s)*) <u>8.</u> Living creatures: animals, birds (*cat, snail*) <u>9.</u> Solid materials (*coals, glass, iron, emeralds*) 10. No kin (*illegitimate*) 11. Comparing (*compare, comparison* 12. Probability (*perhaps*)	<u>1.</u> Evaluation: authentic (*real, reality, really*) <u>2.</u> Plants (*tree, roots, stalk, flower*) <u>3.</u> Solid materials (*coals, glass, iron, emeralds*) <u>4.</u> Colours & colour patterns (*blue, light, colour*) 5. General appearance & physical properties (*mark*) <u>6.</u> General & abstract (*thing, things*) <u>7.</u> Mental object; conceptual (*thought, thoughts, ideas*) <u>8.</u> Living creatures: animals, birds (*cat, snail*) 9. Objects generally (*bowl, rock, hoops*) 10. Strong obligation & necessity (*must, should*) <u>11.</u> Smoking and non-medical drugs (*smoke(s), cigarette(s)*) <u>12.</u> Furniture and household fittings (*chair, table*)	<u>1.</u> General & abstract (*thing, things*) <u>2.</u> Colours & colour patterns (*blue, light, colour*) <u>3.</u> Evaluation: authentic (*real, reality, really*) <u>4.</u> Plants (*tree, roots, stalk, flower*) <u>5.</u> Life and living things (*life, lives*) 6. Parts of buildings (*wall, room, door*) <u>7.</u> Furniture and household fittings (*chair, table*) <u>8.</u> Smoking and non-medical drugs (*cigarette(s)*) 9. Thought, belief (*think, believe, imagine*) 10. The universe (*world, moon*) 11. Like (*like(s), adoring, fancy*) <u>12.</u> Living creatures: animals, birds (*cat, snail*)

NOTE: Here we use double- and single-underlining in the same way as for the preceding two tables, but we underline only the number showing a semantic tag's position in the Table.

---

[11] It is worth mentioning that this exclamatory construction is associated with female speech, being used by more female speakers than male speakers in each age group in the conversational part of the British National Corpus.

Key semantic domains tell us something about the 'aboutness' of texts, rather than about their stylistic characteristics in the strict sense. They are therefore less relevant to style, and there is less agreement between the different reference corpus comparisons: only half of the key semantic domains listed are shared by all three lists. On the other hand, there are some features which are salient not so much in style as in the authorial world view. The domain of colour is high on the list of key domains in all three comparisons, as are the domains relating to the natural world: 'Plants' and 'Living creatures'. Readers of Virginia Woolf will probably agree that these traits have a 'key' role in her writing. Other, more abstract domains are more difficult to interpret, but arguably reflect her exploration of the nature of reality and the ontological concerns of her writing. At the other extreme, the domain of 'Smoking' must be regarded as incidental to the text, in that it results from the semantic tagging of four words only: one of the drawbacks of choosing such a short focal text for analysis is that such haphazard results can occur. Here is another excerpt, which contains a reference to smoking, but is also relevant to some other key features:

> Even so, life isn't done with: there are a million patient watchful lives for a tree,   all over the world, in bedrooms, in ships, on the pavement, lining rooms, where men and women sit after tea, smoking cigarettes. It is full of peaceful thoughts, happy thoughts, this tree.

This passage illustrates representation of some of the key features high on the list above: Plants (*tree*), Life and living things (*life, lives*), Mental object; conceptual (*thoughts*), Parts of buildings (*bedrooms, rooms*). Obviously there is much more to be said about this story, and the extent to which the 'key' analysis succeeds in highlighting stylistically important features. But the main point of this section of my paper has been to illustrate the potential of such analyses, using a chosen text and three alternative reference corpora of different generality.

4. Conclusion

In this article I have briefly explored a method of computer-aided stylistic analysis, involving the comparison of a focus text and one or more reference corpora. The technique is to employ the WMatrix software to identify and display items in order of keyness, or distinctiveness in the focal text, as contrasted with the reference corpus, measured in terms of the significance ratio of Log Likelihood. The main difficulty with this was the relative shortness of the 'The Mark', which gave undue prominence to some features occurring only a few times.

It is worthwhile, finally, noting some of the limitations as well as the future possibilities of this stylistic method. It is only too obvious, to begin with, that this type of analysis when applied to very large quantities of electronic text would be virtually impossible without the power of the modern computer. The great advantage of the techniques illustrated here is that they can be carried out automatically and at great speed. Wmatrix also shows great adaptability to the use of a wide range of corpora. The variety of corpora capable of being used is limited only by the user's ability to assemble the corpora and load them as 'personal folders' onto the Wmatrix website.

The corresponding disadvantage is that any activity involving human scrutiny of the data is immensely slow by comparison. Although POS tagging and semantic tagging are relatively accurate, there are still plenty of 'mistakes made by the computer' that ideally need to be manually checked. Further, although at present Wmatrix can operate with grammatical tags and semantic tags, there are many other levels of analysis that at present it cannot undertake – most importantly, parsing: the systematic syntactic analysis of a text in terms of phrases, clauses and so forth. There are also some more meaning-oriented stylistic analytic tasks (e.g. identifying metaphor or irony) that cannot (yet) be achieved by a computer.

The present situation, then, is that certain tasks can be undertaken fast but fallibly by computer, while other tasks can be undertaken more reliably but more slowly by human beings. Wmatrix already has the advantage that it can undertake a multi-level linguistic analysis of English corpora. Some of the items highlighted by the statistical analysis can clearly be seen to have thematic and literary significance, although without the help of WMatrix, they probably would not have been noticed.

One of the things suggested by this analysis is that there is no need to worry unduly about choosing an exactly appropriate reference corpus. None of the three reference corpora used in this experiment were ideal for the purpose, and yet the differences between the results of using the different reference corpora were rather minor.

Obviously this small experiment is far from exhaustive. I believe that present results, although lacking in detail, are promising, and that we can look forward to a future in which more revealing analyses of style can be achieved by computer at a more abstract level.

References

LEECH, Geoffrey (2008), *Language in literature: style and foregrounding*. Harlow: Pearson/Longman.

RAYSON, Paul (2008), 'From key words to key semantic domains,' *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics* 13: 4, 519-549.

SCOTT, Mike (2004), *WordSmith Tools* version 4, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

WOOLF, Virginia (1917), 'The Mark on the Wall', in: Leonard Woolf and Virginia Woolf, *Two Stories*. London: Hogarth Press.

DISCOURSE PRESENTATION AND SPEECH (AND WRITING, BUT NOT THOUGHT) SUMMARY[1]

Mick Short
Lancaster University, U.K.

Résumé : Cet article examine les modalités d'un phénomène relativement peu étudié dans le domaine du discours rapporté, à savoir le *sommaire* de propos rapportés (oraux et écrits, mais pas intérieurs), et il mesure son impact sur la théorie du discours rapporté. Par une attention minutieuse portée au sommaire de propos oraux et écrits, ainsi que d'autres cas où les propos sont de toute évidence *présentés* mais pas *rapportés*, on peut retravailler la notion canonique des degrés de fidélité dans le discours rapporté, ce qui est nécessaire, me semble-t-il, pour expliquer les effets prototypiques des différentes catégories sur l'échelle de présentation des propos rapportés dans des contextes (en l'occurrence fictionnels) où les propos sont indiscutablement présentés mais pas rapportés. Je distingue entre ce que j'appelle « sommaire de propositions » (dans lequel sont résumées des propositions individuelles) et « sommaire de discours » (le résumé de portions plus longues de discours) ; j'avance que, alors que le sommaire de propositions est généralement associé à ce que l'on a coutume d'appeler la « représentation d'un acte de parole » par le narrateur – qu'il s'agisse de propos écrits ou oraux –, le sommaire de discours peut en principe utiliser n'importe laquelle des catégories de l'échelle du discours rapporté. Par conséquent, je voudrais proposer une échelle des modalités du discours *représenté* pour compléter l'échelle des modalités du discours rapporté existante. Je formule également l'hypothèse que la notion de sommaire s'applique mal à la représentation de pensées, et je m'interroge sur les conséquences de ce phénomène. Cette réflexion me permet (1) de présenter un changement mineur, mais que j'espère utile, dans la désignation des catégories de présentation du discours, (2) de commenter quelques cas qui sont intéressants par leur ambiguïté, (3) de considérer les indices qui nous montrent que des propos sont résumés et (4) de corriger quelques erreurs de Short (1988) et du chapitre 10 de Leech et Short (2007 [1981]).

Mots-clés: sommaire de discours, présentation de discours, ambiguïté dans la présentation de discours, discours rapporté, discours représenté, fidélité, sommaire de propositions, sommaire citationnel, sommaire de paroles, sommaire de propos écrits.

---

[1] This article was previously published in *Language and Literature*, Feb. 2012 vol. 21 n°1 (18-32).

1. Introduction

Sternberg (1982a, 1982b), Short (1988), Tannen (1989: 110-19) and Fludernik (1993: 409-14) have pointed out that Direct Speech (DS) can be used to present propositions which cannot possibly be accurate reports, either because, for example, too much time has elapsed for memory of an original to be accurate (this often happens in spoken 'reports' of speech, as Tannen points out) or because what is being reported as speech never actually occurred, e.g. in hypotheticals like 'Get lost' in 'I would have said "Get lost" but I was too embarrassed by what he said' (see Short, Semino and Wynne 2002) or what Fludernik (1993: 11) calls 'condensed speech acts, in which a brief discourse schematically represents an entire speech event', a notion which is not unlike, but not identical with, the concept of speech summary which I suggested in Short (1988) and will develop here.

Fludernik, following Sternberg, argues via what is termed the 'direct discourse fallacy' that the assumption of faithfulness in discourse report has to be abandoned. I have, with others, already argued against this view in Short, Semino and Wynne (2002). There, we argued (a) that it is only when *reporting* is involved that issues of faithfulness (which effectively means lexical and grammatical faithfulness),[2] and so also the stronger notion of *verbatim* report (see Clark and Gerrig, 1990), apply and (b) that careful consideration of the context and co-text is needed to be sure that reporting is actually taking place, rather than being merely presentation (as in fictional or hypothetical speech) or *re*presentation (for example to bring out a contrasting ideological 'take' on the original speech). Hence we suggested that for clarity, and to avoid confusion, we need:

(a) to distinguish terminologically among (i) discourse *presentation* (which refers only to the presenting discourse, the posterior discourse in situations of report and representation), (ii) discourse *report* (which assumes, for direct discourse presentation, a *match* between the lexis, deixis and grammar in the anterior and posterior discourses) and (iii) discourse *representation* (which assumes a *mismatch* between the lexis, deixis and grammar of the anterior and posterior discourses)[3] and

(b) to distinguish systematically among (i) speech, (ii) writing and (iii) thought presentation, only using the term 'discourse presentation' and its category-specific equivalents (e.g. 'free indirect discourse') when talking very generally or when there is ambiguity or uncertainty as to whether one or another form of discourse is being presented.

---

2   When reporting is cross-language, even these requirements have to relaxed, of course, although one would expect as close lexical and grammatical correspondence as possible between the source and target language.

3   For discussions of discourse in fiction, I prefer, as indicated in Semino and Short (2004) to use the term 'presentation'. Much grammatical discussion of direct and indirect speech etc uses 'report' because the relation between the anterior and posterior speech situations is assumed to be unproblematic (indeed, grammarians have traditionally invented their own examples) and discussions in Critical Discourse Analysis usually focus on situations where (usually illicit) manipulation of the original has taken place, and so such analysts usually use the term 'representation'.

It is important for us to be very clear about exactly what we are talking about if we are to characterize accurately the meanings and effects of the various forms of discourse presentation. Moreover, thought presentation, unlike speech and writing presentation is not the presentation of a form of ostensible inter-personal communication; and a proper understanding of the presentation of communication also needs to take account of the fact that the assumptions we have about (i) speech and (ii) writing, although similar in many ways, can also be different from one another. Indeed, I suspect that it is because of descriptive imprecision from traditional times to the present over speech/ writing that much of the recent confusion concerning the concept of faithfulness has arisen.

'Speech' has always been the default term in discourse presentation, as the *oratio directa* vs *oratio obliqua* distinction in Latin rhetoric, in spite of the fact that the recording of spoken language has only been possible over the last hundred years or so, shows. Essentially, most discourse presentation which has been described has, for thousands of years, been found in written (and often fictional) texts. Not surprisingly, then, our canonical assumptions concerning faithfulness actually relate to writing (e.g. written scholarly debates), not speech and it is in writing that the assumptions concerning lexical and grammatical faithfulness to an original in DS presentations are strongest (see Short, Semino and Wynne 2002). As students and scholars, we can be accused of unreasonable manipulation if we misquote from other written texts and on most occasions writers, even tabloid journalists, try not to commit the sin of misquotation (which counts in Gricean terms as a violation of the maxim of quality).[4] And as teachers, we punish our students severely if they violate this maxim in the other direction too. Plagiarism, the pretence that the words of others, and the propositions they present, are those of the current writer is as unpardonable a sin as that of misrepresenting what others have said.

All this suggests that the concept of faithfulness needs to be preserved in the real world, otherwise the attitudes I have just referred to cannot be adequately explained. And our responses to fictional discourse presentation are clearly based on the schemata we have developed from our experience of real-world discourse presentation, in line with Ryan's (1991) Minimum Distance Principle. Of course the notion of faithfulness in fiction is a chimera, as just about everything is invented by the author. In 1st- and 2nd-person fictional narration there was no actual anterior speech situation for the narrator to 'report', even though we pretend to ourselves when reading that there was; and in 3rd-person narration it is arguable that the idea of anterior *vs* posterior discourse situations does not sensibly apply at all - it usually seems that what is

---

4   Ikeo (2009) discusses interesting cases of DW in literary reviews, where what is quoted is accurate but the truncated ways in which the quotations are selected and contextualised create significant misrepresentations of the original texts.

said is being said for the first time 'in front of our eyes'. Note also that being faithful to an original in real-world direct speech (DS) does not normally involve correspondences in intonation and pronunciation between the anterior and posterior situations, presumably because they are irrelevant in written presentations and would require talented oral mimicry in spoken presentations.

This also shows the salience of writing presentation in the formation of our discourse presentation schemata. Direct speech in novels, for example, has the lively, dramatic qualities that it has, compared with the less dramatic indirect speech (IS) form, precisely because it is associated schematically with a claim to present accurately the lexis, deixis and grammar of the (putative) original, whereas IS does not.

Speech and writing summaries, like the presentation of hypothetical speech, do not constitute presentational report and so cannot be used as counter examples to the faithfulness account. Moreover, I suspect that speech summary is much more extensive than we have noticed so far[5] and that many of the examples of inaccurate DS/DW presentation used to date to argue against the notion of faithfulness in discourse report can be seen to be summary, and so not really counter examples at all.

2. My current position on the discourse presentation scales

In section 3 below I will discuss a series of examples of speech summary, but as a prelude to that discussion, I need to outline briefly, for those who are not familiar with it, my current view of the speech, writing and thought presentation scales. My current position, is slightly different from Semino and Short (2004) and the same as that presented in Short (2007), except that I now think it clearer to use the term 'Presentation' (and so the acronym 'P') rather than 'Representation' (and so the acronym 'R') for the various category labels, as this term focuses entirely on the *presenting situation* and so helps us to avoid the trap of confusing presentation with representation and report. In the past I, like others, have unfortunately run these notions together. For example, in chapter 10 of Short (1996), following on from chapter 10 of Leech and Short (1981), I use the terms 'speech presentation' and 'thought presentation' for chapter and section headings but then use 'representation' (which suggests a change from an anterior situation to the posterior, presenting situation) for the Narrator's Representation of a Speech Act (NRSA) category and its thought presentation equivalent (NRTA).

---

5   This is testable empirically, something which would throw useful light on the 'faithfulness debate'. What makes me suspect that summary may be quite common is that when Elena Semino, Martin Wynne and I were annotating the Lancaster SW&TP corpus described in Semino and Short (2004) and elsewhere, we quite often inserted a note in our annotations to the effect that summary was involved, even though we were not looking for the phenomenon at the time.

For clarity I will first introduce some speech presentation examples (using, as is traditional, roughly equivalent manipulations of an initial DS string) and associated category labels (including the term 'presentation' [P] for the reasons outlined above) and then I will outline the faithfulness scales as I currently see them. Note that our assumptions about the effects of the various presentational categories rest on rearranging a DS string to create the other categories and their resultant effects. This helps to explain why we tend to use such proposition-domain manipulations when introducing discourse presentation to students (I distinguish proposition-domain summary from discourse-domain summary in 3 below).

Category	Example
Direct Speech (DS):	"Just go – now!" he said grumpily.
Free Indirect Speech (FIS):	She should get out now!
Indirect Speech (IS):	Grumpily he told her to leave.
Narrator's Presentation Speech Act (NPSA):	Grumpily he ordered her out.
Narrator's Presentation of Voice (NPV):	He spoke grumpily.

These five speech presentation categories, and their equivalents for writing presentation, are each associated canonically with differing sets of proposition-domain faithfulness assumptions, as shown below (where the categories are presented in the reverse order from that above so that I can outline the faithfulness claims in ascending quantitative order from one claim, in NPV, to four claims, in DS):

Category	Faithfulness claims
NPV/NPW:	Speech/writing took place (1)
NPSA/NPWA:	(1) + speech/writing act specified, optionally with the topic indicated (2)
IS/IW:	(1) + (2) + indication of propositional content (3)
FIS/FIW:	(1) + (2) + (3) (+ 4**???**)
DS/DW:	(1) + (2) + 3 + words and structure used to express the content (4)

I suggest that the canonical faithfulness assumptions stemming from writing presentation effectively 'wash over' straightforwardly onto speech presentation. The faithfulness claims increase, one at a time, as we move down the list, one category at a time, from NPV/NPW to DS/DW, except for FIS/FIW (free-indirect discourse is famously a semantic halfway house between the direct and indirect forms). Indeed, the indeterminacy with respect to faithfulness claim 4 (in novelistic terms, raising the issue of whose words are being used, narrator or character) explains why the free indirect category is perceived by readers and hearers in the way that it is. The NPSA category (and NPWA) is often associated with summary, precisely because the most it can contain is a speech act value plus an indication of the topic of speech. For NPSA/NPWA, unlike DS/DW, FIS/FIW and IS/IW, there is no separate propositional form for the presented string. Discussions of faithfulness in

discourse report usually centre on the direct categories, as this is where the largest number of faithfulness claims are made, and rarely consider in any detail the two categories with the least faithfulness claims, precisely because propositional faithfulness is not at issue with these presentational forms. When we move from NPSA/NPWA to NPV/NPW in report, where all we are told is that speech or writing occurred, the faithfulness claim is so weak that the term 'faithfulness' no longer relates to the form or content of the reported discourse at all and so the relationship to the fuller proposition-domain forms is non-existent and even the term 'proposition-domain summary' is inapplicable.

As I have said above, speech presentation and writing presentation, which both involve the presentation of ostensible communication, seem to act in rather similar ways, with the canonical assumptions being even stronger for writing presentation than for speech presentation. However, thought presentation is *not* the presentation of a communication between people but the presentation of someone's inner world. So, in the set of discourse presentation scales in Figure 1 below, I separate the thought presentation scale from the other two scales, as in Semino and Short (2004). Square brackets are used to separate off elements which are linked to the discourse presentation scales but are not technically part of the scales themselves. [N] = sentences of the narration of states, events and actions; [NPS]/[NPW]/[NPT] (Narrator's Presentation of Speech/Writing/Thought = reporting clauses and other, non-clausal, reporting signals):

Speech and writing presentation

[N]	[NPS]	NPV	NPSA	IS	FIS	DS[6]	
[N]	[NPW]	NPW	NPWA	IW	FIW	DW[7]	
							Norm?

Thought presentation

| [N+IN[8]] | [NPT] | NPT | NPTA | IT | FIT | DT | FDT[9] |
| | | | ← *Norm?*→ | | | | |

Figure 1. The discourse presentation scales

---

[6] This DS category is wider than that traditionally used, and includes what is usually known as Free Direct Speech (FDS), which I now consider as a minor variant within the DS category, rather than a separate category on its own, as, when we move from DS to FDS there is no extra faithfulness claim, as there is when we move rightwards from other category to another on the speech presentation scale. See Short (1988) and Semino and Short (2004: 49).

[7] DW includes FDW for reasons parallel to those noted in note 3 above.

[8] IN = Internal Narration, covers the narrator's descriptions of internal cognitive states which are not thought presentation, e.g. 'Anger well up inside him'.

[9] Whether or not we need a DT/FDT distinction on the thought presentation scale needs careful empirical consideration, in my view. As the notion of faithfulness claims does not really make sense with respect to thought presentation it could be that there is a clear distinction in effect between DT and FDT. I suspect not, but it is an open question.

Because thought presentation is not the presentation of ostensible communication, the thought presentation scale is constructed on the basis of a less than perfect analogy with the other scales. Some category effects seem to be roughly equivalent, for example the dramatic effects of DT (and some FIT), compared with IT, seem similar to those on the speech and writing presentation scales. But others are not. I argued in chapter 10 of Leech and Short (2007 [1981]) that the differences in effect between FIS (distance from the speaker, irony etc) and FIT (closeness to the speaker, sympathy etc) are a consequence of the fact that the norm for speech presentation (because it is ostensible communication) is DS whereas the norm for thought presentation must be more indirect; consequently the free indirect category represents a move in a different direction from the norm on the thought presentation scale, compared with those for speech and writing presentation scales. The bigger difference between thought presentation and the other forms of discourse presentation is also seen in the need for an extra category of Internal Narration (IN). And, perhaps most importantly for this paper, it is not at all clear that NPTA has a proposition-domain summarizing effect, as NPSA and NPWA usually do, because summary does not seem sensibly to apply to a form of discourse presentation which does not involve ostensible communication and so an 'original proposition' is not available to the presenter to be summarized.

3. Speech and writing summary

Typically, when stylisticians discuss the NPSA (and NPWA) category they characterize its effect as summarizing in type, for the reasons I have suggested in 2 above. When we establish the various discourse presentation categories, we typically do so, as I did above, by manipulating a proposition in a DS string into the forms associated with the other presentation categories. In other words, the kind of summary that is involved in NPSA and NPWA is effectively *proposition-domain summary*. However, there is another form of summary, related to whole discourses or parts of them, which I want to call *discourse-domain summary*. When I was a grammar school pupil many years ago, I was trained to write summaries of texts, to varying lengths (100 words, 500 words, and so on). This was, in effect, I assume, training for possible administrative roles in later life; when secretaries in institutions take the minutes in meetings, what they create, and then present in their 'published' minutes of meetings, are discourse-domain writing presentation summaries of anterior speech, sometimes of individual turns in the meeting and sometimes of sequences of turns, summarized together.

Once we see that speech and writing can be summarized a proposition at a time or a larger stretch at a time, we can see that there might be ambiguities

between whether what is being presented in the NPSA/NPWA form is the summary of a proposition or of some larger piece of discourse. This has led me to realize that I made a mistake in section 10.1.3 of Leech and Short (1981) with two invented examples, [12] and [13], which I used to illustrate what I was then calling the Narrative Report of Speech acts (NRSA; now Narrators' Presentation of Speech Acts [NPSA]):

> He promised to return.
> He promised to visit her again.[10]

In fact, both of these examples are formally IS, as the presented string is clearly a clause (albeit a short, non-finite one).[11] I suspect that I was assuming without realizing it that the summary was of more than one proposition in each case, and so mistakenly assumed that, because they were summaries, they were examples of proposition-domain NRSA (now NPSA) summary, as NPSA is the obvious proposition-summary category on the speech presentation scale.

Below, I discuss a series of examples of discourse-domain speech summary. I do not have a full catalogue of summary examples yet (in particular, I am still looking for writing presentation examples), but essentially I want to suggest as a consequence of the analyses below that:

(a) in addition to the more 'standard', one-proposition-at-a-time, presentation (including proposition-domain summary for NPSA and NPWA), speech presentation and writing presentation can also be used to present summaries of longer stretches of speech and writing (discourse-domain summary), including whole discourses/texts;

(b) as all of the categories on the presentation scales appear in principle to be usable for presenting discourse-domain summary, we effectively need two discourse-domain summary presentation scales (speech and writing) in addition to the three proposition-domain discourse presentation scales (speech, writing and thought), as set out in Short and Semino (2004), with the minor modifications I have suggested in section 2 above;

(c) there is no equivalent discourse-domain thought presentation summary scale as the notion of thought summary does not make much sense – summary can only reasonably occur when an original is available to be summarized, something which is arguably impossible even when we present our own thoughts, let alone those of others;

(d) the establishment of the discourse-domain speech and writing summary presentation scales helps us more easily to identify and describe accurately a range of interesting presentation ambiguities.

3.1. Indirect Speech (IS) discourse-domain summary

As I have suggested that the above invented examples from Leech and Short (1981) can be seen as IS discourse-domain summary, I will begin with a

---

[10] These invented examples were changed to be more accurate in the second edition of *Style in Fiction*.

[11] I would like to thank Geoffrey Leech for pointing this out to me.

clear textual example of this category. Here, and from now on, where relevant I will bolden the stretch of text I am focusing on:

> At other times the daughter, heart-stoppingly voluptuous in her tight Californian pants, would lead me by the hand through the ruined garden, to the last clump of still-rooted myrtles, then crouch, bare-kneed, and pull me down beside her, and **demand to know my ideological convictions.**
> (Laurie Lee 1969 *As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning*, 35)

This example from an autobiography (which is another example of IS involving a non-finite clause) looks more like the presentation of a summary of what was said rather than of a single proposition, mainly because of the clash between the single-proposition structure and abstract lexis on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the schematic assumptions we have for emotionally-charged interactions. It is implausible that the young woman would have uttered just one, rather abstract, single-proposition sentence like 'What are your ideological convictions?' or 'What are your political views?'. Even though the text is not fictional, in this case, because we do not have access to the original very private conversation referred to, a decision as to whether the presentation is of a discourse-domain summary or not can only be based on what is in the presenting text and the relevant schematic assumptions the reader brings to the text. In real life, it is sometimes possible in principle at least, to check a posterior discourse presentation against a recorded original, although in practice that often turns out not to be possible. The same is true of the following DS examples.

3.2. Direct Speech (DS) discourse-domain summary

When, in Short (1988) I discussed newspaper headlines like:

> UGH! GET RID OF MY SQUINT
> (*The Sun*, 21 June 1984)

> You've given me a squint, said Maggie
> (*Daily Express*, 21 June 1984)

I pointed out that it was unlikely that Margaret Thatcher, the UK Prime Minister at the time, ever said what she was presented as saying in these DS headlines, and that, indeed, there was no contextual evidence in the ensuing articles for her having used the words presented. The implausibility here relates mainly to character and role. Mrs Thatcher typically spoke rather formally in public in any case, but when she was Prime Minister she also had a duty to keep her language formal to reflect her position. Effectively, then, as with the Laurie Lee example, our assessments of whether we have proposition-domain

presentation or discourse-domain summary presentation will be based on textual clues in the presenting text and schematic assumptions related to situation, speaker role and so on.

I went on in Short (1988) to consider whether the above examples might be speech summary, but concluded that the DS form weakened that interpretative possibility (even though I noted that IS could sometimes be used to present summaries of stretches discourse longer than one proposition) and came to the conclusion (followed up on, in more detail, in the proposals in Short, Semino and Wynne 2002) that faithfulness constraints varied depending on factors like genre (for example news reports in popular newspapers might be less faithful than those in serious papers) and textual position (for example that headlines might be allowed more faithfulness leeway than the main body of news reports). In other words, although I raised the possibility of speech presentation being used for discourse-domain summarizing purposes I did not really follow the idea through, something which I am beginning to do in this paper. If these examples are indeed DS discourse-domain speech summary, as I now believe, then the standard speech presentation faithfulness considerations do not apply, the only faithfulness constraint being that the wordings, whatever their style, represent a reasonable summary of what was said overall. Of course the standard proposition-domain presentation interpretation is still possible, leading to a possible reading ambiguity. Whether readers respond to the above headlines and equivalents as discourse-domain summaries or the presentation of particular propositions is an empirical issue, of course, which could be tested in future research.

3.3. Narrator's Presentation of Speech Act (NPSA) discourse-domain summary

It is clear in the next, fiction, example that an NPSA discourse-domain summary interpretation of a part of the conversation makes most sense:

> . . . **one of these questions related to our manner of living, and the place where**, because I had heard he had a great plantation in Virginia, and that he had talked of going to live there, and that he had talked of going to live there,
>
> and I told him I did not care to be transported.
> (Daniel Defoe 1906, *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders,* 41)

There is only one clause (no 'reporting clause + reported clause structure'), the speech act (question) is specified and the presented string indicates that two topics were asked about, suggesting that more than one clause (and maybe even more than one turn) was uttered.

3.4. Free Indirect Speech (FIS) discourse-domain summary

In the extract below, a group of characters are discussing preparations for an expedition they intend to undertake:

> And thus it was agreed. They would depart in the spring, to avoid the malarial menace of the later seasons. Each would require a portable bedstead, an air mattress and a pillow; they would take some Oxley's essence of ginger, some good opium, quinine and powders; a portable inkstand, a match-box and supply of German tinder; umbrellas against the sun and flannel belts to ward off cramps of the stomach during the night.
>
> (Julian Barnes 1989, *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters*, p. 149)

Arguably all of this extract is discourse-domain speech summary. The first sentence is NPSA. For a group of people all to agree, there must normally be more than one utterance of agreement, so the NPSA must be the summary of a number of contributions. The NPSA summary introduces a stretch of FIS, which again appears to be discourse-domain summary, this time of an extended stretch of interaction. The first of the two FIS sentences has a plural subject, again suggesting more than one speaker and so more than one conversational turn. This in turn suggests that the subsequent sentence, which is in effect a long list of the items that the group would need to take, is also a summary of an extended interaction among the participants about what they would need, probably with different individuals suggesting different items.

3.5. Narrator's Presentation of Voice (NPV) discourse-domain summary

> Breathless, half-choking, she told the dreadful story.
>
> (Katherine Mansfield, 'The Garden Party)[12]

I have classified this example as NPV, not NPSA, discourse-domain summary because the telling of a story (in this case Laura's description of her encounter with the family of a working-class man who has just been killed in an accident) is unlikely to involve just one proposition and we cannot know what specific speech acts were used in the telling of the story. It would be even more clearly discourse-domain summary if Mansfield had added the topic of the story (e.g. '. . . she told the dreadful story of the dead man'). The above sentence could conceivably be NPSA summary if we assume that all of the sentences uttered were statements. This provides support for the theoretical likelihood that there can be inter-category ambiguities on the discourse-domain speech and writing summary scales as well as on the 'standard' discourse presentation scales.

---

[12] I am grateful to Chang Shuchen for pointing out this example to me.

In Leech and Short (2007 [1981]: 10.1.3) I suggested that 'Mr D'Arcy came from the pantry, fully swathed and buttoned, and in a repentant voice told them the history of his cold. Everyone gave him advice . . .' was what I am now referring to as NPSA. A more accurate account, given the above, is that 'Mr D'Arcy . . . told them the history of his cold' is ambiguous between NPSA proposition-domain summary presentation and NPV discourse-domain summary presentation, and that 'Everyone gave him advice' is NPSA discourse-domain summary presentation.

4. Speech and writing discourse-domain summary presentation scales

Given that I have now provided examples of speech presentation discourse-domain summary using each of the standard speech presentation categories, and that it is likely that examples can be found of each of the categories throughout writing summary too, I would like to propose a discourse-domain speech summary presentation scale and a discourse-domain writing summary presentation scale, to match the standard proposition-domain speech and writing presentation scales (where the subscript 's' below indicates a discourse-domain summary interpretation):

Discourse-domain summary speech presentation

[N]   [NPS]   NPVs   NPSAs   ISs   FISs   DSs

Discourse-domain summary writing presentation

[N]   [NPW]   NPWs   NPWAs   IWs   FIWs   DWs

Figure 2. Discourse-domain summary speech and writing presentation scales

The introduction of a set of discourse-domain summary presentation scales would allow us to be more accurate in our interpretative and analytical claims for the stretches of presented discourse under discussion. They would also enable us to describe more exactly the ambiguities and uncertainties that can occur between proposition-domain presentation and discourse-domain summary presentation. The NPSA/NPSAs and NPWA/NPWAs category pairs are quite likely to be ambiguous with one another, as the NPSA and NPWA presentational categories are prototypically associated with summary on both the proposition-domain and the discourse-domain scales.

5. Proposition presentation functioning as discourse-domain summary presentation

We have already seen in 3.4 that it is possible to have ambiguities both between (a) proposition-domain presentation categories which are adjacent on the cline and (b) proposition-domain presentation and discourse-domain summary presentation, at least in cases where the speech is presented relatively minimally. This, in turn, raises the possibility of similar sorts of ambiguities in relation to adjacent categories.

What I have also come across, however, are some examples of presentations which effectively constitute (i) proposition-domain presentation and (ii) discourse-domain summary presentation *at the same time*. Consider the example below (I have numbered the sentences for ease of reference), which comes at the beginning of the garden party referred to in the title of the story, with Laura welcoming the guests as they arrive:

> 'Darling Laura, how well you look!' (1)
> 'What a becoming hat, child!' (2)
> 'Laura, you look quite Spanish. (3) I've never seen you look so striking.' (4)
> And Laura, glowing, answered softly, 'Have you had tea? (5) Won't you have an ice? (6) The passion-fruit ices really are rather special.' (7)
> (Katherine Mansfield, 'The Garden Party')[13]

(1), (2) and (3)–(4), because they are each contained within separate sets of inverted commas look like conversational openers produced by different people commenting on Laura's appearance, They would thus seem to be DS proposition-domain presentations of the individual utterances of three different characters arriving at the party, with no matching individual response turns from Laura being provided. The DS of sentences (5)–(7), on the other hand, as they cohere together pragmatically and are all contained within one set of inverted commas, are apparently[14] all excerpted from *one* of Laura's responses to *one* of the visitors. Hence each DS example in (1)-(4), seen on its own, is traditional proposition-domain speech presentation. But they are clearly also representative parts of three separate interactions and, together, the three sentences of Laura's presented speech also count, by inference, as the enaction *the sort of response* Laura would have made to all of her guests, including the three who produce sentences (1)-(4). So, overall we have what amounts to a *quotative summary*, which quotes representative parts of at least three

---

[13] Also supplied to me by Chang Shuchen.

[14] The story is a fiction, of course.

conversational openings and one (part of) a representative reply, with the rest of the discourse omitted. In other words, the DS proposition-domain speech presentation is being used at the same time as (DS) discourse-domain summary presentation.

This discussion in turn brings me to another example I now realize I did not get quite right in *Style in Fiction*:

> Mr Shepherd hastened to assure him, that Admiral Croft was a very hale, hearty, well-looking man, a little weather-beaten to be sure, but not much; and quite the gentleman in all his notions and behaviour; — not likely to make the smallest difficulty about terms; — only wanted a comfortable home, and to get into it as soon as possible; — knew he must pay for his convenience; — knew what rent a ready-furnished house of that consequence might fetch; — should not have been surprised if Sir Walter had asked more; — had enquired about the manor; — would be glad of the deputation, certainly, but made no great point of it; — said he sometimes took out a gun, but never killed; — quite the gentleman.
>
> (Jane Austen, *Persuasion* Ch. 3, quoted in Leech and Short 2007 1981]: 10.1.4)

I described this extract, correctly, I think, as FIS. But in the light of the DS example from the Katherine Mansfield sentence above, I think it is more accurately described as FIS quotative summary, as the dashes and elliptical syntax clearly suggest that we are being presented with excerpted snippets of a longer speech (and maybe even of a series of Mr Shepherd's turns, with the contributions of Sir Walter and others omitted). The introduction of the kind of careful proposition-domain presentation and discourse-domain summary presentation analysis I have been arguing for in this paper thus helps us to characterize better the detailed effects of such examples. A similar Jane Austen example (which is also arguably ambiguous between FIS and FDS) is discussed in Pallarés-García (2008: 63), who refers to it as 'an interesting mixture of quotation and summary'.[15]

These examples are similar to what Fludernik (1993: 411) calls contraction, for which she provides a DS example, derived from Page (1988 [1973]: 32) and indeed my notion of summary shares some similarity with what she calls 'condensed speech acts, again giving DS examples to illustrate what she means.

6. Concluding remarks

This paper clearly builds on the work of others (e.g. Sternberg, Page, Tannen, Clark and Gerrig, and Fludernik) as well as my own, including some

---

[15] I would like to thank Elena Pallarés-García for pointing out this example and sharing her dissertation with me.

of my own earlier imprecisions. Analytical false steps are, of course, an inevitable, and indeed welcome, consequence of stylisticians' attempts to be empirical and analytically and interpretatively precise. I would be pleased, of course, for others to help fill in the blanks I have referred to above and correct any mistakes, inaccuracies or gaps. Similarly, I am very interested in hearing from others about different kinds of discourse presentation ambiguities and uncertainties they have discovered. I would also like to suggest that empirical work is conducted on whether or not real readers arrived, while reading, at the kinds of discourse-domain summary interpretations I have suggested.

Finally, I would suggest that discourse presentation analysts need also to spend some concentrated time on investigating the pragmatic processes involved in inferring whether a presentation is what I have called proposition-domain presentation or discourse-domain summary presentation (or both at the same time). As I have suggested in some of the discussion of individual examples above, the co-text may contain information to suggest that a discourse-domain summary is involved, the presentation itself may have relevant summary-suggestion features and we clearly use schematic knowledge of various kinds to infer that the presentation of what Ryan calls the Textual Actual World is summarized. How we perceive and respond to discourse presentation ambiguities and vaguenesses, both within and across the presentation scales, also merits inferential pragmatic investigation. Indeed, given that, to date, the definition of the discourse presentation categories has been dominated by structural considerations (e.g. syntax, lexis), it is arguable that the elephant in the room in discourse presentation theory and analysis is the relative weighting of formal, contextual and pragmatic factors when deciding upon categorizations, discourse-presentation types (e.g. proposition-domain presentation and discourse-domain summary presentation) and the effects associated with them.

References

BARNES J (1981) A History of the World in 10½ Chapters. London: Picador.

CLARK, HH and GERRIG, RJ (1990) Quotation as demonstration,', *Language* 66, 784-805.

DEFOE D (1906) *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders* (with an introduction by E A Baker). London: George Routledge and sons.

FLUDERNIK M (1993) The Fictions of Language and the Languages of Fiction. London: Routledge.

IKEO R (2009) An elaboration of the faithfulness claims of direct writing, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 41,5, 999-1016.

LEE L (1969) As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning. London: André Deutsch.

LEECH GN and SHORT MH (1981) *Style in Fiction*. London: Longman.

LEECH GN and SHORT MH (2007 [1981]) *Style in Fiction*. London: Longman.

Page N (1988 [1973]) *The Language of Jane Austen*. Oxford: Blackwell.

PALLARÉS-GARCÍA (2008) Point of View and Techniques for Representing Consciousness in Jane Austen's Emma. Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Salamanca.

RYAN, M-L (1991) *Possible Worlds, Artificial Intelligence, and Narrative Theory*. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana Univ. Press.

SEMINO E and SHORT M (2004) Corpus Stylistics: Speech, Writing and Thought Presentation in a Corpus of English Writing. London: Routledge.

SEMINO E, SHORT, M and WYNNE M (1999) Hypothetical words and thoughts in contemporary British narratives', *Narrative* **7** (3): 307-34.

SHORT M (1988) Speech presentation, the novel and the press, in van Peer W (ed.) *The Taming of the Text*. London: Routledge, 61–81.

SHORT M (2007) Thought presentation 25 years on, *Style* 41 (2): 225–41.

SHORT M, SEMINO E and WYNNE M (2002) Revisiting the notion of faithfulness in discourse presentation using a corpus approach, *Language and Literature* 11 (4): 325–55.

STERNBERG M (1982a) Proteus in quotation-land: Mimesis and the forms of reported speech, *Poetics Today*, 3, 2, 107–56.

STERNBERG M (1982b) Point of view and the indirections of direct speech, *Language and Style*, 15, 2, 67–117.

TANNEN D (1989) Talking Voices: Repetition, Dialogue, and Imagery in Conversational Discourse. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

"THE RHETORIC OF TEXT"
RECONSIDERED IN FICTION
AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Craig Hamilton
Université de Haute Alsace
ILLE EA 3437

Résumé : L'article présente plusieurs principes rhétoriques que Leech et Short ont introduit dans "The Rhetoric of Text," chapitre sept de *Style in Fiction,* afin d'analyser des textes de Hemingway (fiction) et de Sting (non-fiction).

Mots-clés: rhétorique, stylistique, imitation, iconicité, point de vue

On Rhetoric and Stylistics

For such an old term, "rhetoric" remains surprisingly polysemous. This is because it can designate at least two concepts simultaneously. First, "rhetoric" is often used to refer to written or spoken discourse that aims to be persuasive, especially in the context of politics. Ironically, detractors may call discourse "rhetoric" when they feel it is *not* persuasive. In this sense, "rhetoric" may refer to discourse one disagrees with (rather than discourse one agrees with), just as the term "ideology" is often used for policy one disagrees with. In other words, if "ideology" may refer to policy one disagrees with, "rhetoric" may refer to discourse one disagrees with. Such is the fate of "rhetoric" , as empirical evidence from corpora might reveal, its semantic prosody is more negative than positive in current usage. That said, the second main sense of "rhetoric" refers not to the product *per se* but to the process. By that I mean that "rhetoric" can be used to refer to the theory of persuasion. American university courses on rhetoric reflect this ambiguity, which is to say they

usually involve theory and/or practice. Some rhetoric courses teach students how to write persuasively, while others may teach them only about rhetorical theory. Still other courses, however, try to do both at once by mixing theory with practice under the heading of "rhetoric."

Within the context of Leech and Short's landmark book, *Style in Fiction*, the fact that there is a chapter dedicated explicitly to textual rhetoric should hardly be surprising. I am referring here to their seventh chapter, called "The Rhetoric of Text." As I have explained elsewhere (Hamilton 2008), the historical roots of stylistics are to be found in rhetoric. In the pedagogical institution of rhetoric, *elocutio* (i.e. style) was one of the five major canons of ancient rhetoric, so the debt stylistics owes to rhetoric should seem obvious. However, many researchers in stylistics today might argue that their work has more in common with modern linguistics than it does with classical rhetoric (although I doubt that Leech and Short would make that argument). Disciplinary boundaries, of course, may be but lines in the sand. As Paul Hopper recently admitted: "In fact, if pressed, I would regard linguistics as a branch of rhetoric in much the same way that, for Saussure, it was a branch of semiotics. Linguistics, for me, is micro-rhetoric—rhetoric writ small, so to speak" (2007, 249). In light of Hopper's remarks, I would add that if stylistics today is part of linguistics, and if linguistics is itself part of rhetoric, then it follows that stylistics is logically part of rhetoric as well.

In "The Rhetoric of Text," Leech and Short introduce a series of stylistic principles in order to uncover effective means of communication in texts (2007, 169). In broad terms, rhetorical analysis in literary studies may refer to "analyzing the surface structure of narrative texts to show how the linguistic mediation of a story determines its meaning and effect" (Lodge 1980, 8). More specifically, and this is what Leech and Short demonstrate in their chapter, studying style closely allows us to see how effective communication occurs in narrative texts. In what follows, I therefore discuss several principles from "The Rhetoric of Text" in order to show how they can clarify questions of style in both fiction and non-fiction. After introducing some of the principles, I turn my attention to Hemingway's *In Our Time* (1925) before discussing Sting's autobiography, *Broken Music* (2003).

Some Principles in "The Rhetoric of Text"

According to Leech and Short (2007, 169), rhetoric relies on "principles or guidelines for getting things done by means of language," and they openly admit their preference for "principles" rather than "rules" in their chapter.

Throughout their chapter, Leech and Short identify at least fifteen "principles" of the rhetoric of text, including the principles of,

1. End focus, or "last is most important" (2007, 171)
2. Segmentation (2007, 173)
3. Subordination (2007, 178)
4. Climax (again, "last is most important"; 2007, 179)
5. Memory (2007, 184)
6. "First is most important" (e.g. in speech) (2007, 186)
7. Imitation (2007, 188)
8. Chronological sequencing (2007, 188)
9. Presentational sequencing (2007, 190)
10. Psychological sequencing (2007, 190)
11. Juxtaposition (2007, 193)
12. Reduction (2007, 198)
13. Concision (2007, 199)
14. Variety or elegant variation (2007, 199)
15. Expressive repetition (2007, 199)

Although the relationship between these fifteen principles is not always clear in "The Rhetoric of Text," some of them do merit more of our attention here. For instance, the first main principle Leech and Short discuss is that of end focus. Although they claim that end focus is "phonological" but that climax involves "tone units" (2007, 179), end focus and climax are two sides of the same coin for they are both found in writing too. That is why I will use the term "end focus" here for "the last is most important" principle in written examples. As Leech and Short explain (2007, 181), "In a classically well-behaved sentence, we expect the parts of the sentence to be presented in the general order of increasing semantic weight." Those familiar with research on information structure (Lambrecht 1994), especially topic-comment or theme-rheme ordering, will see some similarity here with the principle of end focus. And when Leech and Short say the principle of climax refers to "last is most important" too (2007, 179), then the similarity to the principles of end focus and climax ought to be clear.

One of the examples Leech and Short use to demonstrate the principle of end focus is the following sentence by the historian Edward Gibbon, "Eleven hundred and sixty-three years after the foundation of Rome, the imperial city, which had subdued and civilized so considerable a part of mankind, was delivered to the licentious fury of the tribes of Germany and Scythia" (qtd. in Leech & Short 2007, 180). After opening with information about Rome as an imperial city, Gibbon ends his sentence by focusing on "the tribes of Germany and Scythia," thereby introducing a new topic. Once that new topic is introduced, however, it is then familiar to the reader. And because it is familiar to the reader, we would logically expect the next sentence to start with the same

topic, those invading tribes. Writers who write according to the principle of end focus can thus fulfill reader's expectations about vital new information by putting it not in the middle of a sentence but rather at its end. The fact that Leech and Short's principle is corroborated by Joseph Williams' guidance on sentence "shape" (2009, 91) suggests this principle remains a useful one today. Although Leech and Short (2007, 186) later admit that in speech there may be a preference for speakers "to mention what is most important first," the principle of end focus nevertheless remains valid, especially in writing.

Another principle is suggested but not named in Leech and Short's discussion of sentence structure (2007, 176-185). To my mind, the principle involved here is the so-called form is content principle, which can be paraphrased simply as meaning that the *form* selected can be as meaningful as the *content* of what is communicated, especially if form and content are assumed to be equal in value. One of the consequences of this principle in literature is that there are writers who may use complex sentence structures to convey complex content (Leech & Short 2007, 176). For example, frequent uses of coordination or subordination in complex sentences can appear to convey complex thoughts. However, there are also writers who use complex syntax to convey confusion (e.g. Beckett in his plays), just as there are those who use simple syntax to convey profound emotions (e.g. Hemingway in his short stories). Simple syntax can include frequent uses of the conjunction "and," as well as successive uses of short declarative statements. Too much coordination, of course, can give us the impression of confusion. Writers who avoid subordinate clauses, for example by using repetitive coordination instead, might not help readers understand what is important and what is not even though nobody can pay equal attention to everything all of the time. That said, while intentional ambiguity may seem poetic, the same cannot be said of unintentional ambiguity.

As Leech and Short make clear, the importance of sentence structure cannot be underestimated. In their discussion of periodic sentence structure (2007, 181-182), for instance, they note that writers can create drama or suspense by using long "anticipatory constituents" in their sentences. Leech & Short cite the following example from Henry James' *The Ambassadors* to make their point, "At the end of the ten minutes he was to spend with her his impression — with all it had thrown off and all it had taken in — was complete" (qtd. in Leech & Short 2007, 183). James separates the predicate ("was complete") from the subject ("his impression") by using a subordinate clause containing twelve words. In doing so, James seems to create the effect of suspense. However, examples like this lead Leech and Short to formulate the

memory principle, which means, "Reduce the burden on the reader's immediate syntactic memory by avoiding major anticipatory constituents" (2007, 184). In simple terms, sentences with shorter anticipatory constituents are easier to read than those with longer ones. When thinking about the burden of comprehension writers may place on readers, Leech and Short are right to insist that the rhetoric of text must be "addressee-based" (2007, 185). They say that for they feel that writers have to take "the reader's needs and expectations" into consideration if they want to communicate effectively (2007, 185). Of course, writers are free to ignore the needs and expectations of readers, but if they do, then they will probably produce writing that is not worth reading once let alone twice.

The final principle of concern here is that of imitation, which Leech and Short (2007, 185) feel involves the presentational and representational functions of literary modes. The representational function specifically is carried out by writing that is "miming the meaning that it expresses" (2007, 185). This function logically relates to iconicity. Chronological sequencing is one form of iconicity whereby a cause "precede[s] effect" (2007, 186). For example, "The criminal was shot and killed" presents the cause first, the effect second. "The criminal was killed and shot," however, presents the effect or result first, the cause second. Indeed, so strong is our preference for cause to precede effect that we might even interpret that last example to mean that the gunshot did not cause the criminal to die. Juxtaposition, another form of iconicity, means that "words which are close in the text may evoke an impression of closeness or connectedness in the fiction" (2007, 193). While the Gestalt principle of proximity (Ungerer & Schmid 2006) most likely provides a cognitive basis for this form of iconicity, its effects can be seen easily. For example, to say that "A schooner sailed into Portsmouth Harbour manned by forty men" (2007, 193) is to reveal juxtaposition in action. We expect the participle clause at the end of the sentence to modify the noun closest to it — Portsmouth Harbour — although it modifies schooner, the sentence's subject! Juxtaposition in this case creates ambiguity or confusion since writers confuse readers by using such sentences.

Rhetoric in Fiction

To discuss rhetoric in fiction along the lines proposed by Leech and Short in "The Rhetoric of Text," consider the following vignette, which is "Chapter VII" from Ernest Hemingway's *In Our Time* (sentences numbered for the purpose of analysis) :

> [1] While the bombardment was knocking the trench to pieces at Fossalta, he lay very flat and sweated and prayed oh jesus christ get me out of here. [2] Dear jesus please get me out. [3] Christ please please please christ. [4] If you'll only keep me from getting

killed I'll do anything you say. [5] I believe in you and I'll tell everyone in the world that you are the only one that matters. [6] Please please dear jesus. [7] The shelling moved further up the line. [8] We went to work on the trench and in the morning the sun came up and the day was hot and muggy and cheerful and quiet. [9] The next night back at Mestre he did not tell the girl he went upstairs with at the Villa Rossa about Jesus. [10] And he never told anybody (Hemingway 1996 [1925], 67).

It goes without saying that Hemingway's style has been studied in great depth before. My remarks below are therefore but a tiny contribution to a much greater field of research. For example, in an article on "A Cat in the Rain" (another Hemingway story), David Lodge argues that Hemingway, "By omitting the kind of [character] motivation that classical realistic fiction provided, … generated a symbolist polysemy in his deceptively simple stories, making his readers 'feel more than they understood'" (1980, 17). Another critic, Charles Anderson, contrasts Hemingway's "lyrical mode," as seen in passages of *A Farewell to Arms*, with "the hard polished surface of his typical prose" (1961, 442). The Hemingway style has been so influential for generations of American writers that, as Jerry Underwood suggests, it is nearly impossible for writers to escape Hemingway's influence (1976, 684-685).

That such a unique style could create memorable stories should seem obvious. "Chapter VII" from *In Our Time* is a story of hypocrisy, of so-called foxhole Christianity. In sentence [1], the long anticipatory constituent creates dramatic suspense, which is reinforced by the use of the past progressive verb phrase ("was knocking the trench to pieces"). Furthermore, despite the inclusion of a reporting phrase, ("[he] prayed"), the prayer is Free Direct Thought (2007, 270) rather than Free Direct Speech (2007, 258) because the prayer seems to be a silent one. Presumably, there are other soldiers with the protagonist in the trench (e.g. "We" in sentence [8]), but they do not appear to hear his prayer since it is not in Direct Speech form. Moreover, the protagonist prays only for himself, not the others.

The prayer comprises 41% of the story (i.e. 55 words out of the story's 134 words), and the prayer runs from the last half of sentence [1] to the end of sentence [6]. After the prayer, the turning point in the story comes in sentence [7], when the "shelling moved further up the line," away from the protagonist. This is where Leech and Short's principle of imitation becomes most relevant, especially where chronological sequencing is concerned. There is a chronological sequencing of events in sentence [1], where the bombardment comes first, followed by the protagonist's actions, "he lay very flat and sweated and prayed." By using simple past verb forms here — as well as repeating the coordinating conjunction "and" — Hemingway's use of sequencing represents the situation dramatically. This is why the prayer that follows seems sincere

and genuine. Likewise, Hemingway uses sequencing in sentences [7] to [10] to report events in their chronological order. However, the shift from [6] to [7] is highly salient for we assume causes to come first, effects second. That is why we can interpret sentence [7] to be an effect caused by the prayer. Since [7] follows [1] to [6] as we read, we are made to assume that the shelling moved away from the protagonist *because* he prayed to Jesus to spare his life.

However, Hemingway could have made his story even shorter by merely stating the so-called facts, "The Fossalta trench was bombarded last night. Then the shelling moved further up the line. At least one soldier survived the attack." Although that style would be fitting for a wire agency report, it is hardly an example of great literature. It is what it is, a poor paraphrase of Hemingway's original story. What is more, within the context of *In Our Time*, if the numbered chapters (i.e. the vignettes) that appear between the book's main stories were made even shorter (and they are never longer than a page), then their inclusion in the book might seem even more perplexing. But to return to "Chapter VII," we can also see Hemingway putting the principle of end focus into practice. Sentence [6] ends with "dear jesus," while sentence [9] ends with "Jesus" — spelled with a capital "J" this time to make the contrast striking. It should be noted, however, that the protagonist is not entirely disrespectful toward Jesus since he uses a polite construction at one point in his prayer, in [4], "If you'll only keep me from getting killed I'll do anything you say." The use of *will* in both the protasis and the apodosis of a conditional construction is rare, but when used it is often pragmatically motivated. It is polite to say to a customer, for example, "If you'll wait here, I'll get the manager to assist you." To return to end focus, sentence [8] ends with "cheerful and quiet" rather than "hot and muggy," the pair of terms with which the phrase contrasts. Finally, and this is perhaps the most powerful example of the principle of end focus in action, Hemingway sums up the story in sentence [10], "And he never told anybody." Presumably, he does this so that there can be no doubt about the protagonist's hypocritical Christianity. The promises the soldier made during his near-death experience are never kept, and as Thomas Strychacz (1989) suggests, masculinity and authority are frequent concerns in Hemingway's book. Finally, the "last is most important" principle not only seems true about the composition of sentences but also the composition of stories like Hemingway's "Chapter VII" from *In Our Time*.

Rhetoric in Non-Fiction

Although Leech and Short called their book, *Style in Fiction*, many of their insights in "The Rhetoric of Text" are equally relevant to non-fiction. Let

us consider, then, the following excerpt, which is from *Broken Music, A Memoir* by Sting (sentences numbered for the purpose of analysis) :

[1] From about the age of seven, on school holidays and at weekends I will go out to work with my father on his round in the High Farm estate and the miners' cottages at the north of the town. [2] He works seven days a week, every day of the year but Christmas. [3] My dad is the boss, but he can't afford to take a holiday. [4] When I join him, he will shake me awake at 5 a.m., leaving my little brother in his slumbers, and I'll bundle myself into the warmest clothes possible. [5] Sometimes, in the winter, it is so cold that there is frost on the inside of the window and I have to fumble to get dressed underneath the bedclothes as my breath condenses in the chill air. [6] I stumble downstairs where my father is pouring the tea and I begin setting a fire before the rest of the family rise. [7] We load up the van, wearing old leather gloves with the fingers cut out and lifting the cold metal crates as gently as possible so as not to wake the neighbours. [8] Soon we are making our way through the dark empty streets. [9] I learn to love the unique quality of the early mornings. [10] When everyone else in the town is tucked up in bed, we move quietly like cat burglars and seem to own the streets, investing them with an exclusive and mysterious glamour that will vanish as the morning progresses (Sting 2003, 28).

This passage is from chapter 1, when Sting describes his childhood in Wallcastle near Newcastle in the late 1950s. A few pages earlier, we learn that Sting turned five in 1956, which was when his father quit his job as an engineer to become manager of a dairy instead. The passage above is from a section where Sting describes the dairy, which the family lived above. Most readers might agree that Sting's depiction of the scene is a very vivid one, even for readers like myself who are not from the north of England. There are many common nouns here with definite articles, as well as examples of what Leech and Short would call devices of "cohesion" (2007, 196). Yet some of their principles might help us see a little more clearly how Sting's depictions seem so vivid.

First, the sentences are generally well-crafted, with the principle of end focus put to good use. For example, sentence [2] ends with "every day of the year but Christmas," while sentence [3] ends with "can't afford to take a holiday." Sting implies here that even if his father could have made time for a holiday somehow, since he was his own boss, there was never any money for a holiday. The juxtaposition is clear, as a schoolboy, Sting has "school holidays" (sentence [1]), while his father only has one day off the entire year, Christmas, which is in winter to top it off. Sentence [4] ends with "the warmest clothes possible," while sentence [5] ends with "chill air," reminding readers we are in the heart of winter here. Then sentence [6] ends with "setting a fire before the rest of the family rise," while sentence [7] ends with "so as not to wake the neighbours." This explains why Sting and his father work so quietly. Indeed, in sentence [4] we see that Sting's father shakes him awake so as not to wake the younger brother who is sleeping. Then we see his father making tea for the two

of them, while Sting wants to warm the house for the comfort of others. To summarize, these are kind acts of consideration, depicted in detail, unlike the selfish soldier praying only for himself in Hemingway's story.

The principle of imitation is also at work in Sting's excerpt. For instance, in sentences [4] and [5], in the middle of the passage, we read, "[4] When I join him, he will shake me awake at 5 a.m., leaving my little brother in his slumbers, and I'll bundle myself into the warmest clothes possible. [5] Sometimes, in the winter, it is so cold that there is frost on the inside of the window and I have to fumble to get dressed underneath the bedclothes as my breath condenses in the chill air." After using the verb "bundle" to describe hastily getting dressed in sentence [4], Sting then represents that action in the next sentence. Sentence [5] is rather long since the average English sentence is just 17.8 words long in general (Leech & Short 2007, 90). Sting's fifth sentence, however, is roughly twice as long as the average one (37 words), and noticeably longer than either the fourth sentence (28 words) or the sixth sentence (23 words) which frame sentence [5]. The principle of imitation offers an answer to the question of why a noticeably longer sentence would have been used in [5]. What Leech & Short call "'form enacting meaning'" (2007, 195) in their discussion of iconicity suggests that a longer-than-average sentence can help represent or mimic the action of having "to fumble to get dressed," especially when it is cold. What is more, if verbs like "bundle" and "fumble" have attenuated aspects, then using longer sentences to reinforce those aspects could directly contribute to the vivid imagery here.

A final thing readers may notice in Sting's excerpt is the use of "will," which occurs 4 times in the 244 words of the passage. For the first 26 pages of chapter 1 in *Broken Music*, Sting mainly uses past tense forms in the usual manner. But this changes near the end of page 26. Although Sting the man was at least 50 when he wrote *Broken Music*, he only covers the first 25 years of his life or so in his autobiography. What is more, his use of "will" both here and throughout the memoir is meant to represent the viewpoint of a first-person omniscient narrator, which seems like a paradox. When Sting notices that most of the men in Wallsend seem to work in the shipyard building ships, he writes, "As I watched them, I wondered about my own future, and what kind of job I would be able to do. Would I too join this vast army of men and live out my days in the bellies of these giant ships?" (2003, 26-27). Two paragraphs later, he writes, "Three years after me, my brother, Phil, is brought into the family and my father will make another decision that he will regret for the rest of his left" (2003, 27).

While a young boy could not know his father's feelings about such a decision, this is knowledge Sting no doubt acquired later on in life. What makes the use of "will" unusual is that we have a middle-aged writer telling his life story from a boy's point of view at this part of the memoir. But what if Sting had used "would" rather than "will" (as often as possible) in the excerpt in question? The result would be as follows:

> From about the age of seven, on school holidays and at weekends I would go out to work with my father on his round in the High Farm estate and the miners' cottages at the north of the town. He worked seven days a week, every day of the year but Christmas. My dad was the boss, but he couldn't afford to take a holiday. When I would join him, he would shake me awake at 5 a.m., leaving my little brother in his slumbers, and I would bundle myself into the warmest clothes possible. Sometimes, in the winter, it was so cold that there would be frost on the inside of the window and I would have to fumble to get dressed underneath the bedclothes as my breath condensed in the chill air. I would stumble downstairs where my father would be pouring the tea and I would begin to set a fire before the rest of the family would rise. We would load up the van, wearing old leather gloves with the fingers cut out, lifting the cold metal crates as gently as possible so as not to wake the neighbours. Soon we would be making our way through the dark empty streets. I would learn to love the unique quality of the early mornings. When everyone else in the town would be tucked up in bed, we would move quietly like cat burglars and seem to own the streets, investing them with an exclusive and mysterious glamour that would vanish as the morning progressed.

Although more frequent uses of "would" create consistency, they may strike readers as redundant or repetitive, compared to the original, even if there is nothing grammatically incorrect about them. Indeed, is often possible to use "would" in place of "used to" to depict past actions that no longer occur. But because Sting mixes verb tenses in the original excerpt, that may explain in part how we get an unusually vivid impression of a routine scene from his childhood. In other words, this could be an example of Leech and Short's elegant variation principle, which simply advises writers to avoid "too much repetition" (2007, 199). That said, Sting's persistent use of "will" throughout his autobiography is one of its more noticeable stylistic features. In the first sentence of the Epilogue, for instance, he writes, "Three years after the deaths of my parents, Trudie and I will move into Lake House in the Wiltshire countryside" (2003, 330). As the great grammarian Michael Swan notes, "When we use *will*, we are not showing the listener something; we are asking him or her to believe something" (2005, 191). In Sting's case, his personal knowledge of his life allows him to use "will" in this way to report various events, even though the predictive sense "will" may give us the impression, at times, that the autobiographer does not always know what exactly happens in his own story. But that is a topic for another article.

Conclusion

In this article, I have surveyed several of Leech and Short's principles from "The Rhetoric of Text." I have done so in order to show that they can clarify a number of aspects of fiction and non-fiction. Although I have discussed some principles, such as end focus and imitation, there are many principles I have not discussed. What is more, my brief analyses of the examples by Hemingway and Sting are by no means complete. Indeed, were there space enough and time, one could say a great deal more about style in both *Broken Music* and *In Our Time*. For example, the principle of expressive repetition (Leech & Short 2007, 199), or narratological concepts like that of the "reflector" (Leech & Short 2007, 273), could shed light on aspects of Hemingway's story that I have not discussed Likewise, reviews of *Broken Music* could also be studied to see how critics have responded to Sting's story and style. After all, the book quickly rose to number 6 on *The New York Times* bestseller list on 18 January 2004, and in an interview Sting said he wrote the book to show, "How an ordinary person from the North of England becomes Sting, becomes a celebrity, becomes a successful artist" (Sainz 2004, 6). Having said that, I hope to have made it clear in this article that "The Rhetoric of Text" enables us to uncover textual details we might have taken for granted before. And if Leech and Short's chapter reminds us as well that stylistics comes from rhetoric, then that too is worth remembering.

Bibliography

ANDERSON, Charles, 1961. "Hemingway's Other Style", *Modern Language Notes* 76.5, 434-442.

HAMILTON, Craig, 2008. "Rhetoric and Stylistics in Anglo-Saxon Countries in the 20th and 21st Centuries", *Rhetoric and Stylistics : An International Handbook of Historical and Systematic Research* (volume 1), Editors Ulla Fix, et al, Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter, 245-263.

HEMINGWAY, Ernest, (1925) 1996. *In Our Time*. New York, Simon & Schuster.

HOPPER, Paul, 2007. "Linguistics and Micro-Rhetoric, A 21st-century Encounter", *Journal of English Linguistics* 35, 236-252.

LAMBRECHT, Knud, 1994. *Information Structure and Sentence Form*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

LEECH, Geoffrey and Mick SHORT, (1981) 2007. *Style in Fiction, A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose* (2nd edition), Harlow, England, Pearson/Longman.

LODGE, David, 1980. "Analysis and Interpretation of the Realist Text: A Pluralistic Approach to Ernest Hemingway's 'Cat in the Rain'", *Poetics Today* 1.4, 5-22.

SAINZ, Adrian, 8 February 2004. "Interview: Sting is up for 2 Grammys and an Oscar", *The Ocala [Florida] Star Banner*, 6. Web.

STING [A.K.A. Gordon Sumner], 2003. *Broken Music, A Memoir*. London, Simon & Schuster.

STRYCHACZ, Thomas, 1989. "Dramatizations of Manhood in Hemingway's *In Our Time* and *The Sun Also Rises*", *American Literature* 61.2, 245-260.

SWAN, Michael, 2005. *Practical English Usage* (3rd edition), Oxford, Oxford University Press.

UNDERWOOD, Jerry, 1976. "Disquisition concerning Style, The Evil Influence of Ernest Hemingway", *College English* 37.7, 684-685.

UNGERER, Friedrich and Hans-Jörg SCHMID, 2006. *An Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics* (2nd edition), Harlow, England, Pearson/Longman.

WILLIAMS, Joseph, 2009. *Style, Basics of Quality and Grace* (3rd edition), Harlow, England, Pearson/Longman.

THE THREE S'S OF STYLISTICS

Claire Majola-Leblond
Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3
ERIBIA - GREI EA 2610

Résumé : Cet article est une réflexion sur la méthodologie stylistique, librement inspirée du travail de G.Leech et M.Short, appliquée à une nouvelle de William Trevor, « Solitude ».

Mots-clés: nouvelles, saillance, ligne serpentine, silence, stylistique, William Trevor.

At summer's end, the three S's that inevitably come to mind are those in Serge Gainsbourg's famous song:

Sea / see: In some ways, a text can be viewed as a seascape, with changing, shimmering waves of meaning, and stylistics is undoubtedly about sight, vision-point of view. The reader becomes sailor, scrutinizing the text for signs indicating direction[1].

Sex: textual pleasure and the erotics of reading are familiar notions to readers of Roland Barthes's *Le Paisir du texte* (1973)

Sun/son: undoubtedly radiant, stylistics is also about filiation. We are here today, celebrating the 30th birthday of a seminal work and its authors (should I say fathers), and I would like to add here that my interest in stylistics is closely linked to *Style in Fiction*, a book Professor Jean-Pierre Petit made all his Licence students (among whom, myself) read in his short story class, precisely in 1981, which is why I would like to dedicate this paper to him.

Probably the most obvious meaning of the letter S is plurality, diversity; historically Marc Alain Ouaknin in *Les Mystères de l'alphabet* traces its origins

---

[1] Michael BURKE speaks of "the dynamic ebb and flow of affective mind processes during engaged acts of literary reading" (2011, 255)

back to ancient Hebrew (where its first meaning was "tooth"), through the Greek letter *Sigma*, used by mathematicians as the sign of sum. Adding up, combining different elements to reach a result is indeed quite representative of the methodology of stylistics, linking analysis and synthesis, objective observation and subjective interpretation. To try and offer some perspectives on what stylistics means to me and the ways it can prove to be an invaluable tool to make sense of texts, I will focus on one of William Trevor's short stories, "Solitude"[2]; not only because its title features an "s" word, but also because short stories lend themselves particularly well to stylistic investigation. Their textual closure often makes it possible to reach convincing, or at least plausible interpretation more easily and stylistic features, because of the concentration of narrative, are often more salient than in novels.

Indeed, the first S in Stylistics, and in some ways, the capital S of stylistics, is SALIENCE. It is one of the three "s-words" focused on by Leech and Short in *Style in Fiction,* along with "sequence" and "segmentation". Like most stylistic notions, it has a very specific and precise meaning, but it can also be taken more broadly; I will take here the word in its lay meaning; the definition to be found in the Oxford English Dictionary spans from heraldry to architecture via medicine; salience first refers to the quality of leaping or springing up[3]. It thus stands out as a dynamic notion. Prominence and high visibility are then emphasized as key features. Most, if not all stylistic notions, can be related to salience: foregrounding, end-focus, thematization, deviation and repetition, sound patterning, cohesion…. The list is long and the crucial issue is discernment. "Literary considerations must therefore guide us in selecting what features to examine" warn Leech and Short (1981, 70).

Salience can be more or less objective, more or less simple to identify[4]: titles – Labov's *abstracts* – are unquestionably salient; they create expectations, give some sense of direction to the following text. "Solitude" for instance strikes an uncertain note, and the double tonality, positive and negative - major and minor - focuses on ambivalence, thereby establishing, at the outset of the text, interpretation and coming to terms with experience as potentially central themes. Salience can sometimes be more difficult to identify, depending on

---

[2] TREVOR, William, 2005, *A Bit on the Side,* London, Penguin, 100-28. All page numbers refer to this edition.

[3] In heraldry it refers to an animal standing on its hind legs as if in the act of leaping ; in old medical use, *punctum saliens* referred to the heart, as it first appears in an embryo, hence the first beginning of life, or motion ; in architecture, it refers to an angle, pointing outward, jutting out, away from the centre of the fortification.

[4] It is simply defined in *Key Terms in Stylistics* as "concerning elements which stand out, for instance in the lay-out of the page", (NORGAARD Nina, BUSSE Beatrix, MONTORO Rocio 2010, 32).

one's sensitivity to modulation, difference, prominence and deviance, one's capacity to select and interpret; on what Leech and Short call "stylistic competence", "an ability which, they say, different people possess in different measure" (1981, 49).

"Solitude" opens in the following way:

> I reach the lock by standing on the hall chair. I open the hall door and pull the chair back to the alcove. I comb my hair in the hallstand glass. I am seven years old, waiting for my father to come downstairs. (100)

At first sight, everything seems to be salient in this overture. The rhythm is striking, short sentences, parataxis, many monosyllables, repetition of the first person pronoun four times in three lines, always in the position of subject, sounding a note of control and assurance. The use of the simple present tense is also salient in a fictional context; it is endowed with a strong actualising power that literally causes the scene to appear unmediated before our eyes. Directness and immediacy are dominant features, undoubtedly connected with the choice of perspective, that of a 7 year old child in familiar surroundings (the use of definite articles is a well known tactic).

But since salience is a dynamic phenomenon, power and control that appeared very much in the foreground, once established, tend to recede into the background when our attention is further drawn to the verbs used and the transitivity system[5]. The "I" shifts from the position of "actor" of material processes (I reach, I open, I comb) to that of "behaver/sensor" (I am[…] waiting) while the "actor" changes to "my father" as subject of the material process ("to come"). Spatially speaking, saliency can be seen as inverted; the child steps down from the chair and the father comes from upstairs. What then might potentially be interpreted as salient is the vulnerability of the child, (presumably a little girl, although we are not explicitly told that) deeply longing for her father's return. At the end of the first paragraph, the dialectics of the text are established.

The following paragraph develops the subjectivity of the child's perspective and subtly defines the architecture of relationships inside the family:

> Our house is a narrow house with a blue hall door, in a square, in London. My father has been away and now he is back. *The first morning we'll go to the café.* Ages ago my mother read what he had written for me on the postcard. 'They're called the Pyramids,' she said when I pointed at the picture. And then: 'Not long before he is back.' But it was fifty days. (100)

---

5   Material process (actor), mental process (sensor), behavioural process (behaver), process of verbalisation (sayer), relational process (carrier), existential process (there is… existent). See SIMPSON (2004, 23-25) for a complete account of the transitivity system.

The order chosen: the house - the blue hall door - the square – London, departs from the more traditional and neutral zooming in from general to particular, without being strongly deviant. The blue hall door is nevertheless worth noticing as a slightly salient mark of subjectivity since it is difficult to include in a clearly identifiable sequencing. But more striking is the difference in the modes of speech representation chosen; free direct style for the father's words which, though italicised, are thus presented as part and parcel of the child's memory and thoughts; direct style complete with inverted commas and inquit for the mother's words which, by contrast appear as clearly separate from the child's train of thoughts. Proximity versus distance; the opposition is further emphasized by the obvious contrast in the perception of time between mother and daughter. To a little girl "fifty days" is indeed a "long" time, and it seems therefore that the mother has been lying.

Father and child eventually go to the café; the father has coffee and the child "a slice of Russian cake".

> But all the time there is what happened and all the time I know I mustn't say. A child to witness such a thing was best forgotten, Mrs Upsilla said, and Charles nodded his long black head. No blame, Charles said; any child would play her games behind a sofa ; all they'd had to do was look. 'No skin off my nose', Charles said. 'no business of a poor black man's' and not knowing I was still outside the kitchen door, Mrs Upsilla said it made her sick to her bones. Well, it was something, Charles reminded her, that my mother wouldn't take her friend to the bedroom that was my father's too. At least there was the delicacy of that. But Mrs Upsilla said what delicacy, and called my mother's friend a low-down man. (101)

This fifth paragraph opens up a textual abyss. The discovery of the mother's betrayal, highly disturbing for the child, is presented in an equally disturbing way to the reader. Salience here takes the form of obliqueness and ellipsis; the fragments of speech collected and juxtaposed as free indirect speech, possibly free direct speech, or direct speech, in what strongly looks like an impossible attempt at producing a coherent paragraph in indirect speech on the narrator's part appear as mimetic, iconic, of the disruption this traumatic event caused in the child's life. A disruption that culminates in the somewhat enigmatic passage that closes the first part of this four part story, putting an end to the party organized to celebrate the father's return from Egypt:

> My mother's friend looks up from the landing that's two flights down. He waves and I watch him coming up the stairs.[…] and I wonder if my mother's friend is drunk because he takes another cigarette from his packet even though he hasn't lit the first one.
>
> […] When I reach out I can touch him. My fingertips are on the dark cloth of his sleeve and I can feel his arm beneath, and everything is different then.
>
> There is his tumbling down, there is the splintered banister. There is the thud, and then another and another. There is the stillness, and Mrs Upsilla looking up at me. (110)

The stylistic choice of existential processes following an ellipsis here appears as a clear strategy to erase the actor completely, emphasizing powerlessness and shock while undoubtedly appearing as an evaluative strategy; no responsibility can be attached to anyone. The actor's disappearance is all the more salient as this last paragraph rhythmically speaking echoes the opening paragraph in which the seven-year old "I" was so strongly present and proudly in control. Both reader and child are thus sent on an uncertain voyage of interpretation and reconstruction.

Salient elements do not stand alone in works of fiction; connections need to be drawn for interpretation to be reached. But connections are seldom straightforward, which is why the middle S in stylistics may stand for SERPENTINE. The serpentine line takes us back to Hogarth and Eighteenth Century aesthetics. The representation to be found on the cover of *The Analysis of Beauty* (1753) associates the rigor of mathematical construction to the freedom of the curve:
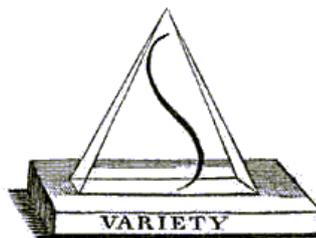
Hogarth explains in chapter VII, "Of Lines": "The serpentine line, by its waving and winding at the same time different ways, leads the eye in a pleasing manner along the continuity of its variety[…] and […] by its twisting so many different ways may be said to enclose (though but a single line) varied contents".

In stylistics, it easily connects with perspective, mind style, or empathy and offers quite an apt representation of reading strategies based on an unfailing trust in Paul Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975). Stylisticians can thus be viewed as following or tracing more or less tortuous lines across texts, similar to Tristram Shandy's famous plot lines, to situate and relate elements in order to make sense, in particular when interpretation is problematic, which is often the case in literary texts. "Solitude" is no exception.

The first line we tend to draw in a text is the story-line; we identify the major world building elements (who, where, when what…) and place them in some sort of dynamics. In "Solitude", we have a time-line which turns out to be

made up of three separate segments with two salient ellipses, 10 years between parts 1 and 2; 36 years between parts 2 and 3.

<u>7 year old – London</u>
                              // (10years) //
                                        17th birthday France
                                                                  // (36years) //

   <u>53rdyear, Bordighera</u>

The discourse line, which is usually thought of as a more or less continuous line tends to play hide and seek with the reader in this story. The narrator in the first part of the text is difficult to identify; the narrative voice seems to follow the meanders of the 7 year-old reflector's perception and the inflexions of her voice too, giving a striking example of a child's mind style. We have to wait until the second part of the text to find, in a brief aside, the first and only explicit dissociation of the narrative voice from the character's: "I can hear now, thirty-five years later, that man's rippling voice" (111); we know the character is 17; so we add up $17+35=52$ and we identify the narrator's age; the retrospective dimension of the narration is fleetingly established together with the polyphonic nature of the first person (as child, as teenager, as adult narrator). In the third and fourth phases of the short story, the character has now moved to Italy and explicitly speaks up in her narrator's voice : "I'm in my fifty-third year now, a woman who has settled down at last in the forgotten Italian seaside resort where they met. In nineteen forty-nine that was, I calculate." (117) We add up: $1949 + 53$ equals 2002, a palindrome-number, which is interesting in a story where everything seems to fold back on itself. This approximately corresponds to the time of telling. Character and narrator have caught up with each other. If we take into account the fact that the story was first published in 2002, they have even caught up with the reader!

   Child reflector,
   Narrative transparency
     Child's voice ?

                    Adolescent reflector / voice ?
                    One single (salient)narrative aside
                              $17+35=52$

                                        Adult
                                        reflector,

                         Narrative maturity?

                         $1949+53=2002$

We have been trying, more or less successfully, to bridge gaps and include the discontinuity of events at story level into some kind of progression to match our expectations of traditional story telling. Yet, this discontinuity is resistant, and paradoxically appears reinforced by the constant use of the present tense in the narrative, which makes distance impossible. We are inescapably plunged in the obsessive present of the autodiegetic narrator's personal memories and thoughts winding, snakelike, around the double traumatic event of the mother's betrayal and the accident at the party and trying out different viewpoints (her own, her father's as she perceives it, Mr d'Arblay's) so that discourse and story lines combine in the following way:

The narration of those two events is fragmented in a sparse number of paragraphs, scattered over the entire story. And we are soon made aware that in fact, the central issue is not to understand exactly what happened[6]. It has to do with approaching the much more fundamental and difficult task of coming to terms with experience, in this case, telling itself, requiring us to try and trace an ultimate serpentine line with metatextual and intertextual coils.

Acquiring a voice is a complex enterprise; the child cannot speak to her father "all the time I know I mustn't say" (100); the teenager is silent: "that is how we live, our conversations incomplete, or never begun at all" (114); only the adult narrator becomes aware of the importance of relating: "who then, in all the world, would be aware of the story that might be told?" (119); like Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, she desperately starts looking for a listener: "Again and again I searched among strangers for a listener who would afterwards pass on as a wonder the beneficence of those two people "(120). She eventually meets a mysterious Mr d'Arblay on the promenade, at Bordighera, who listening to her, gives sense to her narrative[7] and puts an end to her quest.

---

[6] It is not easy to identify the narrative voice or the type of narration, or the perspective chosen. All certainties are denied to the reader.

[7] We are at last given the end of the traumatic scene and a final echo of the accident, though the voice still remains unclear:

> "My mother gathered her dress from the floor, her necklace too, where she had thrown them down[…] And Charles came in then, and knew, and took me out to the square to show me the flowerbeds he'd been tending" […]
>
> "A child 's slight fingertips on a sleeve, resting there for longer than an instant. So swift her movement then, so slight it might not have occurred at all: that too Mr d'Arblay can imagine and

Their conversation starts as literary small talk, about Ford Maddox Ford's *The Good Soldier,* Somerset Maugham's stories, and the benefits of re-reading "good" novels, opening for the reader the double path of intertextuality and metatextuality.

The hint takes us back to the beginning of the text, the little girl is at the café with her father.

> He spreads out on the table a handkerchief he has bought, all faded colours, so flimsy you can see through it in places. Old, he says, Egyptian silk. There is a pattern and he draws his forefinger through it so that I can see it too. 'For you', he says.' For you'. (102)

Two pages later in the story, we are told the mother is offered a similar handkerchief by her husband :

> He has brought her a handkerchief too, bigger than mine, and already she wears it as a scarf. 'So beautiful you are!' my father says and my mother laughs, a sound that's like the tinkling of a necklace he gave her once. (104)

The handkerchief is associated with the necklace, which is, with the dress, central in the fragmented memories of the betrayal scene.[8] Intratextually, thus, the motif of the handkerchief implicitly points to the antagonism between mother and daughter (we might hear a vindictive note in "bigger than mine"), a feeling which the father either is not aware of, or chooses to ignore, focusing instead on the idea of interpretation, pointing the obvious intertextual and metatextual reference to Henry James's famous "Figure in the Carpet", thereby back-grounding a more serpentine, more hypothetical and more complex intertext to the scene, Shakespeare's *Othello.* III, 4, 53-65, Othello warns Desdemona:

> that handkerchief
> Did an Egyptian to my mother give,
> She was a charmer, and could almost read
> The thoughts of people; she told her, while she kept it
> 'Twould make her amiable, and subdue my father
> Entirely to her love: but if she lost it,
> Or made a gift of it, my father's eye
> Should hold her loathly, and his spirits should hunt

---

he does. The unlit cigarettes are crushed beneath a shoe. There is the crash of noise, the splintered banister. There are the eyes, looking up from far below. There is the rictus grin." (125)

8   "My mother's dress was crumpled on the floor and I could see it when I peeped out, her necklace thrown down too. Afterwards, she said they should have locked the door." (108) followed a few pages later by:

> "My mother gathered her dress from the floor, her necklace too, where she had thrown them down. The drawing room was heavy with her scent and her friend put a record on the gramophone, the voice still sang when they had gone, And Charles came in then, and knew and took me out to the square to show me the flowerbeds he'd been tending."(125)

After new fancies: she dying, gave it me,
  And bid me, when my fate would have me wive,
To give it her;
  […]
  'Tis true, there's magic in the web of it.

Calling forth tragedy as intertext casts on the most casual remarks foreboding overtones; thus Mrs Upsilla's warning when tying up the little girl's shoelace before the party that " A nasty accident there could be", or Charles's comment over the number of wine bottles "Enough to get drunk" are made to resonate ominously and trigger off a sense of inevitability. Yet, whereas Othello wrongly suspected his wife of being unfaithful and kept misreading signs, the father in "Solitude", who offers his wife a handkerchief without knowing about her unfaithfulness, apparently reaches acceptance without too much difficulty:

My father accepts what he has come to know which I believe is everything – of my mother's unfaithfulness. There is no regret on my mother's part that I can tell, nor is there bitterness on his; I never heard a quarrel. (114)

According to the narrator though, only telling can bestow meaning. Shakespeare's tragedy ended on the very similar note of the necessity of telling:

  I pray you in your letters,
  When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
  Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,
  Nor set down aught in malice; then must you speak
Of one that lov'd not wisely but too well[…]"(V,2, 341-5)

At the end of "Solitude", Mr d'Arblay is the one to reassert the cathartic, redemptive value of telling:

'It is natural too,' Mr d'Arblay replied while we walked, 'to find the truth in the agony of distress. The innocent cannot be evil […]
'Theirs was the guilt' […] 'his, that he did not know her well enough, hers that she made the most of his not knowing. Theirs was the shame, yet their spirit is gentle in our conversation: guilt is not always terrible, nor shame unworthy'. (126)

Quite revealingly, his ontological status is never completely clear. His name seems to come straight out of a Jane Austen novel; it turns out to be the name of eighteenth century novelist Frances Burney's husband. Is the character 'real' (like the kind widower, Mr Fairlie[9] in part 1), or is he a figment of the narrator's imagination, (like Abigail and Davie, her two imaginary companions)? There is no answer to that question; the focus is on his role as intermediary, as

---

9   But Mr Fairlie is also the name of a character in Wilkie Collins' novel, *The Woman in White* (1859).

revealer. The narrative eventually shifts from first to third person, from self-centeredness to otherness and a displaced perception of the self that can be interpreted, in the coda as a sign of narratorial maturity[10]:

> Petits fours have been brought too, although I never take one from the plate. One night she may, is what they think in the kitchen, and even say to one another that one night, when she sits down at this same table, as old as she will ever become, she will be lonely in her solitude. How can they know that in the dining room where royalty has dined she is not alone among tattered drapes and chandeliers abandoned to their grime? They cannot know, they cannot guess, that in the old hotel, and when she walks by the sea, there is Mr d'Arblay, as in another solitude there were her childhood friends. (127)

Intertextuality and metatextuality can often seem de-lirious (in the etymological sense of the term de-lirare, of swerving from the furrow) in so far as both take us away from straight trajectories; yet, the role of serpentine lines in perspective is to open up onto vanishing points; and it might well be the ultimate role of stylistics to make us sensitive to the sounds of silence to reach deeper understanding.

Offering SILENCE as the third and final S in stylistics may seem slightly perilous and paradoxical. Yet there are stylistic traces of silence in a text. One is ellipsis, and we have seen how salient ellipsis can be; the many things left out in texts create an empty space open to the reader's interpretation and serpentine conjectures; other things, expressed at a slant angle (among which intertextual suggestions), meant rather than said, create a sort of no man's land between discourse universe and text worlds where, in Sylvie Germain's evocative formula, "the echoes of silence" (1996) might be perceived. In many ways, what is explicit in a text only corresponds to the tip of the iceberg; this is particularly familiar in poetry where meaning is often evoked, suggested, transmitted via sounds for instance, but it is equally true of artists such as William Trevor. Before being a writer, Trevor was a carver, carving out, taking away material to create form; he admitted to his writing methods' not being very different from his carving techniques. His use of sounds, assonance, alliteration or rhyme as vectors of sense has always been for him a privileged strategy to mean without being explicit, thus turning writing into an indirect speech act.

For instance, the verb "know" and more precisely its central diphthong is repeatedly used as a leading sound; it combines with "no", "so", "old", "told", "shadow", circulating between the character: "I know I mustn't say" (100), the narrator: "I know that this is not so, yet still it seems to be" (119), Mr d'Arblay, "It is not difficult for him to imagine the house as it was; he does not say so,

---

[10]   One can note that this short story is part of a volume entitled *A Bit on the Side.*

but I know" (125) and the parents, "This is what, during that sleepless night, they came to know" (126), linking all of them beyond life and death in a final common intuitive understanding which other sound patterns help reinforce:

> It was enough, Mr d'Arblay diffidently insisted, that what there is to tell, in honouring the dead, has now been told between two other people, and shall be told again between them, and each time something gained. The selfless are undemanding in their graves. (126)

Thus "tell", "dead", "again" are made to echo and connect, just like "gained" and "grave", reasserting continuity and meaning.

In a similar way "lives", "lies", "silence", "time", "night", "child", are connected through sound, creating a tight web of meaning above the fragmentation expressed by words:

> Three lives were changed for ever in that instant. Whatever lies my father told were good enough for people at a party, the silence of two servants bought. My mother wept and hid her tears. But some time during that sleepless night was she – my father too – touched by the instinct to abandon the child who had been born to them[11]? (126)

The linking of sound tends to suggest that the answer to that question is no and that the family, in spite of the double drama it underwent cannot be disintegrated.

Echoing words can also be perceived, exploring in a different way the rich fields of cohesion. It is the case here with "blue" which works as a sort of password[12] connecting the past to the present; "the blue hall door"(100) which might now, alas, be "a different colour" (115); the narrator wears blue "because it suits [her] best" (p.117), but also probably to assert that continuity with the past, she notices about Mr d'Arblay "his eyes quite startling blue[…] the blue of his eyes repeated in the tie that's knotted into a blue-striped shirt." (122), and this unmistakably singles him out as privileged interlocutor. This "blue note" is also particularly tuned to a story entitled "Solitude", not to mention Purcell's tonally unstable and complex famous musical piece "O Solitude":

> […] O how agreeable a sight
> These hanging mountains do appear
> Which th'unhappy would invite
> To finish all their sorrows here
> When their hard fate makes them endure
>   Such woes as only death can cure[…]

This conveying of an indirect, at times luminous, at times darker, epiphanic meaning through what could be termed textual whispering seems to

---

11   underlining, mine.

12   The idea of password comes from Jean Pierre Richard's book *Microlectures* (1979).

be Trevor's SIGNATURE, a sort of genetic print, secret and discreet; it is present in many other stories and obstinately affirms the resiliency of sense, accepting the risk of the reader's overlooking, or over-interpreting signs.

As a last word, I would venture the idea that stylistics, in the unfailing attention to sight, sound and sense it demands, is the SALT of reading (and probably of teaching too) ; over these last 30 years, that salt has never lost its flavour; yet, if too little salt makes the food tasteless, too much salt renders it inedible…

Bibliography

BARTHES, Roland, 1973, *Le Plaisir du texte*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil.

BURKE, Michael, 2011, *Literary Reading, Cognition and Emotion: An Exploration of the Oceanic Mind*. London, Routledge.

GERMAIN, Sylvie,1996, *Les Echos du Silence,* Paris, Desclée de Brouwer.

GRICE H. Paul 'Logic and Conversation', in COLE & MORGAN (Eds), 1975, *Syntax and Semantics 3. Speech Acts,* New York, Academic Press, (pp. 113-27).

HOGARTH, William, 1753, *The Analysis of Beauty.* http://www.tristramshandyweb.it/sezioni/e-text/hogarth/analysis_html/preface.htm, last consulted on 17/03/2012.

JEFFRIES, Lesley and McINTYRE, Dan, 2010, *Stylistics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

LEECH, Goeffrey and SHORT, Michael, 1981, *Style in Fiction*, London and New-York, Longman.

LEECH, Goeffrey, 2008, *Language in Literature, Style and Foregrounding*, London, Longman.

NØRGAARD Nina, BUSSE Beatrix, MONTORO Rocio, 2010, *Key Terms in Stylistics*, London and New-York, Continuum.

OUAKNIN, Marc-Alain*, 1997, Les Mystères de l'Alphabet*, Paris, Editions Assouline.

RICHARD, Jean-Pierre, 1979, *Microlectures*, Paris, Editions du Seuil.

TOOLAN, Michael, (1998), 2009, *Language in Literature*, London, Hodder Education.

TREVOR, William, 2005, *A Bit on the Side*, London, Penguin.

SHAKESPEARE, William, *Othello*, The Arden Shakespeare, 1985, London, Methuen.

SIMPSON, Paul, 2004, *Stylistics, A Resource Book for Students,* London and New York, Routledge.

STERNE, Laurence, (1759-67), 1983, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

MIND STYLE: DEVIANCE FROM THE NORM?

Linda Pillière
Aix-Marseille Université – LERMA EA 853

Résumé : Cet article revient sur l'interprétation courante du terme « mind style », pour démontrer que d'autres facteurs, l'importance du contexte socio-culturel et le rôle du destinataire, jouent un rôle fondamental dans la mise en place du « mind style ».

Mots-clés: style, mind-style, stylistique, déviance, contexte socio-culturel.

In Chapter 6 of *Style and Fiction,* Leech and Short investigate the concept of mind style. The fact that they choose to dedicate a whole chapter to the topic reveals the importance that they attribute to this notion. The chapter demonstrates that a critical analysis of a mind style requires both a detailed linguistic study at the microtextual level, while engaging with wider issues, with studying how the fictional world is experienced. Yet in spite of its rich potential for textual analysis, the term mind-style has not enjoyed the same success as *point of view* or *focalization*. Even the second edition of *Style in Fiction* offers a relatively limited number of references for further reading. The aim of this article then is to seek to understand why this should be. Is the term *mind style* deviant from the norm of narratological terms? And how exactly should the term *deviant* be understood? In order to address these questions it will be necessary to re-examine what exactly is meant by *mind-style* and how it has largely been interpreted in recent research.

The term mind style was first coined by Roger Fowler as "any distinctive linguistic representation of an individual mental self" (1977, 103). He goes on to say that "it is created through the writer using cumulatively, consistent structural options, agreeing in cutting the presented world to one pattern or

another which give rise to an impression of a world-view" (76). For Fowler, mind-style is an alternative to Uspensky's "point of view on the ideological plane" which he considers to be too "cumbersome" (1996, 214). Following on from Fowler, Leech and Short use the term to refer to the way the fictional world is perceived or conceptualized, in preference to 'world-view' (2007, 151).

In order to demonstrate what they mean by mind style, all three use precise examples from twentieth-century literature. Fowler refers to Halliday's study of Lok, the Neanderthal man in Golding's *The Inheritors*, while Leech and Short analyse a passage seen through the eyes of the mentally-retarded Benjy in Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*. Both of these analyses focus on the various consistent linguistic features that are used to present a limited appraisal of events. In the case of the passage concerning Benjy, it is a game of golf, and in the instance of Lok, it is a man drawing a bow and arrow and shooting. Neither Lok, nor Benjy possess the adequate vocabulary to name these events. Nor do they fully understand the relationship between cause and effect (Leech and Short 2007, 196). The limited cognitive skills of both these two characters are reflected in the choice of lexico-grammatical patterns. So in both instances, the reader is presented with a world view that is markedly different from his/her own, and both studies offer clear examples of language that is deviant, in so far as the syntax and lexis used are markedly different from the linguistic norm.

Subsequent analyses of mind-styles have tended to focus on the same kind of deviance i.e. examples of a character's abnormal thought processes. Elena Semino, for example, has analysed metaphor and mind style in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1996) arguing that the use of machine metaphors by the first person narrator, Bromden, contribute to the creation of his mind-style and reflect his mental illness. In her analysis of metaphors in Mark Haddon's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, Semino (2007) argues that the problems experienced by the main character, Christopher, when he tries to understand other people's use of metaphors can in fact be linked to the fact that the protagonist suffers from Asperger's syndrome, a disorder that affects the sufferer's communication skills and ability to form social relationships. A more recent article (Semino, 2011) focuses on the use of deixis and fictional minds that work "in a striking and peculiar way". Ineke Bockting (1995) examines the narratives of the three Compson brothers in Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* and concludes that the different ways in which the characters' speech patterns are represented reflects various types of mental disorder.

Obviously such mind-styles present clear examples of a specific way of apprehending the fictional world. But Semino and Swindlehurst (1996) take this further when they argue that

although in theory mind style applies to all texts, in practice its relevance is limited to cases where a text's view of reality is perceived by the reader to suggest a particularly striking, idiosyncratic, or deviant understanding of the world. In such cases, an analysis of mind style provides a useful way to understand the workings of the text and to explain its effects.

However, I would contend that the theory of mind style is indeed relevant for all kinds of text and that, as Fowler himself argues, language constructs "a point of view which systematically transforms our common-sense world" (1996, 225). In fact, when we turn to look at what Fowler and Leech and Short have to say about mind style, we find a far more comprehensive approach than most recent studies on mind-style might suggest. Fowler (1977, 103), for example, states that

> A mind style may analyze a character's mental life more or less radically; may be concerned with the relatively superficial or relatively fundamental aspects of the mind; may seek to dramatize the order and structure of conscious thoughts, or just present the topics on which a character reflects, or display preoccupations, prejudices, perspectives and values which strongly bias a character's world-view but of which s/he may be quite unaware.

Similarly, Leech and Short (2007,158) point out that mind style can be applied to a writer's style in so far as it reflects his or her world view. They demonstrate that Henry James's use of syntactic embedding is both a characteristic of his style and a linguistic feature that contributes to his creation of a fictional world bound up in intricate social codes i.e. his mind-style.

So why have so many subsequent studies focused on **limited** cognitive skills? And what have been the repercussions on the use of the term mind style in general? One answer to the first question is that unusual mind styles are immediately obvious to any reader because their linguistic features do not correspond to Standard English. When you read a passage such as

> They were hitting little, across the pasture. I went back along the fence to where the flag was. It flapped on the bright grass and the trees. (Leech and Short 2007, 163)

there is no need to be a linguist, to realize that something strange is happening here, and that a very idiosyncratic way of viewing events is being created. Another reason, which is linked to the first, is that an unusual mind style is perceptible in a short passage and therefore offers clear examples for the critic. The extract from Golding's *The Inheritors* that Halliday analyses, or the extract from Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* that features in *Style in Fiction* are just a few paragraphs, offering an ideal length for textual analysis.

However by limiting mind style to analysis of the unusual, less attention has been paid to the wide-reaching definitions given by Fowler and developed upon by Leech and Short that I quoted earlier. Indeed it may explain why

narratology has preferred to talk of voice or point of view. For, while it is obvious that critics consider that consciousness (Fludernik 1996) or cognitive style (Margolin 2003) play a vital role and should be analysed, they seem to fight shy of using the term mind style. This is particularly striking in Alan Palmer's work, *Fictional Minds*. Although he insists upon the importance of the notion of "mind", arguing that it includes "all aspects of our inner life" and that "the constructions of the minds of fictional characters by narrators and readers are central to our understanding of how novels work" (2004, 12) – he never actually uses the term "mind style" even though *Style in Fiction* figures in the bibliography and he does quote Leech and Short when he examines various kinds of discourse. Instead he opts for a term first introduced by Marie-Laure Ryan (1991), "embedded narratives", to refer to "the whole of a character's various perceptual and conceptual viewpoints, ideological world views" (2004, 15).

I would therefore argue that by focusing on mind styles that reflect limited cognitive skills, the concept of mind style has become far more limited than its original authors intended, and perhaps attracted fewer supporters than it actually deserves. From this two other hypotheses follow. Firstly, that the idea of deviance that is considered in most of the subsequent work on mind style is but one kind of deviance. Secondly, that the abnormal mind styles studied automatically lead to a focus on the individual, thus limiting the wider-reaching importance of the concept. To address the first point, I wish first to consider what exactly is meant by deviance, before examining two mind-styles that do not feature the abnormal deviance so frequently analysed.

The notion of deviance is a complex one and in *Language and Literature*, Leech evokes three categories of deviation: primary deviation, secondary deviation and tertiary deviation. There is not space to examine all three in detail here, and for the present discussion it is primary deviation which is the most relevant and which, according to Leech, is of two kinds:

a) Where the language allows a choice, the poet goes outside the normally occurring range of choice.

b) Where the language allows a choice, the poet denies himself the freedom to choose, using the same item in successive positions. (2008, 59)

In other words, deviance is perceived as being different from "norms of linguistic expression in general" (2008, 62). Studies on abnormal mind style have been mainly concerned with primary deviation type (a), with the normally occurring range of choice being that of Standard English grammar. Again, this is probably because such deviance is the most salient type. But this kind of deviation need not be so spectacular. It can simply be an unusual collocation

– which is salient at a microtextual level – and perhaps less easily noticed. To illustrate this point I will examine a few short extracts from Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*, and the use that the butler Stevens makes of the adjective 'professional'.

Within the context of the novel, Stevens is obsessed with his profession and what the correct behaviour of a butler should be. He speaks at length on The Hayes Society and what it means to be a great butler, and who fulfils the role most fittingly. So it is all the more striking that he should describe his relationship with Miss Kenton in terms of "a fine professional understanding" (1996, 173). The adjective "professional" is, in fact, used on several occasions to refer to their relationship, where "the normally occurring range of choice" might have suggested "personal". Miss Kenton's possible departure from Darlington Hall would be, for Stevens, a "professional loss" (1996, 180). And when he sets off to see her again some twenty years later, he convinces himself that their interview will "be largely professional in character". Even his cosy cups of cocoa at the end of the day with Miss Kenton are "overwhelmingly professional" (1996, 155), but the hyperbolic adverb implies the contrary.

Other unusual collocations can be found in Stevens's use of "triumph". The noun is used to describe his feelings on recalling the evening of his father's death (1996, 115) and curiously placed in the same sentence as "sad associations". Similarly, when he fails to comfort Miss Kenton on the news of her aunt's death (1996, 239), his mood is "downcast" only to be then qualified as "a sense of triumph". In both contexts, "triumph" becomes salient, and the linguistic discrepancy, the use of a word in an unusual context, suggests to the attentive reader that Stevens's version of events is not the whole truth and nothing but the truth. In other words, the use of "triumph" is deviant in so far as its use is at odds with the context. How aware the reader may be of primary deviation type b over a long stretch of text will obviously depend to some extent on the reader's attentiveness. Once again, *The Remains of the Day* offers some interesting examples.

One of the dominant features of Stevens's narrative is his excessive use of negation. This use of negation takes various forms, frequently combining negation of the verb with a lexical item that contains a negative affix, so that the result is in fact a double negative where a simpler affirmation would have been possible. Thus he says "the pressures [...] were nevertheless not inconsequential (1996, 80) instead of simply that they "were consequential". "not at all out of keeping" (1996, 139) is preferred to "in keeping", "would not be an unsuitable setting" (1996, 92) is used instead of "would be a suitable setting," "it would not be unfair to suggest" (1996, 142) instead of it "it would be fair to suggest", and "it was not impossible that" (1996, 186) rather than "it was possible that". These forms occur throughout the novel, but how easily

they may be recognized will depend on many factors, including the reader's attentiveness to detail. Moreover, a reader versed in Freud's work on repression, might well bring another reading to the text. In his essay 'Negation', Freud states that "the content of a repressed image or idea can make its way into consciousness, on condition that it is *negated* […]To negate something in a judgement is, at bottom, to say: 'This is something which I should prefer to repress!' A negative judgement is the intellectual substitute for repression; its 'no' is the hallmark of repression, a certificate of origin – like, let us say, 'Made in Germany'" (1995, 666-9). If we follow this reasoning it would follow that when Stevens says "it is not for me to suggest that I am worthy of ever being placed alongside the likes of the 'great' butlers (1996, 114), he is in fact repressing his belief he does indeed consider himself worthy. When he comments on the mistakes he has been making under his employer by saying "there is no reason to believe them to be signs of anything more sinister than a staff shortage" (1996, 149) he is in fact repressing that very idea. The negations therefore contribute to creating not simply a character who represses his emotions, but also someone who denies the true state of things. In all the examples studied so far, then, there is deviance but not from the norm of Standard English. The mind style of Stevens, while idiosyncratic, is not mentally abnormal.

What then of the mind style of authors? Why has that domain been neglected? The most probable answer to this question is that it is not always easy to distinguish between the two notions of style and mind style. Are they one and the same thing? In what follows, I seek to demonstrate that they are not.

A mind style, according to Fowler (1977) is a cumulatively consistent pattern of linguistic choice that reflects a specific mental state and way of seeing reality. He argues that mind style implies a "perspective on the topics treated" and portrays "the set of values, or belief system, communicated by the language of the text" (1996, 165). Style, on the other hand, need not necessarily reflect a specific way of viewing reality, even if very often the two overlap. To demonstrate this point, I will examine use of a single grammatical structure, *as if*, in Flannery O'Connor's short stories. On one level, we might simply want to follow the literary critic Kessler who sees the use of *as if* as a typical trait of her writing, calling it "O'Connor's poetic signature" (1986, 15). However, it is equally possible to interpret O'Connor's use of a*s if* as being fundamentally linked to her own vision of the world and as contributing to the creation of her mind style.

Two keywords in O'Connor's fiction are *mystery* and *revelation*. Her fiction is deeply informed by her Catholic faith, and her essays reveal how she

struggled with the desire as a Catholic writer to "reveal as much of the mystery of existence as possible" (1969, 98), while at the same time writing about "the concrete world of sense experience" (1969, 94). In her essays, there is no ambivalence, no hedging, when she writes "I see from the standpoint of Christian orthodoxy. This means that for me the meaning of life is centered on our redemption by Christ and what I see in the world I see in its relation to that"(1969, 32). But in the short stories, she is all too aware that she cannot force this way of apprehending the world on her reader: "When I write a novel in which the central action is a baptism, I am very well aware that for a majority of my readers, baptism is a meaningless rite" (1969, 162). One of the ways she is able to communicate the "mystery of existence" as a possibility to the reader is through her consistent use of the comparative structure *as if*.

From a grammatical point of view, the comparative structure *as if* both equates or identifies two terms, through the use of *as*, while introducing a hypothesis with *if*. One of the characteristics of this structure is that the hypothesis invoked may be known to be false, but on other occasions it can express genuine doubt and even introduce an event that is later confirmed to be true. The first use of *as if* is illustrated by the following:

> "Hiram pulled Bailey up by the arm as if he were assisting an old man" (1990, 128).

Within the context of the short story, Bailey is clearly not an old man. The second use of *as if* is illustrated by the following:

> A car some distance away on top of a hill, coming slowly as if the occupants were watching them" (1990, 125).

At this point in the story, "A Good Man is Hard to Find", there is no way of telling whether the occupants of the car are indeed watching the grandmother and family or not. Unlike the first quotation, where it would not be possible to envisage terminating the sentence with "which indeed he was", in this instance we could imagine either of the following endings:

> [...] coming slowly as if the occupants were watching them, which indeed they were
> [...] coming slowly as if the occupants were watching them, which they weren't

It is only later in the story that we discover that the three men in the car were in fact watching the family. The extent to which the first statement may be identified with the hypothesis as being true or not will depend on several factors including the reader's interpretation of the information in the subordinate clause, and also how that information relates to the context of the story itself. The use of *as if* is thus a means of generating diverse meanings, of opening up different possibilities, and of introducing an idea without necessarily asserting it. Within O'Connor's short stories the structure enables

the narrator to suggest characters' motives without necessarily asserting them, leaving it to the reader to infer:

> He put on his black hat and looked up suddenly and then away deep into the woods as if he were embarrassed again (1990, 129)

> Norton turned what was left of the cake over as if he no longer wanted it. (1990, 447)

More importantly, when moments of revelation do occur in the short stories, when characters are on the brink of grasping the final mystery, O'Connor resorts to using an indeterminate (*some*) and *as if,* rather than making an assertion. In "The Artificial Negro" we read for example:

> They stood gazing at the artificial Negro as if they were faced with some great mystery, some monument to another's victory that brought them together in their common defeat. They could both feel it dissolving like an action of mercy. (1990, 269)

This comparative structure is also used to suggest that ordinary prosaic elements may have symbolic significance. The peacock, in "The Displaced Person" takes on possible biblical symbolism through the use of *as if*:

> The peacock stood still as if he had just come down from the sun-drenched hill to be a vision for them all. (1990, 198)

It is up to the reader to make the connection at this point as the biblical reference is only clearly given some eight pages later when the priest sees the peacock raise its tail again: "'The Transfiguration', he murmured." (1990, 226). A similar refusal to impose a Christian reading of events is to be found at the end of "A Good Man is Hard to Find" where we read "The Misfit sprang back as if a snake had bitten him" (1990, 132). In her correspondence, O'Connor writes of this story and of the role of the grandmother that "it's a moment of grace for her anyway-a silly old woman-but it leads him to shoot her. This moment of grace excites the devil to frenzy" (1979, 373). The biblical reference here is clearly stated. But in the short story itself, the reference to the Garden of Eden is tentative as the comparison to being bitten by a snake can also be read at face value, as a simple reaction of self-defence. One of the roles of *as if* then is to allow O'Connor to introduce the notion of mystery of existence as a possibility, as one way of understanding events, which the reader would, in all likelihood, reject if it were asserted rather than suggested. Rather than assert Christian dogma, she chooses to offer a spiritual interpretation of events as one possible interpretation. As such, this grammatical structure reveals her set of values and beliefs, and is part of her authorial mind style.

The other problem created by much of the analysis of abnormal mind styles, that I now address, is that all too often the individual's conceptual

framework has been focused upon, without due attention being paid to the image that the speaker has of his/her addressee and without taking into account the socio-cultural framework.

In examples of first-person narration, the addressee plays an important role in the creation of the narrator's mind style. The "you" may be a fictional construct but its presence will necessarily influence the choice of structures and thought patterns. Just as a character's mind style may be created through dialogue or narration so, too, it is revealed in the way s/he addresses the fictional addressee. In the novella, *The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner*, the main protagonist, Smith, is continually addressing a "you" who is never clearly identified, but against whom Smith positions and defines himself: "In-law blokes like you and them" (1994, 10) on the one hand, and someone to instruct and inform, on the other: "you're wrong and I'll tell you why" (1994, 8). In similar fashion Stevens, in *The Remains of the Day* addresses a person who at times appears to be a younger colleague and at others, someone in a position of power and authority, comparable to Lord Darlington. It is during these passages that Stevens often expresses his opinion on matters and even tries to analyze his motivations.

It is on occasions such as these, when the first person narrators "speak" to their addressees, that some of the most striking features of their mind-style are revealed. Take for instance the following passage, when Stevens remembers the night his father died and the professional pressures he faced in looking after Lord Darlington's guests:

> Even so if you consider the pressures contingent on me that night, you may not think I delude myself unduly if I go so far as to suggest that I did perhaps display, in the face of everything, at least to some modest degree a 'dignity' worthy of someone like Mr Marshall – or come to that, my father. (1996, 114)

The combination of negation, modality and adverbs of degree reveal both Stevens's inability to express his true feelings and his unreliability as a narrator. The only time the verb "delude" is used in the novel occurs at this point, but it is highlighted by the repetition of similar phonemes in *(un)duly*.

The socio-cultural framework also plays a role in creating the mind style of a character. As Flannery O'Connor remarks:

> An idiom characterizes a society, and when you ignore the idiom, you are very likely ignoring the whole social fabric that could make a meaningful character. You can't cut characters off from their society and say much about them as individuals. You can't say anything meaningful about the mystery of a personality unless you put that personality in a believable and significant social context (1969: 104)

In *The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner*, it is very tempting to simply focus on the main character's mind style as a very individualistic way of expressing himself. Smith's frequent use of I is of course to be expected in a novella told in the first person, But to fully understand his use of pronouns, we need to understand how he positions himself in relation to society in general. His whole outlook on events and the world in general, is a refusal to conform to those in power, and this informs his linguistic choices. His refusal to use the first person plural "we" is but one illustration of this, and it plays a central role in demarcating himself from those in authority who always use *we*. As he says "They always say "'We' 'We', never 'I' 'I' –as if they feel braver and righter knowing there's a lot of them against only one" (1994, 32). Indeed, Smith's idiolect with its regionalisms and inconsistent non standard forms is less a reflection of his social standing than a way of marking him apart from the powers that be. He sees authority as a threat to his individuality, and independence. So he attempts at every turn to assert himself and just as he refuses to win the race so he refuses to be subservient to the rules of Standard English.

This refusal to obey conventional codes and standards is reflected in his reworking of old clichés, the way he coins compounds such as "lace-curtain lungs" (1994, 39), "jumped-up jackdaws", "cutballed cockerel" (1994, 19) and deviates with unusual collocations "varicose beanstalks" (1994, 39). All authority is a threat for Smith – whether that be the police, the Borstal governor or Standard English itself. So unlike Lok or Benjy, Smith's linguistic creativity is voluntary. He takes pleasure in alliterative combinations such as "plush posh seat" (1994, 20) or "gangrened gaffer" (1994, 49) or "tash-twitching" (1994, 13). He even reinterprets the semantic value of words as in his reflection on what it means to be honest "I know what honest means according to me and he only knows what it means according to him" (1994, 15). Such reasoning challenges the definition that might be found in a dictionary, the ultimate authority. His language then reflects the way he sees the world in terms of "us and them". It is impossible to focus on his individual mind style without taking into account the sociocultural context whereby he defines himself.

If we take the example again of Stevens in *Remains of the Day,* then part of the deviance to be found in Stevens' language is not deviance from Standard English, or semantic deviation, but deviance with his position in society. In other words, what is striking in the way he describes events and reveals his thoughts is the fact that his language does not totally correspond with the image that the reader has of a butler (although it could be argued that he does resemble a Jeeves-like figure). His use of English, his complicated syntax is foregrounded because it does not conform to what the reader might expect of a butler, just as it strikes a contrast with the more informal English of his upper-

class employers. His choice of Latinate vocabulary (*implement*, *ascertain*, *remuneration*, *commence*), of verbs created from nouns (*this is evidenced by the fact*, to depart the room), of complex prepositions (*due to the fact that*) are all examples of this idiosyncracy, as is his predilection for the pronoun "one" which is so frequently used that it sounds stilted:

> It is just that one never know when one might be obliged to give out that one is from Darlington Hall, and it is important that one be attired at such times in a manner worthy of one's position (1996, 11)

Indeed nothing could be further from the register used by his American employer Mr Lewis, but even Lord Darlington himself uses a less elevated register than Stevens. On inquiring whether the location of two dismissed Jewish maids might still be discovered, Lord Darlington remarks "I suppose there's no way of tracing them" Stevens's rephrasing of the sentence is a masterpiece of circumlocution: "I am not at all certain it will be possible to ascertain their whereabouts at this stage" (1996, 159). His circumlocutions are underlined by other characters indicating their incomprehension 'What do you mean, butler?' asks Monsieur Dupont when Stevens informs him "assistance is not immediately available at this precise moment" (1996, 111). There is deviation here, but it is deviation within a sociocultural context, and not the sign of an "abnormal" frame of mind. In a totally different novel, characters from the upper-class might well express themselves in this manner.

To conclude, rather than focus solely on the relationship between mind style and an individual cognitive state and, moreover, to take this relationship as a given, I suggest that is necessary to take into account two other important factors in the relationship: the sociocultural context and the addressee. The following diagram represents the interaction between the various factors that constitute any mind style:
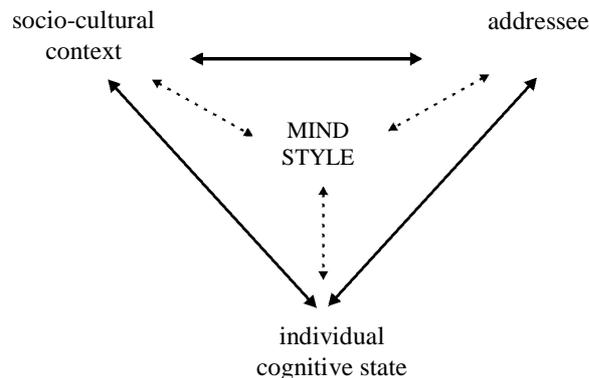
In the centre of the diagram is mind-style itself, an abstract concept that both creates, and is created, by three factors: an individual cognitive state, a socio-cultural context and an addressee. The relationship between all three is a dynamic one, illustrated in the diagram by the arrows. In other words, an individual cognitive state will both create its addressee, just as it is in turn created by its addressee. In turn it creates and is created by a sociocultural context. If all three factors are taken into account, then the concept of deviance is no longer limited to abnormal minds, but can also be conceived as deviance in relation to a sociocultural context and/or the expectations of the reader.

Bibliography

BILLIG, Michael, 1999. *Freudian Repression*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

BOCKTING, Ineke, 1995. *Character and Personality in the Novels of William Faulkner: A Study in Psychostylistics*, Lanham, MD, University Press of America.

FLUDERNIK, Monika, 1996. *Towards a "Natural" Narratology*, London, Routledge.

FOWLER, Roger, 1977. *Linguistics and the Novel*. London, Arrowsmith.

FOWLER, Roger, 1986. *Linguistic Criticism,* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

FREUD, Sigmund, 1995. "Negation", *The Freud Reader*, Peter Gay (ed.), London, Vintage.

HALLIDAY, M.A.K, 1971. 'Linguistic Function and Literary style: An Inquiry into the language of William Golding's *The Inheritors*', *Literary Style: A Symposium*. Ed. Seymour Chatman, Oxford, Oxford UP, 330-65.

ISHIGURO, Kazuo, (1989) 1996. *The Remains of the Day*, London, Faber.

KESSLER, Edward, 1986. *Flannery O'Connor and the Language of the Apocalypse*, Princeton, Princeton University Press.

LEECH, Geoffrey, 2008. *Language in Literature*. Harlow, Pearson Longman.

LEECH, Geoffrey and SHORT, Mick, (1981) 2007. *Style in Fiction,* Harlow, Pearson Longman.

MARGOLIN, Uri, 2003. "Cognitive Science, the Thinking Mind, and Literary Narrative", *Narrative Theory and the Cognitive Sciences*, David Herman (ed.), Stanford, CA, Center for the Study of Language and Information.

O'CONNOR, Flannery, 1969. *Mystery and Manners: Occasional Prose*, New York, Farrar, Strauss & Giroux.

O'CONNOR, Flannery, 1979. *The Habit of Being: Letters of Flannery O'Connor*, London, Faber and Faber.

O'CONNOR, Flannery, 1990. *The Complete Stories of Flannery O'Connor*, London, Faber and Faber.

PALMER, Alan, 2004. *Fictional Minds*, Lincoln and London, University of Nebraska Press.

PILLIERE, Linda, 2004. "Revealing the mystery – an approach to Flannery O'Connor's use of language" in *The Complete Stories Flannery O'Connor : The Complete Short Stories*, Annick Duperray (ed.), Paris, Ellipses.

PILLIERE, Linda, 2004. "The Language of Repression – a linguistic approach to Ishiguro's style", *Etudes britanniques contemporaines*, n°27, 99-109.

PILLIERE, Linda, 2008. "An individual voice? Grammar and style in *The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner", Bulletin de la Société de Stylistique anglaise* N°30, 195- 207.

RYAN, Marie-Laure, 1991. Possible *Worlds, Artificial Intelligence and Narrative Theory*, Bloomington, Indiana UP.

SEMINO, Elena, 2002. "A Cognitive Stylistic Approach to Mind Style in Narrative Fiction." *Cognitive Stylistics: Language and Cognition in Text Analysis*. Elena Semino and Jonathan Culpeper,(eds.), Amsterdam, John Benjamins.

SEMINO, Elena, 2005. "Mind style." *Elsevier Encyclopaedia of Language and Linguistics*, 142-48.

SEMINO, Elena, 2007. 'Mind style 25 years on', *Style*, 41, 2, 153-203.

SEMINO, Elena, 2011. "Deixis and Fictional Minds", *Style,* 45, 3, 418-440.

SEMINO, Elena and SWINDLEHURST, Kate, 1996. 'Metaphor and mind style in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest', Style* 30, 1, 143-166.

SHORT, Mick. "Mind-Style." *Encyclopaedia of Language and Linguistic*. Ed. Roger E. Asher. Oxford: Pergamon, 1994. 2504-05.

SILLITOE, Alan, (1959) 1994. *The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner*, London, Flamingo.

THE MEANING OF CONCESSIVE CLAUSES IN JIM HARRISON'S WORK: A GRAMMATICAL READING OF MIND STYLE

Clara Mallier
Université Michel de Montaigne Bordeaux 3

Résumé : A travers une étude de cas (l'emploi des propositions concessives dans l'œuvre de Jim Harrison), cet article aborde sous un angle grammatical le phénomène de « mind style », montrant que la singularité d'une vison du monde peut s'incarner dans des choix grammaticaux aussi bien que dans des préférences sémantiques ou lexicales.

Mots-clés: stylistique, linguistique énonciative, Jim Harrison, mind style.

The notion of "mind style", presented by Geoffrey Leech and Michael Short in *Style in Fiction* (1981) after its introduction by Roger Fowler in *Linguistics and the Novel* (1977), has been explored substantially over the past decades. In her article published in this volume, Linda Pillière observes that the notion was originally "far more comprehensive . . . than recent studies on mind-style might suggest." (p. 69) Indeed, mind style is often approached through the prism of texts which represent "abnormal" worldviews (with linguistic evidence of psychological disorder, impairment of mental faculties etc.), leaving aside less deviant forms of idiosyncrasy, perhaps because their linguistic manifestations are more elusive. In this article, I would like to address a second aspect of the notion of mind style which has been comparatively overlooked, for reasons which may be similar to the first: while the advent of cognitive poetics in recent years has resulted in a particularly stimulating exploration of the lexical / semantic side of mind style, with new conceptual tools such as the study of schemas or frames and the use of Cognitive Metaphor theory (see Semino, 2007), the grammatical component of mind style has elicited less attention.

Leech and Short's definition of the notion does specify that "mind style [can] be observed through formal construction of language in terms of [both] grammar and lexis" (Leech and Short 1981, 151), but the connection between grammar and meaning (as well as between grammar and psychology) is more elusive, more difficult to grasp than the connection between meaning and such linguistic features as lexical choices or the use of metaphors. Nevertheless, grammatical preferences are useful indicators of the singular world view of a given individual, not only in cases of extreme "deviance" from the norm[1], but also in the manifestation of simple, idiosyncratic preferences. To explore the link between Harrisons's narrators' grammatical choices – be they conscious or unconscious – and their mental processes in the present case study, I will borrow tools from a French branch of linguistics whose theoretical framework was set by Antoine Culioli, namely the Theory of Enunciative Operations. Enunciative (or "utterer-centered") linguistics uncovers the mental "operations" of which speech is the surface manifestation; its focus on the enunciator, or speaker, makes it a particularly effective theory for broaching the phenomenon of mind style, as it tries to bring to light the link between grammatical surface and hidden, implicit psychological mechanisms. Here is not the place to present the global theoretical framework of enunciative linguistics as my analysis will bear on a single grammatical trait, namely the use of concessive clauses by the North-American writer Jim Harrison, in order to shed light on the mental processes involved in it and to clarify the pragmatic relationship which it creates with the implied reader[2]. I will focus on Harrison's fictional prose, leaving aside his essays and poems, and for purposes of clarity and comparison, will deal exclusively with clauses which are introduced by the conjunction THOUGH[3]. Since the abundance of concessive clauses is a consistent trait of Harrison's writing, the style I will address is the author's, but the *mind style* I will be exploring is that of his narrators; I will mainly deal with characteristics that are shared by them all, but I will also point out occasional variations between them.

<div align="center">*</div>

The use of concessive clauses by Jim Harrison is a salient feature of the author's style, for two reasons at least: because of their frequency in his work,

---

[1] For remarks on the grammatical expression of neurosis and psychosis by a linguist and psychoanalyst, see Danon-Boileau (1987).

[2] For a presentation in English of the Theory of Enunciative Operations following the theoretical framework established by Antoine Culioli, see Bouscaren, Chuquet and Danon-Boileau (1992).

[3] For a comparative study of the psychological mechanisms involved in the uses of THOUGH, ALTHOUGH and ALBEIT in *Dalva*, see Mallier (2006), and for remarks on OF COURSE in the same novel, see Mallier (2008).

and because they are in most cases post-posed. This lends them a distinctive quality, for they seem to constitute an afterthought, as can be observed in the following examples:

Her voice is no longer dry and fatigued, *though I worry a bit that this is a vaguely manic phase that the family is susceptible to*. (*Dalva*, 18)[4]

*

You see less in the natural world with a dog along *though they alert you by their scenting abilities to what you're not going to see*. (*The Road Home*, 399)

I might have been able to let off some steam *though I doubt it*. ("The Man Who Gave Up His Name", *Legends of the Fall*, 123)

*

Everyone on earth had a different texture of voice and appearance and despite the joking comments of his friends all girls seemed to be notably different from one another *though boys seemed less so*. ("Tracking", *The Summer He Didn't Die,* 204)

*

If you go outside in a relatively unpopulated area you are immediately a little less claustrophobic *though, of course, there are no miracles because you carry your civilization in your head*. ("The Beast God Forgot to Invent", *The Beast God Forgot to Invent*, 60)

*

The child's refusal to accept confusion in his parents' lives is a good protective measure. At that age parents are still gods *though growing smaller by the year*. (*True North*, 21)

*

Ante-posed concessive clauses, on the other hand, are much less frequent in Harrison's works, though examples of them can be found as well:

Nordstrom said her concern was nonsense and *though he found the whole notion appalling* he guessed that it was probably true. ("The Man Who Gave up His Name", *Legends of the Fall*, 148)

*

She lost her taste for heavy drinking and pill pooping and *though she was still a little fragile mentally* she had become pleasantly human rather than one of those upper-class Judy Garlands. (*True North*, 127)

*

---

4   The emphasis is mine in this quotation and those that follow.

> When it was over I had nothing left about which to draw conclusions. My incomprehension was total. She was here and then she wasn't and *though I understood the biological fact of death* the whole ballooned outward from the mute sum of the parts. (*True North*, 117)

The question which needs addressing is whether the difference between ante-posed and post-posed concessive clauses is purely a matter of sentence rhythm, or whether it reflects a difference in meaning as well. The question has elicited different answers from different schools of grammarians. According to Quirk *et al.*, the order of clauses – or more precisely, which clause is made subordinate – generally has no impact on the meaning of the sentence:

> Concessive clauses indicate that the situation in the matrix clause is contrary to expectation in the light of what is said in the concessive clause. In consequence of the mutuality, it is often purely a matter of choice which clause is made subordinate. (Quirk *et al.* 1985, 1097)

Quirk *et al.* posit a "mutuality", or reversibility in the relationship between the two clauses, though the authors leave room for possible exceptions by qualifying their statement with the adverb "often". However, it seems difficult to find examples where "which clause is made subordinate" is really a matter of choice. For instance, the following statement, "I'm quite happy though I may have to move after all these years" (*Dalva*, 3) cannot be reversed into: "Though I'm quite happy, I may have to move after all these years"; the meaning of the sentence would be profoundly altered. If a concessive relationship entails that one clause is "contrary to expectation" in the light of what is said in the other, it does matter which clause is the starting point of the expectation that is thus invalidated. One might think, however, that the *order* in which the two clauses appear is a matter of choice. For instance, the sentence quoted above, "I'm quite happy though I may have to move after all these years" could be rephrased as "Though I may have to move after all these years, I'm quite happy"; the meaning of the sentence would not be radically altered, although there would still be a small difference as the end focus of the sentence would not bear on the duration of the narrator's stay in her home anymore, but on her relative happiness instead. One might conclude that whereas it obviously matters which clause is made subordinate, it does not (apparently) matter so much which clause comes first in the statement. That is indeed how the enunciative linguist Catherine Filippi understands the remark made in Quirk *et al.* (Filippi 1998, 27-28). And yet, in numerous cases, that second assertion can be challenged too. Indeed, the order of clauses often directly affects the meaning of the sentence and it seems that the mechanism described in Quirk ("the situation in the matrix clause is contrary to expectation in the light of what is said in the concessive clause") partly depends on the order in which the clauses appear.

(I) When the concessive clause is ante-posed, the expectation unquestionably stems from it, as is apparent in this example from *Dalva*:

> I intended to call a friend in the athletic department at Stanford who, *though he enters Ironmen contests*, drinks a great deal of beer. (*Dalva*, 129)

It is obvious here that the expectation derives from the subordinate clause (a man who enters Ironmen contests is expected to have a very healthy lifestyle), and is invalidated by the main clause (this particular individual, however, drinks a great deal of beer).

(II) When the concessive clause is post-posed, however, the expectation does not always derive from the subordinate clause. There are indeed two possibilities:

> (i) either the expectation implicit in the concessive clause does start from the subordinate clause, in spite of the latter being post-posed, in which case the mechanism is close to the one we just analyzed: in the sentence "The streets were partly drifted over and no one was around *though it was noon*," (*Dalva*, 47), the inference starts from the subordinate clause even if the latter is post-posed; the paraphrase could be: [it was noon, so one might have expected the streets to be busy, but actually there was no one around].

> (ii) But a second possibility (which is the most common case when a concessive clause is post-posed) is that the expectation can derive from the matrix clause itself. Such is the case in this example from the third-person autobiographical narrative "Tracking": "The novel was immediately accepted so now he was a novelist *though the ego was restrained remembering his father's admonition that the arts weren't an entitlement that separated one from the social contract*." (*The Summer He Didn't Die*, 235) The expectation that is invalidated stems from the consecutive clause embedded in the matrix clause, "so now he was a novelist": [he was a novelist, so he might have had an inflated sense of his own importance, but actually his ego was restrained by his father's words]. The mechanism at work here is different from that described in Quirk *et al.*: it is not that "the situation in the matrix clause is contrary to expectation in the light of what is said in the concessive clause", but conversely that "the situation in the *subordinate* clause is contrary to expectation in the light of what is said in the *matrix* clause."

It appears that there are two different types of concessive clauses, depending on where the expectation starts from. The difference which needs to be emphasized is thus not so much the difference between ante-posed and post-posed concessive clauses as the difference between concessive clauses in which the invalidated expectation is triggered by the subordinate clause (*y*), and those in which the expectation is triggered by the matrix clause (*x*). This fundamental distinction was first brought to light by Graham Ranger, an enunciative linguist who named the first type of clauses "Standard concessive clauses" (henceforward called SCCs), and the second type "Rectifying concessive clauses" (RCCs)[5]. SCCs are the most common form of concessive clauses, which is why Ranger

---

5   See Ranger (1998, 35-36).

calls them "standard", and indeed they correspond to the definition given in Quirk *et al.*; they are in most cases ante-posed, but can occasionally be post-posed as well. Rectifying clauses, on the other hand, are thus named because they seem to bring a correction, a "rectification" to the statement made in the matrix clause. For this reason, they are always post-posed.

Thus, whereas ante-posed concessive clauses are always standard, post-posed clauses can be either standard or rectifying. Interestingly, **some cases of post-posed clauses are ambiguous** – that is to say, they can be interpreted either as standard or as rectifying. In such cases, the meaning of the sentence will vary according to the interpretation that is made. Here is an example from *True North*:

> He said he didn't like the way my parents looked at him *though they were polite*. (*True North*, 79)

This sentence can be interpreted in two different ways. If the expectation is understood to start from the matrix clause, the subordinate clause comes as a rectification: although the subject "he" (a character called Glenn) dislikes the way the narrator's parents looked at him, he acknowledges their having been polite to him, which somewhat lessens his entitlement to feel offended. If, however, the expectation is understood to start from the subordinate clause, then it is the content of the matrix clause that is asserted more firmly: the narrator's parents may well have been polite, Glenn still resents the way they looked at him (this interpretation would be certain if the subordinator was *even though*). The emphasis is almost the opposite from that found in the first interpretation. The same double reading can be applied to a number of post-posed concessive clauses whose nature remains ambiguous, such as this example from *Dalva*:

> I think the car hastened the death of my grandfather *though he tried to absolve me of this notion on his deathbed*. (*Dalva*, 65)

Again, the sentence can be interpreted in two different ways: either as an SCC [my grandfather tried to absolve me of the notion that my driving a car hastened his death, so one might think I didn't feel guilty, *but I still think the two events were related*]; or as an RCC [I think my driving a car hastened my grandfather's death, so one might think he expressed disapproval / gave me some reason to think so, *but actually he tried to free me of this feeling of guilt on his deathbed*]. Again, the emphasis is placed on two almost opposite points in the two interpretations. The shift in meaning between the two types of clauses evokes the shift in interpretation one can experience when looking at a Necker cube:
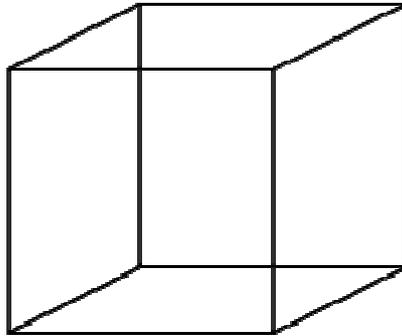
In this famous experiment, depending on which of its ends is seen as closer to the viewer, the cube can be construed from two different points of view: either as from right-and-above, or from left-and-below. German narratologist Manfred Jahn, who used the Necker cube as a metaphor to explain cognitive processes involved in reading, remarks that "whichever interpretation is initially chosen – though (i) [i.e. from right-and-above] is the more likely candidate – after a while the mind somehow tires of it and spontaneously presents the other one. Among other things, a Necker cube illustrates that competing interpretations (especially those that involve a change in point of view) tend to get blocked." (Jahn 1997, 458) In other words, the competing interpretations cannot occur simultaneously, but only successively: similarly, one cannot interpret an ambiguous concessive clause simultaneously as a standard and as a rectifying clause; one can only shift from one version to the other, experiencing the correlative change in meaning.

That being said, most post-posed concessive clauses in Harrison's work are not ambiguous but indisputably rectifying. This is sometimes made clear by the presence of the locution "in fact", or "of course" following the conjunction:

> "Your father was only good at war, do you know that? After that he mostly spent money." I nodded *though in fact my father never mentioned World War II and belonged to no veteran's organizations . . .* (*True North*, 61-62)

<div align="center">*</div>

> I had loathed *Catcher in the Rye* thinking the hero to be a wimp *though, of course, it was the insufferable resemblance of my character to his however slight.* (*True North*, 79)

Another unmistakable sign that a post-posed concessive clause is rectifying is the presence of a comma before the conjunction:

> Bay Mills wasn't that far out of the way, *though I was anxious to get to East Lansing to see Polly.* (*True North*, 93)

*

We want to keep our wounds as lucidly unique as possible, *though sitting there on the beach I began to see it as a vain effort*. (*True North*, 160)

*

He fashioned himself without superstition or imagination, *though mostly because people always told him he was without either*. ("The Man Who Gave Up His Name", *Legends of the Fall*, 126)

*

The music seemed to go with the wordless, verbless immensity of the ocean thought B.D., *though not in that specific language*. ("Westward Ho", *The Beast God Forgot to Invent*, 122)

In all these examples, the concessive clause can be interpreted only as rectifying (i.e., the expectation which is invalidated starts from the main clause): there is no ambiguity. The comma indicates a pause in the thinking process; the subordinate clause (*y*) comes as an afterthought which retroactively narrows or restricts the validity of the main clause (*x*). In a post-posed standard clause, on the other hand, the link between the main clause and the subordinate one is made earlier in the enunciator's mind: it is present from the moment when s/he utters the main clause.

The prevalence of post-posed concessive clauses in Harrison's work is thus also a prevalence of rectifying clauses, despite the rare cases when a post-posed clause is standard, or ambiguous[6]. The enunciative distinction established by Graham Ranger can help us understand the meaning of Harrison's use of concessive clauses, and of the predominance of RCCs over SCCs in his work. Indeed, the distinction between SCCs and RCCs reveals that the two types of clauses imply a different relationship between enunciator and co-enunciator, or more simply between the addressor and the (real or virtual) addressee[7]. The pragmatic relationship at work between the addressor and the addressee in an SCC could be paraphrased as follows: [although you/one might infer from *y* that *x* is not the case, I strongly affirm that *x* is the case nonetheless]. The addressor anticipates and contradicts an expectation that the addressee might have, which might seem incompatible with *x*. In other words, he forestalls a possible objection; that is why Catherine Filippi has described the relationship implicit in such statements as "adversative" rather than yielding, adding that the enunciator defines him- or herself as the "indisputable master of

---

6   For a statistical count of the different types of concessive clauses in *Dalva*, see Mallier (2006).

7   According to Antoine Culioli, speech builds not only an image of the enunciator, but also an image of the addressee – which is why the latter is often referred to as the "co-enunciator". (Culioli 1985, 62)

interpretations"[8]. He does not so much *grant* something to the addressee as deny the possible implications of *y*, however logical they might seem. The mental operation that underlies rectifying clauses is entirely different; it could be paraphrased thus: [I affirm *x*, but then, to be precise / accurate / honest, I have to add that *y* (which is apparently contradictory with *x*) is also true]. RCCs thus constitute a real "concession". The psychical movement here is one of *restriction* (of the validity of *x*) or *integration* (of *y*), not of rejection: the addressor corrects, qualifies his statement and accommodates what Ranger calls a "deleterious factor" (Ranger 1998, 46), acknowledging the relativity of the opinion expressed in *x*.

This can be related to a general outlook on life, and pragmatic relationship to the implied reader, in Harrison's work. Standard concessive clauses have the effect of reinforcing the enunciator's point of view, of strengthening his assertions by sweeping away potential objections. RCCs are very different: they express a correction, a qualification of the assertion present in the main clause; the enunciator acknowledges that his/her viewpoint was partially incorrect, or incomplete, and amends it. The pragmatic attitude is more humble than that involved in SCCs. Beyond their prosodic quality, the frequency of RCCs thus reveals a readiness to acknowledge one's limitations, a vigilance towards the ego's natural tendency to want to win arguments – a tendency which Harrison mockingly diagnoses in himself in the autobiographical third-person narrative "Tracking", saying that "[h]is willful but subdued arrogance puzzled him and it was impossible not to treat it comically." (*The Summer He Didn't Die*, 248). He often cautions his alter ego against hubris: "Sometimes his sense of his own limits became so glaring, so obvious that the concomitant humility made him mute and the idea of operating a small-town gas station seemed attractive. Of course he realized when he reached sixty that it was far too late not to run out your string. *Thinking you could become something else was another case of hubris*." (*The Summer He Didn't Die*, 262) Such caution is correlated to a feeling of powerlessness at deciphering the puzzle of existence: reporting a moment of introspection during a flight, Harrison describes himself as "in the middle of the mind ground of being as it is *though it was a landscape of question marks*." (*The Summer He Didn't Die*, 234) Here, a rectifying concessive clause is directly associated with the theme of personal humility in the face of metaphysical issues. Harrison also says of himself that "[his] nomadic habits had begun to raise more questions than they resolved" (256), and that "[i]n Brazil it finally struck him very hard that we live and die without a firm clue." (258)

---

8   Filippi (1998, 30 and 32).

However, despite its daunting aspect, the unfathomable mystery of life is also attractive: Paul, Dalva's uncle (who is one of the several first-person narrators of the sequel to *Dalva*, *The Road Home*), declares: "There is a mystery underfoot that is largely ignored because it is largely invisible. Ergo, I became a geologist." (*The Road Home*, 334) The distrust towards delusions of personal grandeur is not only a source of anxiety or bafflement; it is also correlated to a feeling of wonder at the majesty of the universe, and a constant relativization of man's importance in the vastness of the cosmos. Dalva expresses it in the following way:

> Now on the porch it was as if there was too much oxygen in the green air of June, and the son had doubtless driven down this road, perhaps glanced through the porch screen to see Naomi sitting here talking to the dead in the evening. *It was too large to be understood, it was not meant to be understood except to sense how large it was as if we were particles of our own universe, each of us a part of a more intimate constellation. The reach from the porch to three crows sleeping in a dead cottonwood down the road was infinite. So were father, mother, son and daughter, lover, horse and dog.* (*Dalva*, 281)

The other first-person narrator of the novel, Michael, constitutes an exception to this rule: he is self-centered, has a strong sense of intellectual superiority, and explicitly comments on the fact that he can't allow others to challenge his perception of the world because his need for stability would be shaken – especially when he deems them to be irrational, as is often the case with Dalva herself:

> For some reason I mentioned the Nez Percé student on the rock pile in my dream. . . .
>
> "That's an interesting dream," she said. "Maybe dreams are in the nature of the landscape? When I was in England and France I dreamt of knights and warhorses and I never do in America. In Arizona I dreamt of melon patches trailing all the way from Oraibi down the Sierra Madre in Mexico, which is where they think the Hopis came from. Here I dream a lot about animals and Indians, and I never did in Santa Monica.
>
> This threatened my scholarly integrity so I made a speech right there in the hot, muggy schoolyard, beginning with Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, with sidetracks into Otto Rank and Karen Horney. In the interest of winning the point I overlooked those irrational mushmouths Carl Jung and his contemporary camp follower, James Hillman. She laughed when I began to pound an imaginary lectern. (*Dalva*, 122)

Revealingly, though rectifying clauses still predominate in Michael's narrative, he uses a significantly higher proportion of standard concessive clauses than Dalva herself, whose personality is the exact opposite of Michael's in many ways. Thus, beyond the abundance of RCCs which is a salient and recognizable

feature of the author's style, there is a variation between the mind styles of the two first-person narrators, which becomes a subtle element of characterization[9].

Far from being only a matter of prosody, the use of rectifying concessive clauses thus reveals a readiness of most of Harrison's narrators to acknowledge the limitations of their thinking and their statements, a humble perception of their position in the universe, an awareness of their being related to the whole of mankind. Dalva thus declares that "of course there is something absurdly nonunique in a sixteen-year-old girl wandering around the fields, windbreaks, and creeks thinking about God, sex, and love, the vacuum of the baby" (*Dalva*, 53) while her mother, Naomi, affirms in the novel which is the sequel to *Dalva*: "as you grow older you tend to slowly recognize that you are less unique than you thought you were earlier in life." (*The Road Home*, 302)

Harrison's use of concessive clauses is a linguistic manifestation of a particular perception of the world, a position of humility in which the individual is always conscious of belonging to something larger than him- or herself. The author cultivates narrators who acknowledge that the universe is much too vast and complex to be comprehended and understood by any given individual. This goes along with a number of other characteristics of his writing, which share the property of steering clear of excessive assertions, of privileging nuance and subtlety, of distrusting the inflation of the ego and its feeling of uniqueness[10]. The author's style is thus consonant with the content of his works, and supports his representation of the fact that men's all too frequent sentiment of self-importance is belittled by the magnitude of the cosmos[11].

<div align="center">*</div>

Understanding what is at stake in Harrison's use of concessive clauses at an enunciative level enables us to make a connection between the author's linguistic style and his personal metaphysics, to show how his fundamental *ethos* and his relationship to the world are expressed through his syntactical choices. The singularity of a world view can thus be felt not only through the semantic preferences of a speaker, but also through his/her use of grammar. This can be applied to numerous other grammatical phenomena than the one example analyzed here – indeed, every part of speech is the manifestation of mental operations which can be "unearthed" and correlated to the idiosyncrasy of the mind which created them. Such an approach could certainly be related to semantic and cognitive studies of the phenomenon of mind style, creating a useful synergy of interpretations.

---

[9] For a statistical approach and interpretation of the differences between the ratio of concessive and rectifying clauses in the narratives of both Dalva and Michael, see Mallier (2006).

[10] For an analysis of several such stylistic traits see Mallier (2008).

[11] For a study of Harrisons's singular treatment of nouns in relation to this theme, see Mallier (2012).

Works cited

Bouscaren, Janine, Chuquet, Jean, and Danon-Boileau, Laurent, 1992. *Introduction to a Linguistic Grammar of English: an Utterer-centered Approach*, Paris: Ophrys.

Culioli, Antoine, 1985. *Notes du séminaire de DEA 1983-1984*, Poitiers: Département de recherches linguistiques (D.R.L.), Université de Paris 7.

Culioli, Antoine, 1999. « Even though, even if ; as though, as if », *Pour une linguistique de l'énonciation*, Tome 3, Paris: Ophrys, 177-181.

Danon-Boileau, Laurent, 1987. *Le Sujet de l'énonciation : psychanalyse et linguistique*, Paris: Ophrys.

Filippi, Catherine, 1997. "*Though* et la relation de concession", in *La Notion*, actes du colloque "La notion" tenu à l'U.F.R. d'études anglophones, Université Paris 7 – Denis Diderot en février 1996, dir. par C. Rivière & M.-L. Groussier, Paris: Ophrys, 91-98.

Filippi, Catherine, 1998. "La relation de concession : étude contrastive de *though* en anglais et de bien que, même si et encore que en français", in *Linguistique et traduction*, tome 4, dir. par Jacqueline Guillemin Flescher, Paris: Ophrys, 25-60.

Fowler, Roger, 1977. *Linguistics and the Novel*, London: Methuen.

Harrison, Jim (1978), 1994. *Legends of the Fall*, New York: Delta.

Harrison, Jim (1988), 1989. *Dalva*, New York: Washington Square Press.

Harrison, Jim (1998), 2000. *The Road Home*, London: Picador.

Harrison, Jim, 2000. *The Beast God Forgot to Invent*, New York: Grove Press.

Harrison, Jim, 2004. *True North*, New York: Grove Press.

Harrison, Jim, 2005. *The Summer He Didn't Die*, New York: Grove Press.

Jahn, Manfred, 1997. "Frames, Preferences, and the Reading of Third-Person narratives: Towards a Cognitive Narratology", *Poetics Today*, vol. 18, n° 4 (Winter, 1997), 441-468.

Leech, Geoffrey, and Short, Michael, 1981. *Style in Fiction*, London: Longman.

Mallier, Clara, 2006. "Les propositions concessives et l'inclusion de l'étranger dans *Dalva* de Jim Harrison", *Bulletin de la Société de Stylistique Anglaise*, n° 27, 59-74.

MALLIER, Clara, 2008. "A chacun son style : énonciation et caractérisation dans *Dalva* de Jim Harrison", *Bulletin de la Société de Stylistique Anglaise*, n° 30, 149-164.

MALLIER, Clara, 2012. "Linguistique énonciative, linguistique cognitive et stylistique : réflexions sur l'emploi des noms dans *Dalva* de Jim Harrison", in *Au-delà des frontières : perspectives de la stylistique contemporaine*, dir. par Cécile Narjoux, Bern: Peter Lang, 251-262.

PILLIERE, Linda. "Mind Style : Deviance from the Norm". ESA n° 4 (pp. 67-80).

RANGER, Graham, 1998. *Les Constructions concessives en anglais : une approche énonciative*, Paris: Ophrys, coll. « Cahiers de recherche ».

QUIRK, R., GREENBAUM, S., LEECH, G. and SVARTVICK, J., 1985. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*, London: Longman.

SEMINO, Elena, 2007. "*Mind style 25 years on*", *Style*, 41, 2, 153-203.

IS STYLE IN SHORT FICTION DIFFERENT FROM STYLE IN LONG FICTION?

Michael Toolan
University of Birmingham, U.K.

Résumé : Le style des fictions brèves est-il le même que celui des fictions longues ? Plus précisément, les nouvelles diffèrent-elles stylistiquement des romans (même si on ne considère que quelques types de nouvelles et quelques types de romans et que l'écart soit plus une question de degré que de nature) ? Dans le contexte d'un colloque sur le Style dans la Fiction, cet article définit quelques traits spécifiques à la nouvelle, en particulier quand ils diffèrent de ceux que l'on observe dans le roman. L'article débute avec des exemples dans lesquels il est difficile d'observer des différences notables entre nouvelles et romans. Je rappelle ensuite quelques caractéristiques généralement associées à la nouvelle. Enfin, mon étude se porte sur l'utilisation, dans certaines nouvelles (mais pas, telle est ma thèse, dans les romans) de ce que je nomme des passages de Grande Implication Emotionnelle qui diffèrent du reste de la nouvelle d'un point de vue formel et fonctionnel.

Mots-clés: fiction brève – fiction longue – émotions – genre.

Where long fiction and short fiction styles do not systematically diverge

What are the key features of style in fiction, according to Leech and Short in their book of that name? The features singled out in Chapter 3 include lexical features, grammatical features, figures of speech etc., and cohesion and context. It is doubtful that these are somehow consistently or predictably more (or less) prominent in long fiction than short fiction. What then of Chapter 6, which adopts and takes forward Roger Fowler's idea of 'mind style'? That notion is quite clear in the Leech and Short discussion; it has been rendered quite convoluted in some more recent treatments but has as its central and powerfully simple idea the thesis that in some kinds of narration—such as the

Benjy-focalised opening section of Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*—the style discloses the mind. Similarly, in Mark Haddon's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*, narrated by a boy who has Asperger's Syndrome, the claim is that the marked and remarked-upon style of this narration is as it is because it purports to be a representation or expression of an autistic boy's way of thinking and interpreting. There is always an element of virtuoso performance on the part of the writer in these efforts, along with doubts about good faith or fair dealing (how can Mark Haddon *really* know what goes on in the mind of someone with autism?) and even about logicality (how can dribbling, moaning, illiterate, virtually-languageless Benjy really have the degree of comprehension and orderliness, in sentences and paragraphs, that the opening section of Faulkner's novel attributes to him?).

> Caddy was walking. Then she was running, her booksatchel swinging and jouncing behind her.
>   "Hello, Benjy." Caddy said. She opened the gate and came in and stooped down. Caddy smelled like leaves. "Did you come to meet me." she said. "Did you come to meet Caddy. What did you let him get his hands so cold for, Versh." "I told him to keep them in his pockets." Versh said. "Holding on to that ahun gate."

These considerations in turn remind us of the pronounced fictionality of mind style narration. No-one, as far as I know, has attempted fictional depiction, using mind-style narration, of historical characters like Wittgenstein, Beethoven or Marie Curie, and one can see why a writer might be deterred.

Again, it seems unlikely that mind style will more naturally emerge in novels than in short stories, even if the sheer extent of the novel, and its opportunities to depict several characters in some depth, make a switching to a mind style easier to accommodate. Chapters 7 and 8 of *Style in Fiction* discuss the principles governing the rhetoric of literary text (e.g., manipulation of salience via changes in end-focus or subordination, and iconicity) and of literary discourse (e.g., the potentially multiple levels of discourse structure, the concepts of implied reader and author, the functioning of irony, tone and distance in discoursal point of view): again, there seems little reason to suppose that these are qualitatively different in stories than in novels. In short, there are plenty of dimensions of style in fiction, as surveyed in Leech and Short's 1981 study, where one would have difficulty in maintaining the claim that the stylistician had to be sensitive to whether the text for study were novel or story. The partial exception I will shortly turn to is caused by a functional/experiential consideration that applies especially sharply to the short narrative form: the imminence, from the outset, of the ending. But before discussing this stylistic and textural exception in detail, some general observations about what distinguishes the short story as a type of fiction are in order.

What defines the short story?

A minimalist hypothesis would be to assert that the short story differs from the novel essentially only in size or length, i.e., in the number of words used. Indeed if one adopted notional norms of say 5,000 words and 80,000 words respectively for story and novel, but allowed wide deviations from those standards, one might be able satisfactorily to sort the vast majority of stories and novels into the two categories with few exceptions. The average story length in Joyce's *Dubliners* is 5,000 words, while the length of his *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is 86,000 words approximately. And so on, for very many 20th century stories and novels. I am inclined to see the story: novel size differential (here somewhat arbitrarily set at 1 to 16, which might reflect a reading-time contrast of roughly one hour and sixteen hours, accompanied by one drink by contrast with sixteen, suffering from typically one interruption in the reading as against sixteen such; read typically at one sitting as against sixteen for the novel; and so on.

Many other differences wholly depend from these different word-length norms. But shortness is identificatory rather than informatively definitional. We need to go back to Poe and his brilliant observations, to begin to build an informative description of the modern short story.

> Were we called upon, however, to designate that class of composition which, next to such a poem as we have suggested, should best fulfil the demands of high genius–should offer it the most advantageous field of exertion–we should unhesitatingly speak of the prose tale, as Mr. Hawthorne has here exemplified it. We allude to the short prose narrative, requiring from a half-hour to one or two hours in its perusal. The ordinary novel is objectionable, from its length, for reasons already stated in substance. As it cannot be read at one sitting, it deprives itself, of course, of the immense force derivable from *totality*. Worldly interests intervening during the pauses of perusal, modify, annul, or counteract, in a greater or less degree, the impressions of the book. But simple cessation in reading would, of itself, be sufficient to destroy the true unity. In the brief tale, however, the author is enabled to carry out the fullness of his intention, be it what it may. During the hour of perusal the soul of the reader is at the writer's control.

If we combine Poe's observations with some simple practical considerations, we may reach the following interim conclusions:

- Short stories are mostly, and surely typically, read at one sitting.
- As a result, the reader who begins reading has in mind the completion of the reading in a way that the reader who embarks on a novel does not similarly have the novel's ending in contemplation.
- A reader who has in mind the completion of the reading of a story may extend that completion-mindedness to their reading of the narrative or text.

- Thoughts about how a story will conclude may be, throughout the reading of the story, more strongly an influence on that reader than they are on someone reading a novel (where these questions or pressures only fully take hold as the final few dozen pages are reached..)
- This extra focus, in the short story, on 'negotiating the end', on getting from middle to end, is purely a function of their brevity (in pages or reading time), one-sitting, integrated-compositional unity; but it feels different from or more than a purely practical inducement. The story as *genre* has developed effects, deviations, strategies, for working with and against that beginning-middle-end 'unity of effect' intensity that the story form favours.
- In Gerlach's words, "anticipation of the ending [is] used to structure the whole" (3).

The reference in the final point above is to the work of John Gerlach, in particular his 1985 study of the influence, on the structure of the modern short story, of the business of ending. Among other things Gerlach itemizes some of the main "signals of closure". These include:

- *solution of the central problem* (e.g., one faced by a character: once the problem is solved or the goal is reached, the reader feels a 'natural' sense that a termination is reasonable)
- *natural termination* (the completion of an action which itself has a recognised beginning, middle and end: a journey, the writing of a book, the construction of a building, the conclusion of a meal;
- *completion of antithesis* ("any opposition, often characterized by irony, that indicates something has polarized into extremes" [10])
- *manifestation of a moral* ("the reader's sense that a theme has emerged" [12])
- *encapsulation* ("a coda that distances the reader from the story by altering the point of view or summarizing the passing of time" [12])

But, it should be emphasized, these are more often signals of closure operating on the level of *narrative* and do not guarantee *thematic* or *heuristic* closure. The late Per Winther (2004: 63) gives two good examples, from celebrated stories, where narrative closure does not entail thematic closure or resolution: at the end of Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener", the reader continues to ponder all the more why Bartleby declined to participate in life, beyond selective tasks of copying; and in Hemingway's "Hills like white elephants", the wait for the train comes to a 'natural' end, but really nothing concerning the proposed abortion or the couple's relationship has been resolved.

The distinct function and stylistic texture of HEI passages in stories

I will argue that one of the ways in which some (by no means all) modern and contemporary short stories differ from novels is in their inclusion of what I will call a High Emotional Involvement (HEI) passage. This HEI

passage is stylistically distinct, and its 'arresting' function reflects the possibility that it is a necessary feature of such stories (but not, of course, a sufficient one). In this large sub-group of modern short stories, crucial effects are achieved by the inclusion of such a passage of text, which may be epiphanic, or a turning-point, or involve some other shift to a level of greater reader attention. When such a HEI passage occurs, it tends to be close to the end of the text (for good narratological reason). More tentatively I suggest that HEI passages of this kind are common and characteristic of many short stories, but rare and exceptional in novels, thus a genre feature of (some) short stories.

HEI passages are distinctive in form as well as in function. On the basis of an array of linguistic criteria (density of negation, presence of projecting evaluative mental process verbs like *see, know* and *feel*; sentence-complexity; semi-grammaticality; temporal marking; absolute/extreme lexis; etc.) these passages differ texturally from the grammar/texture of the rest of the stories in which they arise. They appear to have their own local grammar, which helps to induce the reader to recognize them as the crucial passages they are. Below, I will attempt to show the relevance of ten identified linguistic markers of HEI-passage status, making reference to one story, "Boxes", by Raymond Carver (for discussions of HEI passages in other stories by Alice Munro and John McGahern, see Busse et al. 2010, Toolan 2011, 2012).

Why such an HEI passage is (arguably) necessary in some short stories relates to the very shortness of short fiction: the fact that it draws us into a 'contractual' relationship with a fairly elaborately projected text-world and its characters and their conditions of existence *even as* we very well know that this world, this pageant, will soon depart. Our reading of the very opening lines of a short story are shadowed by our awareness of its brevity, its proximate ending, in a way that is significantly different from our orientation as we embark on the reading of a novel. In the latter, we have minimal awareness or consideration of the ending, as we begin reading. Stories accordingly are end-shaped in ways that rarely apply to novels; in particular, they may draw the reader into at least one moment or passage of strongly-felt ethical and emotional insight, or challenge, or intensity, to warrant our attention to what might otherwise be dismissed as the story of an hour.

Reading to be moved

The brevity of the story as reading experience, and the possibility of writer control of 'the reader's soul' in Poe's terms, should facilitate and intense reading experience, of brief but intense immersion. On the other hand that same

brevity can prompt the reader to question whether their time and attention are being well spent, whether (in relevance-theoretic terms) the cognitive benefits they derive are truly commensurate with the costs incurred. This is where a late-sited HEI passage, more moving and thought-provoking than any earlier segment of the narrative, and also more thickly-textured stylistically, is logically and aesthetically warranted.

My first identifications of stylistically-rich, emotionally-involving passages were as a responding reader: I noticed, and believed that many other readers noticed, a sequence of three textual 'peaks' (the last being the most extreme) distributed through the text of McGahern's story "All Sorts of Impossible Things". I found, again as a reader, a similar near-final 'most moving' narrative moment or section in numerous other stories by modernists and contemporaries (Joyce, Mansfield, Carver, Munro, Beattie, Gallant, etc.). Some of these passages equate with what literary critics have long called 'epiphanies', but plenty do no; besides, while the idea of an ephiphany is centred on some moment of revelation (anagnorisis) experienced by an erstwhile purblind protagonist, the critical beneficiary in the HEI passages I was identifying was the reader. And my interest was and is in quite what effects such passages have on readers, and the degree to which a matrix of stylistic features is instrumental in those effects—to the point that, were the specific features removed (mental process projections, repetitions, negation, etc.), then the experiential effect would be dissipated.

So, to reiterate, my readerly impression of 'exceptional immersion' was what came first. But close behind came questions as to the kind of narrative passage or situation in which one might predict a reader would feel most moved or immersed. This seemed to me a non-trivial question, since it was easy enough to think of story passages that are not particularly immersive. I speculated that the kind of narrative passage in which we readers seem most likely to develop emotional engagement is one where a speaker or focalized character is presented (or is inferable), in a particularized imaginable situation, and we learn explicitly or implicitly what *they* feel strongly about (in the narrative present) or are moved by or emotionally engaged by. Turning to the linguistic 'reflexes' of the narrative presentation of a character's strong feelings, the most direct and unmetaphorised linguistic means of expressing such features seemed to me to include deictic expressions (especially temporal ones), volitive modality, evaluative mental verbs, and Free Indirect Thought. But to some extent I was guided by the text, rather than setting out to find just particular features in these HEI passages.

It was for that reason that initially I focussed on the verb *feel* (*felt*) and the derived nominal, *feeling*, particularly where these projected or were complemented by a full proposition. In the narrative (non direct speech) parts of all three high-emotion passages in the McGahern story, *feel, feeling, felt* were quite prominent with these functions. Here are just a few instances:

> 'Will you marry me or not? I want an answer one way or the other this evening.' He **felt** his whole life like a stone on the edge of a boat out on water.

> He wanted a haircut, and that night, as the teacher wrapped the towel round the instructor's neck and took the bright clippers out of their pale-green cardboard box, adjusting the combs, and started to clip, the black hair dribbling down on the towel, he **felt** for the first time ever a mad desire to remove his hat and stand bareheaded in the room, as if for the first time in years he **felt** himself in the presence of something sacred.

> As he petted her [the greyhound, named Coolcarra Queen] down, gripping her neck, bringing his own face down to hers, thinking how he had come by her, he **felt** the same rush of **feeling** as he had **felt** when he watched the locks of hair fall on to the towel round the neck in the room;

As a projecting predicate, *feel/felt* is interestingly more opaque, thus requiring more readerly effort of interpretation, than the standard discourse-projecting verbs *said* and *thought*. In the McGahern story we are told that the focalising character *felt a wild longing to…walk round the world bareheaded.* By contrast you cannot (grammatically) say a wild longing or think a wild longing; and the things that you *can* say or think come already interpreted, reduced to propositional form: e.g., *he said he wanted to walk round the world bareheaded, he thought he would walk round the world bareheaded.* Nevertheless *feel/felt,* which falls into semantic category X 2.1 ('thought, belief') in the Wmatrix array of semantic classifications, is only one of several simplest mental-verb cues of involving/immersing narration (others include metaphorical *see,* and *know*). More importantly, closer stylistic analysis of putatively HEI passages, in comparison with ambient text, has led to the identification of a number of stylistic features, a sampling of which seem to tend to co-occur, and intensively, in these narrative sections.

HEI (emotively immersive) passages tend to contain more of some of the following than the ambient text does:

1. Key projecting verbs are *know* and *see* and *feel* and *want* (or metaphorised equivalents of these: *come upon*, *reach*). But textual sites of emotion/immersion may not be marked by 'emotional' language alone; or … (*feel, desire, want…*).
2. Negation is widespread: *a lack of hope, no comfort, that wasn't what…*;
3. Sentence grammar is comparatively elaborate, complex; or sentences are longer; or use of nominal clauses and clefting is more prominent; mostly, the focalising character will be sentence Subject.

4. In part *because* sentences/clauses are longer, their internal rhythms tend to be more developed; and this in turn may make the passage feel (be) more poetic, with richer tonality or voicing than adjacent text.

5. Much more noticeably than elsewhere in the narration, standard sentence grammar may be departed from; sentences (e.g. lacking a Subject or finite main verb, or easily recoverable ellipsis relative to a previous sentence) may border on the ungrammatical.

6. More temporal simultaneity (marked by *As he did x, he felt y* structures, which typically combine report of a *physical* or external narrated event with report of a mental or internal event/reaction/insight; hence a double telling); more temporal staging, or multiply-coordinated processes or events…

7. Absolute/ultimate words: *everlasting*, *never, rock-bottom, deeper than she could ever have managed, on and on, all there was…final*

8. heat, light and dimension words are prominent: *cold, dark, deep, rock-bottom, inflammation.*

9. A higher density of lexical and structural repetition and para-repetition in HEI passages than elsewhere; kinds of para-repetition mean that there are noticeable possibilities of inter-substitutability of words, phrases, within the HEI. In effect, the passages are highly rhetorically crafted. The lexical repetitions (in HEI passages) may make links with lexis (thus situations) from earlier in the story, or they may be intra-HEI repetitions, or both. (This dense repetition has a **Focussing** and **Arresting** function, relative to the narrative progressing properties of most of the text; see Shklovsky for an early formulation of this idea.]

10. More likely to find Free Indirect Thought here than in the non-HEI co-text…

Alongside all of the above should come an acknowledgment that textual sites of emotion and immersion may not invariably be marked by these 'emotional' features, and the features are often highly metaphorised in their instantiation (come on for sensed/saw)

Space-limitations forbid an extensive demonstration here, but consider the following short passage, which I submit has the characteristic HEI function, and occurs just three paragraphs from the end of Raymond Carver's story "Boxes".

> I don't know why, but it's then I recall the affectionate name my dad used sometimes when he was talking nice to my mother—those times, that is, when he wasn't drunk. It was a long time ago, and I was a kid, but always, hearing it, I felt better, less afraid, more hopeful about the future. *"Dear,"* he'd say. He called her "dear" sometimes—a sweet name. "Dear," he'd say, "if you're going to the store, will you bring me some cigarettes?" Or "Dear, is your cold any better?" "Dear, where is my coffee cup?"
>
> The word issues from my lips before I can think what else I want to say to go along with it. "Dear." I say it again. I call her "dear." "Dear, try not to be afraid," I say. I tell my mother I love her and I'll write to her, yes. Then I say good-bye, and I hang up.

Clearly the most striking stylistic feature (an instance of type 9) is the repetition, eight times in five lines, of the word *dear*. And it is easy to show both that *dear* occurs more here than anywhere else in the text (since in fact it

occurs nowhere else in the story), and that no other lexical item occurs as densely, as locally-repetitively, as *dear* does. Once one strips out the high frequency grammatical items (*I, the, she, and*, etc.), the high frequency lexical items are not numerous (they include *mother, says, place, tell, want, house—* these latter with a story-wide frequency of 12) and their recurrence is always easily explained on story-topic grounds. More importantly, none of them clusters, collocates with itself, in just the way *dear* does. The nearest *house* comes to multiple local recurrence, for instance, is the fact that it occurs three times in the 9 lines of the final paragraphs.

But the repetition of *dear* is only one type of 'heightened texturing', and it is worth noting that several of the other types are also at work here, disproportionately relative to their appearance in the rest of the narrative text. Consider type 6, temporal staging and simultaneity. Here below I underline all the textual elements in the passage that arguably contribute to the kind of emphatic temporal particularity recurrently found in HEI passages:

> I don't know why, but <u>it's then</u> I recall the affectionate name my dad used <u>sometimes</u> <u>when</u> he was talking nice to my mother—<u>those times</u>, that is, <u>when</u> he wasn't drunk. It was <u>a long time ago</u>, and I was a kid, but <u>always</u>, hearing it, I felt better, less afraid, more hopeful about the future. *"Dear,"* he<u>'d</u> say. He called her "dear" <u>sometimes</u>—a sweet name. "Dear," he<u>'d</u> say, "if you're going to the store, will you bring me some cigarettes?" Or "Dear, is your cold any better?" "Dear, where is my coffee cup?"
>
> The word issues from my lips <u>before</u> I can think what else I want to say to go along with it. "Dear." I say it <u>again</u>. I call her "dear." "Dear, try not to be afraid," I say. I tell my mother I love her and I'll write to her, yes. <u>Then</u> I say good-bye, and I hang up.

It may be pointed out—and this is most palpable to anyone who has read the whole story—that this passage involves thematically an 'opening out', an recalled past and injunctions about the future ("try not to be afraid") and that therefore almost inescapably there may be more temporal marking in such a passage. But even this challenge can be accommodated if we speculate that it is in the nature of highly-immersive HEI passages to co-opt the reader into the seeing, beyond the narrative present, of characters' pasts and futures. Again a critical question is whether temporal marking is anywhere else in the story encoded in the density that is found here (approximately 12 markers in approximately 130 narrative words, or one every 11 words). This is less easy to demonstrate, since it is by no means easy to extract all and only those words in a text with 'temporal marking' function. But we can use Wmatrix's N6 category(frequency) to capture all the narrative (non direct speech) instances in the text of *always* 3*, sometimes* 4*, again* 7; and its N4 (linear order) tag to capture all 31 narrative instances of *then.* For these four temporal types, then, there are 45 narrative tokens in the entire text, or roughly one every 110 words

of running text; if the narrative portion of the story is estimated at 4,000 words, these 45 tokens should occur on average every 85 narrative words. Clearly, their density in the HEI passage is far, far greater than this (and of course in turn means that their frequency *outside* this passage is rather lower than so far indicated). Since always, sometimes, again and then occur a total of 6 times in these 130 words of narrative text (one per 22 words); the other 39 must occur in the remaining 2870 narrative words at a frequency of one per 74 words. This is all very laborious, agreed. But it perhaps helps to show that even less glaringly foregrounded features than the repeated *dear* are disproportionately densely deployed in the HEI passage. A further text manipulation to consider, of course, would concern the effect on the passage, *qua* emotive-immersive passage, if this density of temporal marking were quietly reduced.

To conclude: when contemplating what is different about short stories and by extension about short story style, word-length is our one certainty, with consequences. Short stories are mostly, and surely typically, read at one sitting. As a result, the reader who begins reading has in mind the completion of the reading in a way that the reader who embarks on a novel does not. A reader who has in mind the completion of the reading of a story will or may spread that completion-mindedness to their reading of the whole narrative. I suggest that the process of ending, of closure, of how the story will conclude, is—*throughout* the reading of a story—more strongly an influence on the reader than they are for someone reading a novel (where these questions or pressures only fully take hold as the final few dozen pages are reached). This extra focus, in the short story, on 'negotiating the end', of getting from middle to end, is purely a function of their brevity (in pages or reading time), one-sitting, integrated-compositional unity; but it feels different from such a purely physical/practical inducement. And the story as *genre* has developed effects, deviations, strategies, for working with and against that beginning-middle-end 'unity of effect' intensity that the story form favours. In Gerlach's words, "anticipation of the ending [is] used to structure the whole" (3). If we ask ourselves how, in the inescapable context of the long narrative (the novel or romance), it can be that a story can justify so soon coming to a halt, terminating its reporting of characters and situation, then for *some* stories, part of an answer may be: by providing an HEI 'moment', or episode, of exceptional emotional and intellectual insight.

References

BUSSE, B., D. MCINTYRE, N. NORGAARD, and M. TOOLAN. 2010. John McGahern's stylistic and narratological art." 15,000 word joint paper. *Lexis 5*. Special issue on lexicology and stylistics, 101-131. http://screcherche.univ-lyon3.fr/lexis/IMG/pdf/Lexis_5.pdf

GERLACH, John. 1985. *Toward the End: Closure and Structure in the American Short Story*. Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press.

LEECH, G. N. and M. H. SHORT. 1981. *Style in Fiction*. London: Longman.

POE, Edgar Allan. "*Twice-Told Tales*. By Nathaniel Hawthorne." In *The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, Vol. 11, edited by James A. Harrison, 104–13. New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell, 1902.

SHKLOVSKY, Victor. 1988 [1917]. Art as Technique. translated by Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis, in David Lodge, ed., *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader* (London: Longman), 16-30.

TOOLAN, Michael. 2011. The texture of emotionally-immersive passages in short stories: steps towards a tentative local grammar. In Proceedings (2011) of the 3rd International Stylistics Conference of the Chinese Association for Stylistics, held at Ningbo University, October 2010.

TOOLAN, Michael. 2012. Engagement via emotional heightening in "Passion": on the grammatical texture of emotionally-immersive passages in short fiction. *Narrative* 20:2, 210-225.

WINTHER, Per. 2004. Closure and Preclosure as Narrative Grid in Short Story Analysis: Some Methodological Suggestions. In *The Art of Brevity*, edited by Per Winteher, Jakob Lothe, and Hans H. Skei, Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 56–69.

READERLY INVOLVEMENT
IN THE FIRST CHAPTER OF EDNA O'BRIEN'S

THE COUNTRY GIRLS

Vanina Jobert-Martini
Université Jean Moulin – Lyon 3
ERIBIA GREI EA 2610

Résumé : En se fondant sur une étude stylistique du premier chapitre de *The Country Girls*, l'article s'attache à montrer comment s'établit la relation entre la narratrice et son lecteur. La focalisation interne et les adresses directes au lecteur permettent à celui-ci de se projeter dans le monde rural irlandais des années 50, cadre de l'enfance de la narratrice. Les apports de la stylistique cognitive sont utilisés pour mettre en évidence le jeu des inférences et le caractère prototypique des personnages ou des situations. La dernière partie de l'article s'intéresse aux questions touchant l'évaluation, c'est-à-dire les jugements portés par les personnages, mais aussi par la narratrice et son lecteur, l'ensemble débouchant sur la réception du roman par la critique.

Mots-clés: stylistique – narratologie – stylistique cognitive – focalisation – inférence – schèmes – évaluation – réception critique – O' Brien – féminisme – Irlande – réalisme.

Introduction

Edna O'Brien's first novel *The Country Girls* was published in 1960 and was followed by *The Lonely Girl* in 1962, and *Girls in their Married Bliss* in 1964. The three novels were republished in 1986 as *The Country Girls Trilogy and Epilogue*. The narrator and focaliser of the first two parts of the trilogy is Kate, but the perspective is reversed in the third part and in the epilogue since Baba, Kate's school-friend becomes the narrator. Byron (2006) quotes O' Brien writing about her choice to have two heroines:

> Realizing that the earlier heroines [of the tradition of Irish writing] were bawdy and the later ones lyrical I decided to have two, one who would conform to both my own and my country's view of what an Irish woman should be and one who would understand every piece of protocol and religion and hypocrisy that there was. (14)

My own experience as a reader who could not wait to know more about Kate and Baba led me to wonder about the ways and means O'Brien used to achieve stunningly efficient readerly involvement. In order to be able to stick to a close observation of the text, I restricted the scope of the article to the first chapter of the first novel. Probing into the text, I discovered that, predictably, everything concerning reader's involvement was settled from the very beginning. Broaching the subject of the interaction between writer and reader led me to ground the impressions I had from reading in the confrontation between my own experience and the fictional world. For that matter, cognitive stylistics proved a great help without replacing a more traditional text-based approach. I shall first focus on the relationship established between narrator and reader before looking at bottom up and top down processing (see Jeffries & McIntyre) and moving to the question of evaluation.

1. Establishing the relationship between narrator and reader

Edna O'Brien's first novel starts with the following sentence:

> I wakened quickly and sat up in bed abruptly. (1)

The awakening of the first-person narrator and main character is concomitant with the entrance of the reader into the fictional world. A link is thus established between narrator and reader from the very beginning. They are placed in the same situation, that of opening their eyes and discovering what is around them. The new day is a new (text-)world, to be explored and deciphered. Character and reader have to make sense of a situation and the puzzled character is very much akin to the reader entering the fictional world:

> It is only when I am anxious that I waken easily and for a minute I did not know why my heart was beating faster than usual. Then I remembered. The old reason. He had not come home. (1)

The use of the mental process verb *remember* gives access to the character's thoughts and is a clear sign of internal focalization. An intimate relationship between narrator and reader is thus quickly established, and the narrator seems to rush things since she does not provide any kind of explanation for who *he* is, which confuses the reader. The choice of the author may either reveal the narrator's carelessness or technique or even the character's embarrassment. Whatever the case may be, the reader is left to his

own devices and inferences and is driven to wonder about that male character who occupies the thoughts of the narrator.

There is a sharp contrast between the lack of information about this mysterious man and the wealth of details appearing in the description of the outside world when the blind is let up. Here the reader almost literally sees the world through the eyes of the narrator:

> The sun was not yet up, and the lawn was speckled with daisies that were fast asleep. There was dew everywhere. The grass below my window, the hedge around it, the rusty paling wire beyond that, and the big outer field were each touched with a delicate, wandering mist. And the leaves and the trees were bathed in the mist, and the trees looked unreal, like trees in a dream. Around the forget-me-nots that sprouted out of the hedge were haloes of water. Water that glistened like silver. It was quiet, it was perfectly still. There was smoke rising from the blue mountain in the distance. It would be a hot day. (2)

This very visual description conjures up a peaceful rural world with a dreamlike quality and reminds the reader of the title *The Country Girls*. It is followed by several others in the same vein, the repetition building up a sense of familiarity for the reader. The internal focalization prevails throughout the whole chapter as we follow the girl from the moment she wakes up to the moment she leaves the grounds of the house and reaches the road that takes her to school.

In spite of the prevailing internal focalization, there are clear signs that the narrator takes the specific situation of the reader into account, i.e acknowledges the fact that he/she is necessarily a stranger to her familiar world and therefore is in need of information. After mentioning Bull's-Eye, she specifies:

> He was our sheep-dog and I named him Bull's-Eye because his eyes were speckled black and white, like canned sweets. (2)

The narrator also provides basic information about Hickey:

> He was our workman and I loved him. (3)

Such sentences can be considered as direct addresses to the reader, which tends to increase his involvement in the story. The narrator takes one more step when writing about her mother:

> Her sighs would break your heart. (7)

Whether the possessive *your* is interpreted as part of a general statement or as a possible direct address to the reader, it encourages the reader to get emotionally involved and to share the feelings of the narrator for her beloved mother.

It is thus possible to gather quite a lot of textual evidence suggesting that the reader is invited to enter into a very close relationship with the narrator, and this is in keeping with the content of the novel i.e. the discussion of private matters. However, the reader's active participation is also required on another level, that of the construction of meaning.

2. Bottom up and top down processing

Cognitive linguistics insists on the role played by the reader's psychological activity in the advent of meaning. Lesley Jeffries and Dan McIntyre (2010, 127), in *Stylistics*, make a number of concepts coming from cognitive linguistics accessible and even appealing to even the most literary readers. They define bottom up and top down processes in the following way:

> Used in relation to text comprehension, the former [bottom up processes] refers to the practice of inferring meaning from textual cues while the latter term describes the practice of utilising background knowledge to aid understanding.

The elaboration of the fictional world which ultimately exists in the reader's mind depends on these processes, and I shall try to highlight the main characteristics of Edna O'Brien's fictional world as it appears in the first chapter of *The Country's Girls*.

Leech and Short (1981, 127-8) explain the role of inference as follows:

> The mock reality of fiction has its point of overlap with our model of the real world, and indeed it can be argued that readers will assume isomorphism between the two unless given indications to the contrary. The overlap is great in the case of realistic fiction, and smaller in the case of fantasy […] So from our knowledge of entities and goings-on in the real world, as well as from our knowledge acquired from the text, of the fictional world, we are able to postulate the nature of the fictional world, drawing inferences about matters not directly communicated by the text.

As a matter of fact, *The Country Girls* can be classified as a realistic novel and the reader is soon aware of a typically rural Irish context. Dublin is mentioned as early as first page as a place from which visitors are likely to come in the Summer time. The reader infers that the place described is situated in the same country as Dublin, otherwise the name of another country would have been mentioned. Belfast is also referred to as a place from which you can drive. Even if place names are a very efficient way of conjuring up a fictional world, writers usually also resort to other means since the aim is not so much to give unequivocal information to the reader but also to play with his imagination. The religious practice of the main character sounds unmistakably Irish and echoes passages form *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Referring to her love for Hickey, the narrator explains:

> To prove it I said it aloud to the Blessed Virgin who was looking at me icily from a guilt frame.
> 'I love Hickey', I said. She said nothing. It surprised me that she did not talk more often. Once she had spoken to me and what she said was very private. It happened when I got out of bed in the middle of the night to say an aspiration. I got out of bed six or seven times every night as an act of penance. I was afraid of hell. (3)

The reader infers that the girl has received a Catholic education and is a staunch believer. The veracity of this inference is confirmed later on when the girl states her wish to become a nun. This is not the only case in which the text triggers inference and then explicitly confirms that the reader has made a good guess. Poverty can likewise be inferred from the very first page when the narrator explains:

> I owned slippers but Mama made me save them for when I was visiting my aunts and cousins [...] (1)

The reader then learns that hundreds of bills are stuffed behind Doulton plates and that the place has gone to ruin as a result of the father's carelessness. In the same way, we infer that mother and daughter sleep in the same bed when we read:

> Getting out, I rested for a moment on the edge of the bed, smoothing the green satin bedspread with my hand. We had forgotten to fold it the previous night, Mama and me. (1)

The confirmation that mother and father do not sleep together is to be found later on:

> My father's room was directly opposite the bathroom. (4)

Prompting the reader to make inferences and then giving confirmation is a way of encouraging him to follow the narrator who thus appears reliable.

If inference relies on prior knowledge, it is also the case of top down processing which is to be linked with schemas. Lesley Jeffries and Dan McIntyre (2010, 128-9) give the following definition:

> The term schema refers to an element of background knowledge about a particular aspect of the world. We have schemas for people, objects, situations and events.

Since schemas belong in the reader's mind, they may vary a lot, and they cannot really be studied *per se*. Readers do not all have the same prior knowledge when they start reading a piece of fiction and this may account for various responses to the same novel. Some information cannot be processed without specific prior knowledge. The following sentence is a case in point:

> They called it a lawn because it had been a lawn in the old days when the big house was standing; but the Tans burnt the big house and my father, unlike his forebears, had no pride in land and gradually the place went to ruin. (11)

Such a passage is likely to remain obscure to readers who do not know anything about Irish history, and may have to look up *Tans* in the encyclopaedia in order to make sense of the sentence. On the contrary, for readers with a fairly good knowledge of Irish history, the passage will evoke specific traumatic episodes of the War of Independence that finally led up to the partition of the island in 1921. *Big house* may also be interpreted differently by readers, depending on whether they are aware of the Irish specificity or not. *Big house* may be construed literally as a house that is big or it may be connected with the phrase *the big house novel* and, in that case, some Irish literature scholars could have in mind a novel which focuses on the world of the Anglo-Irish ascendancy, a world whose territory and boundaries are traditionally conjugated in terms of the demesne and Country Mansion – or Big House – of the Protestant landlord.

The type of knowledge needed to make as much sense as possible of a piece of fiction can help define the kind of implied reader it is addressed to. In the case of *The Country Girls*, it seems obvious that the implied reader is bound to be well acquainted with contemporary Irish history and possibly with Irish literature. As a matter of fact, the schemas present in the reader's mind have to be triggered by textual elements in order to be activated. The textual cues are called "headers" and they fall into four categories: i) precondition headers, ii) instrumental headers, iii) locale headers and iv) internal conceptualization headers. The most obvious schema activated at the beginning of *The Country Girls* is that of the mother and daughter relationship. A precondition header, referring to a necessary precondition for the application of a schema[1], can be found in the sentence quoted previously:

> We had forgotten to fold it the previous night, Mama and me. (1)

The first person plural pronoun asserts the existence of the relationship, and the syntactical arrangement of the sentence places the two participants in a rhematic position, highlighting, or foregrounding the importance of the relationship. Locale headers i.e. references to a location where the schema in question can be activated, are numerous since the action is situated in the house inhabited by

---

[1]   Jeffries & McIntyre (2010) specify: "At this point, we should make it clear that while schema is a general term for an element of background knowledge, some writers prefer alternative terms in order to flag up the varied nature of schemas. Minsky (1975), for example uses the term frame to describe knowledge related to visual perception (e.g.background knowledge about different kinds of buildings). Schank and Abelson (1977) introduce the term script, explaining that scripts are composed of schematic information about a complex sequence of events."

the family and the different rooms and immediate surroundings are described at length. The kitchen deserves a particular mention since it is often associated with mothers in realistic novels, and it is also the room where family life is usually set. A rather sad picture is drawn in the first pages:

> Mama was sitting by the range, eating a piece of dry bread. Her blue eyes were small and sore. She hadn't slept. (4)

Internal conceptualization headers, referring to actions or roles from the schema are also very much present in the text, and attract the reader's attention. The mother first appears in the role of the educator teaching her daughter about various aspects of everyday life:

> It was lucky that Mama had gone downstairs, as she was always lecturing me on how to let up the blinds properly, gently. (1)

Not surprisingly, she also assumes the role of the nurturer, providing food for her child:

> 'Get yourself a little piece of cake and biscuits for your lunch,' Mama said. Mama spoilt me, always giving me little dainties. (7)

The mother appears as a carer who protects her daughter against everything that might cause her pain, either physically or psychologically. She insists that her daughter should wear a coat, gloves and a hat, so as not to catch a cold and promises to meet her on the road when she comes back from school.

The text is thus actually swarming with headers likely to activate the mother-daughter good relationship schema. Schemas are not only activated by what we read, they can also be altered –if what we read contradicts our prior knowledge – or confirmed, if what we read corresponds to our previous experience. What is most likely to alter the schema of the mother daughter relationship here is the revelation of the daughter's age. She behaves like a small child, entirely dependent on her mother and yet we learn that she is fourteen and still afraid that her mother might die while she is at school. In spite of their close relationship, mother and daughter grieve and cry because of the father's inability to cope with everyday life and to attend to the needs of the family.

3. The question of evaluation

The narrator uses a value language which leaves no doubt about her likes and dislikes. The descriptions of the landscape are extremely positive:

> It was crowded with briars and young ferns and stalks of ragwort, and needle-sharp thistles. Under these the ground was speckled with millions of **little** wild-flowers. Little

drizzles of blue and white and violet – **little white songs spilling out of the earth**. How secret and **precious** and **beautiful** they were. (11)

The adjectives chosen are both unsophisticated and unmistakably positive, and the musical metaphor gives the passage a poetic touch. In another passage, the narrator expresses her love of nature even more clearly:

I came out to get the lilac. Standing on the stone steps to look across the fields **I felt as I always did, that rush of pleasure and freedom** when I looked at the various trees and the outer stone buildings set far away from the house, and at the fields very green and very peaceful. (7)

The beautiful nature contrasts with the derelict house which is neither clean, nor pleasant and of which the girl is ashamed when her school-friend, Baba, comes to visit.

The narrator's evaluation extends to people, whom she either loves or loathes. The only person for whom she has ambivalent feelings is Hickey whom she had planned to marry when she was eight years old. She gives all the reasons that made her change her mind:

For one thing, he never washed himself […] His teeth were green, and last thing at night he did his water in a peach-tin that he kept under his bed. (3)

The humour that shows in this negative evaluation of a likable person is completely absent when the narrator passes judgment on her parents. The father receives an entirely negative evaluation on two different levels, that of facts and that of feelings. He is accused of not doing any work and spending money on drinks instead of caring for the family. The use of free indirect thought indicates that the narrator and her mother are of the same opinion about him:

She was thinking. Thinking where was he? Would he come in an ambulance or a hackney car, hired in Belfast three days ago and not paid for? Would he stumble up the stone steps at the back door waving a bottle of whiskey? Would he shout, struggle, kill her or apologise? Would he fall in the hall door with some drunken fool and say: 'Mother, meet my best friend Harry. I've just given him the thirteen-acre meadow for the loveliest greyhound…' All this had happened to us so many times that it was foolish to expect that my father might come home sober. He had gone, three days before, with sixty pounds in his pocket to pay the rates. (6)

When confronted with this, readers cannot but share the view of the feminine characters and condemn the father for wrong behaviour. This condemnation is based on shared values that do exist between writer and reader, irrespective of differences in age, nationality, social classes, sex etc…

Not surprisingly, the daughter's feelings towards her father are entirely negative. He inspires fear and causes wretchedness. The main character is

"anxious", the smell of frying bacon "does not cheer her", she is "miserable" and panic-stricken at the idea of his coming back home:

> In fear and trembling I set off for school. I might meet him on the way or else he might come home and kill Mama. (9)

The exact opposite of the hated father is the mother:

> She was dragged down from heavy work, working to keep the place going, and at night time making lampshades and fire-screens to make the house prettier. (8)

> It was only for the few weeks immediately after his drinking that she could relax, before it was time to worry again about the next bout. (11)

Her daughter's love for her is expressed without reservations:

> I went over and put my arms round her neck and kissed her. She was the best Mama in the world. I told her so, and she held me very close for a minute, as if she would never let me go. I was everything in the world to her, everything. (5)

It is possible to argue that such extreme feelings and their raw expression are characteristic of young children and that the narrator's phrases are mimetic of the way in which the child used to experience emotion. However, it can also be argued, following Leech and Short (1981) that:

> In some novels with a first person hero, there is little need to distinguish the values of the first person character, the narrator, the implied author, and the real author, they all take the same attitude. (276)

In the case of *The Country Girls*, the dedication *To my mother* makes us opt for the latter interpretation. The authorial tone is intimate since what prevails is proximity both between narrator and reader and between the author and her subject matter. It is this proximity which induces sympathy for the feminine characters.

However, reader-response was not entirely favourable to Edna O' Brien's novel. Her works were banned by the Irish censorship board and some literary critics were quite harsh with her. The censorship board was aware of the fact that the author's fiction reached far beyond the portrayal of individual characters. The violence of their reaction shows that they considered that the characters depicted were somehow prototypical and that the novelist threatened the established order. They realized that what was at stake was the exposure of the patriarchal society in which the Catholic Church and the state played crucial roles. In *Wild Colonial Girl* (2006) Coletta and O'Connor remark:

> When writing explicitly about Ireland, as she did in her first novels and has resumed to do in her latest work, O'Brien depicts the constricted, hardscrabble life of the villages and farms of the west. Anthropologist Nancy Sheper-Hughes has observed as recently as

> 1979 that "although all societies are characterized by sexual asymmetry to some extent, one would be hard put to find a society in which the sexes are as divided into opposing alien camps as they are in any small Irish village of the west." (6)

As for the feminists, they reproached Edna O'Brien with representing women as victims, which was something they wanted to do away with. Still in *Wild Colonial Girls* Kristine Byron (2006, 22) reassesses O'Brien's trilogy and quotes Lynn Pierce:

> The recognition also depends on the conflation of the textual with the extratextual – in this case the woman reader's knowledge of the workings of patriarchy, both inside and outside the particular fictional narrative—that enable her to grasp the full connotations of the speaker's 'you'... The textual and the extratextual become indeed a shared territory.

There is no reason why it should not work in the same way for the male reader, provided his ideology does not prevent him from sustaining O'Brien's claims about the Irish patriarchal society.

As is often the case, the main function of the first chapter of *The Country Girls* is to let the reader into the fictional world. The narrator and main character, who is not named yet and whose gender we guess from the title makes us discover her rural Irish environment and the people she lives with. More originally, we are invited to share her feelings and emotions, which leads us to sympathize with the feminine characters who are clearly the victims of an oppressive patriarchal order. Although we might receive this exposition differently, depending on our age, nationality, cultural background or ideology, it seems difficult to disagree with the narrator. Leech and Short (1981) suggest:

> It may be that the assumption of agreement between addresser and addressee is one of the features which distinguishes fictional discourse from other kinds of discourses. It is not that the reader cannot disagree with the values portrayed by the author, but that if he is made conscious of disagreement, this is a sign of the author's failure to carry the reader with him: like suspension of disbelief, suspension of dissent seems to be a sacrifice which the reader is ready to accept in embarking on the adventure of reading a novel. (277)

Bibliography

O' BRIEN, Edna, 1960. *The Country Girls*, London, Phoenix.

JOYCE, James, 2000. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

COLETTA, Lisa and O'CONNOR, Maureen, 2006. *Wild Colonial Girl*, Madison, The University of Wisconsin Press.

GREENWOOD, Amanda, 2003. *Edna O'Brien*, Horndon,Tavistock, Devon , Northcote House Publishers Ltd.

LAING, Kathryn, Mooney, Sinead and O'Connor, Maureen, 2006. *Edna O'Brien, New Critical Perspectives*, Dublin, Carysfort Press.

JEFFRIES, Lesly and McINTYRE, Dan, 2010. *Stylistics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

LEECH, Geoffrey and SHORT Michael,1981. *Style in Fiction*, London, Longman.

BREACH OF CONTRACT:
PRAGMATIC VARIATIONS ON A THEME IN RICHARD FORD'S SHORT STORY "PRIVACY"

Marie-Agnès Gay
Université Jean Moulin – Lyon 3
IETT EA 4186

Résumé : Tout en ayant recours à divers outils pragmatiques, l'article emprunte principalement à la théorie de William Labov sur les six étapes de tout récit oral afin d'analyser les ressorts trompeurs de la narration dans « Privacy » de Richard Ford. Cette courte nouvelle à la narration homodiégétique permet, par sa longueur et son mode narratif, d'évidents prolongements avec un récit oral. L'article scrute la façon dont le texte fait mine de suivre à la lettre la structure classique d'un récit pour mieux la subvertir, le texte rejouant ainsi dans sa forme, et plus particulièrement au niveau de la relation narrateur/narrataire, son motif thématique principal qui est celui du leurre et de la tromperie. Au-delà, il démontre que le jeu avec le narrataire et la violation des règles de communication masquent, paradoxalement, une tentative plus radicalement solipsiste d'auto-aveuglement de la part du narrateur.

Mots-clés: Pragmatique, Stylistique, Analyse du Discours, Relation narrateur / narrataire, William Labov, Richard Ford, *A Multitude of Sins*

Laws, rules, contract clauses sometimes seem to exist the better to be circumvented, flouted, or downright violated. Richard Ford's collection of short stories in which "Privacy" appears is entitled *A Multitude of Sins*: the book obviously promises to explore man's endless transgressions of divine law, and the decalogue – God's commandments to his people as part of his Covenant – proves an undeniable filigree to the collection. However, reminding us that authors often revel in breaking the implicit contract that binds them to

their readers, the title proves deceitful. Most of the stories repeatedly return to the transgression of one specific commandment, the seventh – "Thou shalt not commit adultery" – and therefore deal with one sin from a multitude of perspectives.

"Privacy", the opening story, explores the moment of temptation as opposed to the sinful act itself: the homodiegetic narrator relates a period in his marital life when he fell to watching a naked woman in an apartment opposite his, feeling secretly aroused by the illicitness of the situation. What the short story stages is a voyeuristic impulse, and as such it might seem more closely related to the tenth commandment ("Thou shalt not covet your neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's"), all the more so as the basic setting – a man watching his female neighbour – adds to the potential link. But in the general context of the collection and in accordance with its position at the threshold of the book, "Privacy" strikes one, first and foremost, as an inchoate version of the later stories: the main character – the narrated-I – remains on the brink of adultery.

The narrating-I, however, goes further: resorting to systematic narrative deception, he turns into a full-fledged figure of transgression, and his deviant relation with his narratee proves central to the story. Because pragmatics focuses on "the relation between language and its users (speakers and hearers), or more specifically [on] the contextual conditions governing the speaker's choice of an utterance, and the hearer's interpretation of it" (Leech and Short, 254), and can offer "a natural continuity between 'rhetoric' in its ordinary language sense, and as applied to literature" (*Ibid.*), it provides an efficient point of entry into Ford's text. Besides using theories of presupposition and Paul Grice's principle of cooperation, this article will draw primarily on William Labov's famous socio-linguistic approach to oral narratives, in an attempt at close stylistic scrutiny of Ford's short story with a view to interpretation. Indeed, scrutinizing the way the narrator of "Privacy" both strictly abides by and systematically violates the six stages of story-telling as defined by Labov in his seminal 1972 essay "The Transformation of Experience in Narrative Syntax" will enable us to show how the diegetic theme of interpersonal deceit finds a prolongation in the narrator-narratee relationship and affects the very form of the short story. More than this, we will contend that this reading of the text is but a first stage, and that the narrator's flouting of communicative rules eventually masks a more radical attempt at self-deception. Paradoxically, stylistics envisaged as discourse analysis will thus prove here an efficient key to try and crack open the essentially solipsistic narrative code of the short story.

In the footsteps of William Labov

William Labov's name is first and foremost associated with his work on oral narratives made by ordinary people, work whose influence has extended beyond the field of sociolinguistics and of which Michael Toolan gives an extensive account in his 2001 book *Narrative: A Critical Linguistic Introduction*. In "The transformation of experience in narrative syntax", Labov synthesizes his findings upon analyzing oral tales told by black people in Harlem, and develops his hypothesis – already defended in a previous piece of work co-written with Joshua Waletsky five years earlier ("Narrative analysis: oral versions of personal experience") – that a recurrent pattern underlies oral narratives of personal experience. Casting aside surface differences in the pursuit of a deeper and invariant common structure, Labov posits that "a fully-formed oral narrative", and therefore a pragmatically successful narrative, follows six stages which he theorizes as follows:

1. *Abstract*: What, in a nutshell, is this story about?
2. *Orientation*: Who, when, where?
3. *Complicating action*: What happened and then what happened?
4. *Evaluation*: So what? How or why is this interesting?
5. *Result or resolution*: What finally happened?
6. *Coda*: That's it, I've finished and am 'bridging' back to our present situation.
    (Toolan 2001, 148)

As Toolan reminds us (2001, 167), "The extent to which the Labovian six-part formalist analysis of the oral narrative of personal experience applies or is relevant to literary narratives has […] become a matter of some contention", and he adds: "narratologists have differed over the usefulness to narrative poetics of the Labovian approach." (2001, 169) However, Labov's terminology has been adopted by literary criticism, and there is no denying that a number of similarities exist between oral tales and literary discourse, in particular when the literary text under scrutiny is a short story. Because "Privacy" is what we might call a short short story (five pages), not unlike the standard span of an oral narrative, and because it is told by a first-person narrator retrospectively relating a personal experience, the possible continuity between Labov's analyses and a narratological approach to Ford's piece of literary fiction seems hardly debatable.

And indeed, "Privacy" offers a case-in-point illustration of the invariable six-part structure posited by Labov. In the wake of a fairly transparent **abstract**, the title which indeed points to the central theme of the story in its multiple dimensions (one's right to privacy, marital intimacy, and even the more remote dimension of secrecy), the narrator opens his narrative with an informational introduction:

> This was at a time when my marriage was still happy.
>
> We were living in a large city in the northeast. It was winter. February. The coldest month. I was, of course still trying to write, and my wife was working as a translator for a small publishing company that specialized in Czech scientific papers. We had been married for ten years and were still enjoying that strange, exhilarating illusion that we had survived the worst of life's hardships.
>
> The apartment we rented was in the old factory section on the south end of the city […]. […] A famous avant-garde theatre director had lived in the room before and put on his jagged, nihilistic plays there […].
>
> Each night when my wife came back from her work, we would go out into the cold, shining streets and find a restaurant to have our meal in. Later we would stop for an hour in a bar and have coffee or a brandy, and talk intensely about the translations my wife was working on, though never (blessedly) about the work I was by then already failing at. (3-4)

Far from opting for an *in medias res* beginning, an exceptional form turned norm in contemporary fiction, the narrator here chooses to provide his reader with step-by-step background **orientation**, and adopts all the basic markers of expositional discourse: besides the use of existential structures, the opening lines are made up of what Labov and Waletsky, in their 1967 paper, term "free clauses": unlike "narrative clauses", which report an ordered sequence of events and are therefore fixed, "free clauses" – which inform of the context of the events – are freely shiftable (Toolan 2001, 145-149), something that the paratactic mode of the story's second paragraph seems to invite us to do. Aspectual modulations, a common feature of free clauses according to Labov and Waletsky, are another characteristic of this opening, both through the logical presence of the perfective aspect (analeptic information proving necessary) and the use of progressive forms. The fourth paragraph adds another staple of orientation: as the sentences turn more narrative, listing a succession of actions, habitual modality surfaces (recurrence of "would"), confirming the expositional perspective adopted by the narrator. To quote from another source, Helmut Bonheim's *The Narrative Modes: Techniques of the Short Story* (107) – a book whose developments regularly intersect with Labov's approach –, "Privacy" perfectly illustrates that "[t]he kinds of report that tend to be expositional – the anterior view, the habitual action and the panoramic scene – are birds of a feather which have a tendency to flock together."

Singulative discourse abruptly – but expectedly – returns at the moment of the **complicating action**: "It was on such a cold night that […] I saw […] a woman slowly undressing." (4) **Evaluation**, the most diffuse of Labov's stages since it consists in all the means used to underline the significance of the story and can therefore be located anywhere in it or spread out through it, is easily locatable in "Privacy". It makes up a self-contained paragraph just after the complicating action:

> I don't know all that I thought. Undoubtedly I was aroused. Undoubtedly I was thrilled by the secrecy of watching out of the dark. Undoubtedly I loved the very illicitness of it, of my wife sleeping nearby and knowing nothing of what I was doing. It is also possible I even liked the cold as it surrounded me, as complete as the night itself, may even have felt that the sight of the woman—whom I took to be young and lacking caution or discretion—held me somehow, insulated me and made the world stop and be perfectly expressible as two poles connected by my line of vision. I am sure now that all of this had to do with my impending failures. (5)

As is classically the case, evaluation contributes to the creation of suspense insofar as it delays the unfolding of the action. However, the thread of the plot is soon picked up and eventually, after a series of developments, comes the **resolution**: passing her one day on the street, the narrator discovers that the woman he had for seven nights observed, and desired, is an old Chinese woman, perhaps seventy years old or more. The short story then closes with a sentence which has many of the attributes of a **coda**: "And I walked on then, feeling oddly but in no way surprisingly betrayed, simply passed on down the street toward my room and my own doors, my life entering, as it was at that moment, its first, long cycle of necessity." (7) Even though it does not contain the usual shift in deixis which explicitly bridges back to the narrator's current situation at the moment of the telling, the final words do orient the temporal perspective forward and indirectly comprise the narrator's present. The tonality of general life assessment is redolent of fictional endings, and the sense of closure has been immediately conveyed through the opening conjunction "And". Indeed, although a linguistic deviation as such, the final sentence with *and* has become a classical feature of narratives, both oral and written: Helmut Bonheim (152) reminds us that "in Labov and Waletsky's transcriptions of oral narratives, twelve out of fourteen include as one of the final sentences a beginning with *and*", and he goes on to conclude: "In other words, the *and*-sentence is part and parcel of a set of conventions used in story closings."

Of course, one cannot but think here of the traditional "And they lived happily ever after" of fairy tales, a point which deserves further comment in the case of "Privacy". Such a formal echo had already been anticipated in the opening sentence of the short story ("This was at a time when my marriage was still happy"), an intertextually-marked formula. And on the diegetic plane, the long final paragraph brings another obvious allusion to this genre: the protagonist's walk in the city (in sharp contrast with the action in previous pages which takes place entirely within the apartment), his having to face adverse weather conditions, his confrontation with the woman and his eventual return – a changed man – to the apartment, call to mind the motif of the initiatory journey. It is therefore logical that the story should be such a tightly-structured narrative, in keeping with the ritualistic pattern of fairy tales.

Red-herrings

In "Privacy" however, in a clear reversal of the genre, the Princess turns into a toad and an initially happy protagonist inexorably heads to his marital ruin. As is so often the case in postmodern literature, intertextual allusions or formal borrowings are in the service of displacement and deconstruction, although not to the point of parody in Ford's story. And it is therefore time at this point to retrace our steps, and to unstitch our neat Labovian threads; indeed, the tight structural pattern that the story offers to the reader is systematically undermined in the very movement of its being set. As pointed out at the very beginning, rules seem to call for their violation, and the pragmatic commandments governing linguistic communication (the six principles of Labov, the four maxims of Grice…) are regularly contested by speakers in everyday life and by fictional narrators in literary texts, the deviant forms in their turn often becoming the norm (*in medias res* openings or open endings for instance). However, there definitely is more to it in "Privacy", as the blurring of narrative progression is methodical and concerns all six stages. The meticulous sapping of the successive foundation points becomes an integral part of the text, and is therefore bound to carry part of its meaning. Analytical description coming before interpretation, let us review how each specific stage in the narrator's story-telling gives way to a contradictory logic to that underlined so far.

A more exact title for the short story would probably have been "Breach of Privacy"; yet, the choice of the single term as such does not strike one as being inadequate since it simply seems meant to leave more interpretative space to the reader. It is in fact a remark, made in passing in the third paragraph, which really alerts the reader to the deceitful nature of this choice:

> Our bed—my wife's and mine—was in one dark corner where we'd arranged some of the tall, black-canvas scenery drops for our privacy. Though, of course, there was no one for us to need privacy from. (3)

Respect for or breach of privacy is not even a matter for debate as it is the concept itself which is made to sound radically unsuitable and is casually done away with, this being achieved, in a further paradox, by putting the word into relief through the principle of end-focus. As for the concessional final sentence, it too relies on deviation as one senses that the lack of need for privacy is not linked to the absence of people liable to break it, but to non-existent marital intimacy, as suggested by the narrator's strange need for reformulation: "Our bed—my wife's and mine—[…]".

This brings us back to the very beginning. "This was at a time when my marriage was still happy": the narrator's attentiveness seemingly goes as far as supplying us with a proleptic synthesis of the fairly long passage that functions

as orientation. However, well before the disturbing allusion to the marital bed, as soon as line 2 in fact, the reader understands that the incipit, isolated by paragraphing, is indeed disconnected from what follows (see the extended quotation of the opening passage in the first part above). The halting rhythm of line 2 which contradicts the fluidity of the punctuation-free opening sentence, the negative symbolism of winter, negative lexical presupposition in "I was, of course, still trying to write" which suggests not only failure but durable failure, and the final words of the paragraph which pull the analeptic fragment in a somewhat opposite direction from that initiated in the incipit ("still happy" suggests that happiness has been enjoyed for some time whereas we learn that the couple are recovering from hardships)… : everything indeed runs counter to the narrator's initial statement. Finally another, more subtle detail contributes to the undermining process: what is the need of such an expositional passage if most of the facts carefully expounded are supposedly obvious: "of course" is repeated twice (paragraphs 2 and 3) and taken up in the even more striking – because obviously reflexive about the narrator's linguistic activity – expression "needless to say" at the beginning of paragraph 5: "Our wish, needless to say, was to stay out of the apartment as long as we could." (4)

Paragraph 6, too, relies on narrative perversion with its false start, or fake instantiation of a complicating action: "And so it happened that …", which actually introduces more iterative and expositional narration: "And so it happenend that on many nights that winter, in the cold, large, nearly empty room, I would be awake […]. And often I would walk the floor from window to window […]" (4). At this stage, the story gives the impression of heading nowhere, indeed matching the sterile back-and-forth movement of the protagonist. The true complicating action, however, comes in the next paragraph:

> It was on such a cold night that—through the windows at the back of the flat, windows giving first onto an alley below, then farther across a space where a wire factory had been demolished, providing a view of buildings on the street parallel to ours—I saw, inside a long, yellow-lit apartment, the figure of a woman slowly undressing, from all appearances oblivious to the world outside the window glass. (4)

Not only does the complicating action, which is meant to move the plot forward, prove physically static in the diegesis (it is an act of perception), it is textually so also, as the narration of the turning point is interrupted twice: first frozen as it were by a long parenthetical passage – parenthetical both in terms of punctuation (dashes) and syntax with the embedding of prepositional phrases and non-finite clauses – and then delayed by the postponing of the object of the finite verb ("I saw, inside […], the figure of a woman undressing.") The analeptic fragment within the parentheses and its repeated use of a non-finite ing-form blur the status of the paragraph, otherwise made of a central "narrative clause" characterized by a simple past tense (Toolan 2001, 148). The

precision in the next paragraph "Because of the distance, I could not see her well or at all clearly", which calls into question the very complicating action itself, thus simply brings to symbolic completion the careful linguistic process of deconstruction.

As mentioned before, the unfolding of the plot is soon delayed by an entire paragraph devoted to evaluation (paragraph 10 page 5, quoted in full in part one). Assessing in a seemingly classic way his personal involvement in the story, the narrator once again produces self-deconstructive discourse as those lines, supposed to sustain the tellability and the significance of the story, become the locus of uncertainty and suspect interpretation. The anaphoric emphasis on the adverb "undoubtedly" ultimately leading to the use of the stronger marker of certitude "I am sure" cannot suffice to offset the initial "I don't know" and the regressive movement on the epistemic scale which lies at the core of the paragraph: "Undoubtedly […] It is also possible […] I may even have felt […]". Furthermore, the improbable reading of the diegetic situation by the narrator: "the sight of the woman […] held me somehow, insulated me and made the world stop and be perfectly expressible as two poles connected by my line of vision" (with the awkwardness of the wording "it made the world […] be" which contradicts the claim to flawless expression "perfectly expressible") and the vague and allusive nature of the concluding line ("I am sure now that all of this had to do with my impending failures") run counter to the very purpose of evaluation, i.e. one of clarification.

"Narrative-paragraph-initial sentences are a signal of narrativity", Michael Toolan reminds us in his more recent book *Narrative Progression in the Short Story: A corpus stylistic approach* (2009, 126). Yet the next paragraph aporetically opens as follows: "Nothing more happened" (5), and the negation of all further development is symmetrically echoed at the far end of the paragraph: "It was all arousal and secrecy and illicitness and really nothing else." (6) However, the crucial twist in the plot is yet to come, namely the protagonist's decision to leave his flat one day (giving rise to a long passage characterized by a multitude of verbs of movement that also set the story into *narrative* motion) and his passing the woman at close quarters on the street, which soon leads to what, in terms of sheer plotting, appears as minimal resolution: the discovery of the woman's old age and ethnicity (and therefore, we infer from the narrator's point of view, her profound alienness). Then surprisingly, and *in extremis* as it were, the narrative suggests the possibility of a criminal turn to the plot, a belated complicating action which is immediately dropped:

> I might suddenly have felt the urge to harm her, and easily could've. But of course that was not my thought. She turned back to the door and seemed to hurry the key into the lock. (7)

So by the time they reach the coda, the seasoned reader probably expects nothing but fake closure, which they are indeed given (see the full quotation in part one above). The symbolic shutting of a door, a staple of closed endings according to Bonheim (119, 139), is here displaced onto the secondary character, while it is movement which is foregrounded as regards the hero, the non-finite -ing form "my life entering" seemingly condemning him to endless wandering, indeed an aporetic form of imprisonment and therefore of closure. Lasting imbalance is created through the presence of contradictory elements: "as it was at that moment" jars with "its first, long cycle of necessity" and "oddly" contradicts not only "but in no way surprisingly" but also the adverb "simply". Nothing is indeed simple as the story closes, and the expression "its first, long cycle of necessity", not unduly complex as such, is anything but clear and remains partially irrecoverable for the reader.

The path of interpretation

Bonheim (157) contends:

> To grasp the ending of a story as totally open, the reader would have to see it as a blind alley or an excrescence, a useless extension outside the narrative economy; in other words, artistically inferior. No writer will want to write such an ending, at least, not deliberately […].
> [… The] critic who claims to have found a genuinely open ending is in effect confessing his inability to interpret it. […].

We are ready to confess here our inability to interpret Ford's open ending with certainty, yet we are certain that it is indeed the fruit of a deliberate strategy on the author's part, in keeping with the type of narrative discourse he has his first-person narrator develop, and that it thus makes up an integral part of the meaning of the story. And though no self-enclosed signification is waiting there in a text for the critic merely to crack open, stylistic scrutiny can help us on the asymptotic quest for meaning and interpretation: one personal – subjective and incomplete – response borne out by linguistic facts.

The above analyses have left undiscussed many aspects of the text; yet, to quote Geoffrey Leech (297): "This unavoidable selection is also part of what makes stylistics an interpretative enterprise rather than a mechanistic or purely descriptive approach." Our analyses orient interpretation in three directions. First, the obvious discrepancy between the surface structure of the narrative, offered as bait to the reader, and the more complex reality of the text is but a device of indirect characterization, bringing textual confirmation of the protagonist's deceitful nature. Under cover of attentive guidance, which entails his being scrupulously respectful of Grice's maxims of manner and quantity notably, the narrator actually cheats on us while perhaps trying to lull our

critical faculties to sleep. The second and reverse – yet concurrent – interpretation is that such emphasis on textual deceit mimes for us the deception *undergone* by the narrator: the text flags a warning about the danger of deceptive appearances, those of which the narrator is also a victim: the woman is not the attractive young female, offered to his captive gaze, that he took her to be, just as the text, with all its red-herrings, is not the neat and smooth construct offered to our passive consumption that it may seem on a first reading.

However, the "ideal" reader is very unlikely to fall prey to the text's deceitfulness as the signs of duplicity abound and sometimes seem excessive. And therefore, isn't the only individual unable to see *through* the text the narrator himself, blinded as he is by the proximity of his own painful experience? This sends us on a third interpretative track, that of self-deception which, after all, prolongs what the story suggests on a diegetic plane: the protagonist may well have wilfully blinded himself to the reality of the scene under his eyes at the time of the story, as a casual passing remark alerts us: "the woman—whom I took to be young" (5). During the voyeuristic episode, none of the terms used to depict the woman indicates her age; her described thinness and fragility ("a petite woman in every sense") might be those of someone in old age, and there are numerous markers of hedging epistemic modality in the passages where she is described. When looked at carefully, the main description which is given of her at the bottom of page 5 could apply to the body of an old woman[1]. This forces us back to our first two interpretations: the text's formal deceitfulness perhaps indeed functions as bait, but not only to betray the narrator's deceitful nature; it could well be meant to act as a decoy with a view to manipulating the reader's perspective: while dissociating themself from the clearly fake appearances of the text, the reader is probably more likely to adopt the narrator's faulty – yet all the time ambiguous – point of view of the woman, and thus to experience surprise at the end, their faculties having been mobilized in a different direction. This in turn means that the reader's potential pride at not letting themself be deceived by false appearances (those of narrative structure) in the end suffers a rebuff.

However, we have not exhausted the question of the protagonist's self-deception and its relationship to the form of the text. Delusion is not only that of the narrated-I, a character in the story, about a woman turned pure fantasy, but first and foremost perhaps that of the narrating-I. It remains to be seen how his story, and more specifically the very narrative act that produces it, also proves but solipsistic instrument of self-delusion. The self-deceptive narrative process functions on three levels, and pragmatics will again be our point of entry into the text.

---

[1]   This argument is notably developed by Florian Treguer (2008, 211-212).

First the incipit, with its two-fold play on presupposition, seems to betray the narrator's inability to face the failure of his marriage. Indeed the indirect reference, via presupposition, to the subsequent failure of the marriage ("This was at a time when my marriage was still happy" presupposes that the marriage ceased to be happy) not only allows for a more dramatic opening that engages the reader's participation; it also permits the narrator to avoid pronouncing more painful words, and therefore to avoid reality, an idea which the second effect of presupposition, anchored in the cleft structure, confirms. Indeed, "This was at a time when" presupposes the truth of the clausal complement "my marriage was happy"; however, as has already been shown, this view is immediately contradicted by the next lines that give a bleak picture of the couple. The narrator thus foregrounds, but for his own sake it seems, a blatant falsehood that shields him from personal suffering, the unsettling truth however surfacing in the Freudian slip "my marriage" (where "our marriage" would have seemed more logical).

The second object of self-delusion is the narrator's own true self. Building up a story around his voyeuristic impulse gradually appears as a possible way for the narrator to deny a more disturbing fact: that of his potentially violent nature. Because they violate Grice's maxim of quantity, the narrator's repeated negations ("Nothing more happened" – p.5, "There was nothing else" – p.6, "For no particular reason" – p.6) grow suspect, and when one more denial arises at the very end: "I might have felt the urge to harm her, and easily could've. But of course that was not in my thought" (p.7), the possibility dismissed instead looms large in the reader's mind despite the contracted form "could've", a typographical attempt to minimize the risk. One knows the force of what Gerald Prince calls the "disnarrated", i.e. "terms, phrases and passages that consider what did not or does not take place" (Toolan 2009, 148); as underlined by many critics, "the negatives in fact create what they negate"[2]. The last but one sentence, in its weird wording, could not be more telling: "I didn't want her to think my mind contained what it did and also what it did not" (7). The carefully-suppressed truth of the character lies hidden in the text, behind the words or between the lines, waiting to spring to the reader's attention, the reader to whom it falls to release the unsaid of the text[3].

---

[2] The quotation is from Nina Nørgaard (Toolan 2009, 148), but one also thinks of cognitive linguist George Lakoff's famous 2004 study *Don't Think of an Elephant: Know Your Values and Frame the Debate*.

[3] The reader probably infers that some part of the narrator did feel an urge to harm or crush this ageing, sexually undesirable woman, who has humiliatingly aroused his ludicrous desires. They also come to understand that he probably sees himself, or his semblable, his secret sharer, in the old Chinese woman, who seems as cold, solitary and uncommunicative as himself, an interpretation borne out by the multiplication of contracted forms at the end – "must've been" or "could've" – which might betray the

Last, and perhaps most central of all, it can be argued that the narrator probably writes up this carefully-built story to keep at bay an inexorable sense of emptiness and, beyond, of overwhelming meaninglessness. The discrepancy between the wilful transparency of form and the ultimate opacity of the story (Gay, 211-214) is indeed arresting. It is our final contention that the justification for this strange story is in its very forced form, which draws attention to the act of telling itself and the need to create something – be it a fake construct – in order to fill an insufferable void[4]. Abiding by the six stages of narrative progression gives the narrator a deluding sense of going somewhere, a fantasy that the story endlessly contradicts[5]; at the same time, underlining the contours of story-telling aims at entertaining the fantasy of diegetic substance, where in fact, as suggested by the text, there is nothing but a sense of void. In the final analysis, "Privacy" is perhaps an unconscious, and desperate, solipsistic act of self-sustenance in the face of nothingness. Of course, the reader too, in the process, is given a hint of the latter, and indirectly forced to confront it. The final story of *A Multitude of Sins* is entitled "Abyss", and it has the Grand Canyon, a gigantic hole, as its central symbol. From the very outset of the collection, however, the reader has been led, through textual manipulation, to approach the edge of an abyssal hole while being seemingly advancing along a safe narrative path.

Conclusion

In the conclusion to their book *The Language and Literature Reader*, Ronald Carter and Peter Stockwell write (297): "[…] the mark of a good stylistician is someone who selects a particular analytical tool best suited to the passage in hand." Without pretending to come up to their definition, we contend at least that Labov's theory is a very helpful apparatus for analysing Richard Ford's short story "Privacy" as it enables us to lay bare its deceitful narrative mechanism, a structural element that fully participates in the thematic understanding of the text. Furthermore, in the context of this collection of essays which celebrates Geoffrey Leech and Michael Short's landmark *Style in Fiction* (1981), this contribution's resort to close stylistic scrutiny of Ford's short text, pays homage to these linguists whose analyses of literary extracts in

---

narrator's ultimate, and desperate, attempt to establish contact with an addressee that these oral forms render more tangible.

[4]　The fact that the apartment's previous occupant was, as we learn in the opening lines of orientation, a "famous avant-garde theater director" who "put on his jagged, nihilistic plays there" (3) is one decisive element that contributes to the overwhelming sense of void and meaninglessness that pervades the story.

[5]　Not only does the protagonist remain static and his only outing short-lived, the multiplication of repetitive linguistic patterns breeds an impression of motionlessness and sterility.

Style in Fiction showed what powerful interpretations can be derived from the application of linguistic tools to literature. Albeit to the detriment of the academically-expected final stage of a rigorous coda-like conclusion, we simply wish here to thank them for the luminous example they have set, and still do to this day, for critics who choose the path of stylistics into literary texts.

Bibliography

BONHEIM, Helmut, 1992. *The Narrative Modes: Techniques of the Short Story*, Rochester (New York), D.S. Brewer.

CARTER, Ronald and STOCKWELL, Peter, 2008. *The Language and Literature Reader*, London and New York, Routledge.

GAY, Marie-Agnès, 2007. *Richard Ford:* A Multitude of Sins, Paris, Atlande (collection Clefs-Concours).

LEECH Geoffrey, 2008. *Language in Literature: Style and Foregrounding*, Harlow, Pearson Longman.

LEECH, Geoffrey and SHORT, Michael, 1981. *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose*, London and New York, Longman.

TOOLAN, Michael, (1988) 2001. *Narrative: A Critical Linguistic Introduction (second edition)*, London and New York, Routledge.

TOOLAN, Michael, 2009. Narrative Progression in the Short Story: A Corpus Stylistic Approach, Amsterdam, John Benjamins Publication.

TREGUER, Florian and HENRY, François, 2008. *Lectures de Richard Ford:* A Multitude of Sins, Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes.

LANGUAGE AND STYLE
IN DAVID PEACE'S *1974*:
A CORPUS INFORMED ANALYSIS

Dan McIntyre
University of Huddersfield, UK

Résumé : Cet article entend démontrer le potentiel interprétatif de l'analyse de corpus pour conforter ou corroborer une analyse stylistique qualitative. En s'intéressant à un passage du roman de David Peace, *1974*, on démontre que l'analyse de corpus permet de valider des assertions qualitatives et de proposer une méthode relativement objective permettant de sélectionner un passage pour une analyse qualitative.

Mots-clés : 1974, AntConc, linguistique de corpus, David Peace, "keyness", *Wmatrix.*

Introduction

One of the inherent problems with analysing prose fiction is summed up by Leech and Short in their now famous *Style in Fiction*:

> …the sheer bulk of prose writing is intimidating; […] In prose, the problem of how to select – what sample passages, what features to study – is more acute, and the incompleteness of even the most detailed analysis more apparent.
>
> (Leech and Short 2007, 2)

There are, in fact, two issues here. One is the simple fact that it is impossible to analyse a whole novel qualitatively in the level of detail required by stylistics. The second is that, because of this, it is necessary to select a short extract from the novel in question to subject to analysis. The consequent problem is how are we to choose which extract to study?

Since, as Leech and Short point out, 'the distinguishing features of a prose style tend to become detectable over longer stretches of text' (2007, 2), it is not surprising that in recent years there has been an increase in the use of corpus linguistic software that enables the analysis of large quantities of data (see, for example, Busse *et al.* 2010, Fischer-Starcke 2010, Mahlberg and McIntyre 2011 and Walker 2010). However, corpus linguistic methods alone do not offer a complete solution. While corpus linguistic techniques can provide valuable insights into the general properties of a text, for the approach to work to its best advantage, it needs to be used in conjunction with qualitative analysis. It is no use providing the quantitative analyses recognised as necessary by early stylisticians if we then fail to flesh these out with the detail that only qualitative analysis can provide. The ideal scenario, then, is to use corpus linguistic methods to assist in the selection of textual samples for qualitative analysis, and to then support that qualitative analysis with insights from corpus-based investigations. In methodological terms, this approach is analogous to Spitzer's (1948) philological circle. This represents the analytical process generally followed by stylisticians wherein linguistic analysis enhances literary insights and, in turn, those literary insights stimulate further linguistic analysis. Methodologically, it should be possible to achieve something similar in terms of combining corpus- and non-corpus based methods of stylistic analysis; i.e. corpus linguistic analysis determines the choice of sample for qualitative analysis and qualitative analysis then determines the direction that further corpus analysis takes.

In this article, I aim to demonstrate the possibilities of this corpus informed approach through an analysis of David Peace's novel *1974*. This is the first book in Peace's *Red Riding Quartet*, which focuses on police corruption set against a fictionalised account of the Yorkshire Ripper murders that were carried out in Leeds, Bradford, Manchester and Huddersfield, in the UK, between 1975 and 1980. *1974* is narrated in the first-person by Eddie Dunford, Crime Correspondent for the local newspaper, *The Yorkshire Post*. The story takes place in West Yorkshire and begins with the discovery of the body of a girl who has been brutally murdered, as well as mutilated by having a pair of swan's wings stitched to her back. As Eddie investigates the crime, he discovers potential connections between the young girl's murder and a series of other child murders in the recent past. However, his investigation is hampered by the utter corruption of the police force.

The story is bleak, realistic and powerfully told. Peace is widely acknowledged to be a distinctive writer stylistically (see, for example, Shaw 2010, 2011) and my aim here is to show how a corpus informed analysis can account for the literary effects of the wealth of stylistic devices present in his writing.

Text selection

One advantage that corpus linguistics offers is the capacity to help the stylistician determine which part of a long text is likely to be of particular interest stylistically and therefore worthy of detailed qualitative analysis. The keywords function found in most corpus analysis software is particularly helpful in this respect. For the analysis reported in this article I used AntConc, a free concordancing program by Laurence Anthony (2011). Using AntConc it is possible to determine which of the words in your chosen text (which we can call our target corpus[1]) are statistically over- or under-represented compared against their distribution in a larger reference corpus. The over- or under-represented words are keywords.

Keyness and keywords

To calculate keywords for *1974* I compared the novel against the FLOB (Freiberg-Lancaster-Oslo-Bergen) corpus. FLOB is a one million word corpus of written British English covering a wide variety of text-types. For the purposes of keyword analysis, the corpus linguist assumes that the reference corpus provides a measure of the normal distribution of words against which the frequency of words in the target corpus can be compared. AntConc calculates keyness using a statistical measure called log-likelihood[2], which assesses the difference between the frequency of words in the target and reference corpora, and how likely it is that any difference is genuinely significant rather than due to chance alone. This is perhaps easier to understand if we take a concrete example. If we look in the FLOB corpus we find that the word *power* occurs 405 times in 1,128,043 words. Assuming that the FLOB corpus has been constructed to be representative of written British English generally, we can say that this is its normal frequency. If we then looked in a corpus of 112,804 words (i.e. roughly ten times smaller), we would expect to see the word *power* turning up ten times less often: i.e. roughly 40 times. Of course, it would not be surprising if we found that *power* turned up 41 or 43 times. Some variation is to be expected. However, it would be very surprising indeed if we found that *power* turned up 1000 times in a corpus of 112,804 words. A result like this cannot be down to the chance selection of texts alone. 1000 occurrences is

---

[1]   Strictly speaking, corpus linguists would not usually consider a single text to constitute a corpus since, as Sinclair (2005) points out, it does not allow for generalisations about language use as a whole. In practical terms, however, it is entirely possible to analyse a single text using the corpus linguistic techniques employed in the analysis of large corpora.

[2]   A chi-square test is also available; see van Peer *et al*. (2012) for a discussion of appropriate statistical tests for Humanities research.

significantly more than the normal frequency we would expect and suggests that the texts in the corpus are skewed in terms of their content (i.e. not balanced or representative of the language generally). In such a case, *power* would be a statistically significant keyword.

Keywords are interesting to examine because they beg the question 'why is this word key?' This is a question of function, which, unsurprisingly, is of particular interest to stylisticians. A starting point for a corpus informed stylistic analysis, then, might be to determine the key words in the target text and investigate why it is that they are so over- or under-represented. For instance, it may be that keywords reveal some overall thematic concern (see, for example, Mahlberg and McIntyre 2011) or that they act as style markers (see Culpeper 2009).

A keyword analysis of *1974* reveals that the following are the 20 most over-represented words statistically:

1. I
2. the
3. my
4. you
5. what
6. fucking
7. he
8. said
9. it
10. no
11. she
12. Barry
13. me
14. a
15. yeah
16. you
17. Jack
18. door
19. and
20. up

Some of these results are to be expected and are therefore not particularly interesting interpretatively. For instance, the novel is a first-person narration so it is no surprise to find the pronoun *I* used more than we would expect it to be normally. The same is true of *my*. Again unsurprisingly, the keyword *what* appears in interrogative sentences and its overuse is perhaps explained by the genre of the novel. This is to some extent a thriller and questioning of characters by other characters may be connected to plot exposition. Interestingly, the first lexical word on the list is *fucking*. I therefore decided to

investigate this keyword further and use it to determine a small section of the novel to subject to qualitative analysis.

Keywords and concordance plots

Having identified a keyword to hone in on, the next issue is to determine (i) which section of the whole text contains instances of that keyword, and (ii) which of the sections where the keyword is found are candidates for qualitative analysis. The concordance plot function in AntConc can be used to help narrow down this search. Concordance plots (sometimes called dispersal plots) indicate the position of a chosen search word in the corpus file. For example, the concordance plot for *fucking* in a file comprising the whole novel shows that the keyword is spread fairly evenly across the whole text (single black lines indicate the presence of the keyword; thicker lines indicate conglomerations of keywords):

HIT FILE: 1   FILE: 1974.txt

No. of Hits = 315
File Length (in chars) = 453973

Fig. 1 Concordance plot of *fucking* in whole text

Fig. 1 clearly shows the keyword is not concentrated in a particular part of the novel but is instead fairly evenly dispersed. This in itself is an interesting result but is not particularly helpful for determining an area to focus on for qualitative analysis. To this end, it is useful to separate the novel into chapter files. Concordance plots for each chapter can then be calculated. The plots for the first two chapters are shown in fig. 2:

HIT FILE: 2   FILE: Chapter 001.txt

No. of Hits = 21
File Length (in chars) = 33336

HIT FILE: 3   FILE: Chapter 002.txt

No. of Hits = 38
File Length (in chars) = 36055

Fig. 2 Concordance plot of *fucking* in chapters 1 and 2

Examining concordance plots for single chapters is similar to zooming in on a particular area of a street map. The result is a clearer picture of what a particular area looks like. Fig. 2 shows that *fucking* is present in both chapters 1 and 2 and that there is a particular clustering of keywords towards the end of the second chapter (indicated by the

thicker black lines). The question of why the keyword should cluster at this point in the chapter is an interesting starting point for a stylistic analysis. For this reason, I decided to focus on the end of chapter 2 for qualitative analysis. Clicking on the thick black line in AntConc takes you to the second paragraph in the extract below. To contextualise this, I have included the preceding and subsequent paragraphs in the selection (instances of the keyword are marked in bold and sentences are numbered for ease of reference):

If it bleeds, it leads. (1)
'How'd it go with Hadden?' Kathryn was standing over my desk. (2)
'How do you **fucking** think,' I spat, rubbing my eyes, looking for someone easy. (3)
Kathryn fought back tears. (4) 'Barry says to tell you he'll pick you up at ten tomorrow. At your mother's.' (5)
'Tomorrow's bloody Sunday.' (6)
'Well why don't you go and ask Barry. I'm not your bloody secretary. I'm a **fucking** journalist too.' (7)
I stood up and left the office, afraid someone would come in. (8)

In the front room, my father's Beethoven as loud as I dared. (9)
My mother in the back room, the TV louder still: ballroom dancing and show jumping. (10)
Fucking horses. (11)
Next door's barking through the Fifth. (12)
Fucking dogs. (13)
I poured the rest of the Scotch into the glass and remembered the time when I'd actually wanted to be a **fucking** policeman, but was too scared shitless to even try. (14)
Fucking pigs. (15)
I drank half the glass and remembered all the novels I wanted to write, but was too scared shitless to even try. (16)
Fucking bookworm. (17)
I flicked a cat hair off my trousers, trousers my father had made, trousers that would outlast us all. I picked off another hair. (18)
Fucking cats. (19)
I swallowed the last of the Scotch from my glass, unlaced my shoes and stood up. (20) I took off my trousers and then my shirt. (21) I screwed the clothes up into a ball and threw them across the room at **fucking** Ludwig. (22)
I sat back down in my white underpants and vest and closed my eyes, too scared shitless to face Jack **fucking** Whitehead. (23)
Too scared shitless to fight for my own story. (24)
Too scared shitless to even try. (25)
Fucking chicken. (26)
I didn't hear my mother come in. (27)
'There's someone on the phone for you love,' she said, drawing the front room curtains. (28)

'Edward Dunford speaking,' I said into the hall phone, doing up my trousers and looking at my father's watch:

11.35 p.m. (29)
A man: 'Saturday night all right for fighting?' (30)
'Who's this?' (31)
Silence. (32)
'Who is it?' (33)
A stifled laugh and then, 'You don't need to know.' (34)
'What do you want?' (35)
'You interested in the Romany Way?' (36)
'What?' (37)
'White vans and gyppos?' (38)
'Where?' (39)
'Hunslet Beeston exit of the M1.' (40)
'When?' (41)
'You're late.' (42)
The line went dead. (43)
    (Peace 1999: 43-44)

The above example demonstrates that the combination of keyword analysis and concordance plots can be a useful means of determining a short section of a text to subject to qualitative analysis. The next stage is to move on to this more detailed analytical level.

A qualitative analysis of an extract from *1974*

A traditional method of doing stylistic analysis is to follow Spitzer's (1948) technique of beginning with an intuitive response to the text in question and then validating (or invalidating) this impression through linguistic analysis. My intuitive response to *1974* is to note an overwhelmingly negative atmosphere described by a narrator who appears to be volatile and almost irrationally angry. As a character he gives the impression of being instinctive rather than contemplative, with a tendency towards plain speaking, the latter quality perhaps being indicative of a fairly basic level of education. Underlying my analysis of *1974* there is an additional research question to be answered: namely, what is the function of the keyword *fucking* in this extract?

Keywords in context

First of all, we can observe that the nine instances of *fucking* from the concordance plot occur in the second paragraph and are part of the first-person narration of Eddie Dunford. The other two examples in the selection above occur in direct speech in the preceding paragraph. Furthermore, seven of the

examples from the second paragraph occur in instances of free direct thought presentation (see Leech and Short 2007, Chapter 10) in which Eddie apparently addresses himself. These instances constitute a stylistically interesting scheme. Each instance of *fucking* is followed by reference to an animal:

> Fucking horses. (11)
> Fucking dogs. (13)
> Fucking pigs. (15)
> Fucking bookworm. (17)
> Fucking cats. (19)
> Fucking chicken. (25)

The first two examples of this (*horses* and *dogs*) express Eddie's annoyance at, respectively, the show jumping programme which he can hear on the television in the next room and the barking of the dog in the adjoining house. There is something comic in the fact that Eddie's annoyance is directed at the animals generally rather than the noise which is the actual locus of his irritation. Following this, the next reference is to 'fucking pigs', which deviates from the previous two structures in that the animal reference is metaphorical, *pigs* being a slang term for *police*. The lexical and syntactic parallelism of the three examples, with the semantic deviation in the third example, generates the effect of Eddie viewing the police as being on the same level as animals which cause him annoyance. The next phrase in the series, 'fucking bookworm', is an instance of Eddie turning his ire against himself by referring scornfully to his literary ambitions. This metaphorical use of an animal term has the further effect of characterising Eddie as small and insignificant, especially when contrasted against the 'pigs' of the police force. There is a return to a literal animal term in the next phrase, and the switch from introspective self-loathing to general irritation at cats seems blackly comic. The final phrase in the sequence again constitutes self-assessment, with *chicken* being a common euphemism for *coward*. The general function of this sequence is to convey the emotions of irritation, self-loathing and anger than Eddie feels, thereby aiding the characterisation process. The repeated use of *fucking*, appended equally to referents which generate both mild irritation (e.g. *cats*) and extreme loathing (e.g. *pigs*) characterises Eddie as extremely tense, angered as he is by both serious and minor issues. This anxiety is reinforced by the parallelism of the sentences that intersperse the free direct thought presentation (14, 16, 18, 20). Dynamic verbs indicate a series of small-scale actions ('I poured…', 'I drank…', 'I flicked…', 'I swallowed…') which suggest restlessness and nervous tension.

Speech and thought presentation and sentence structure

The nature of stylistic analysis is that one analytical insight leads to another. In the case of *1974*, the fact that the keyword *fucking* occurs primarily in short bursts of free direct thought presentation leads naturally to a consideration of the general functions and effects of discourse presentation in the extract. What is clear is that all speech presentation is either direct speech or free direct speech (see Leech and Short 2007, 256-58, and Chapter 10 generally for the model of discourse presentation employed here). That is, speech is presented using the most maximal presentation options available; there is no narrator interference. Thought, on the other hand, is presented in a variety of forms: free direct though (e.g. 'Fucking cats'), Narrator's Report of a Thought Act (e.g. 'remembered all the novels I wanted to write') and Narrator's Report of an Internal State (e.g. 'Too scared shitless to even try'; see Short 2007 for more on this category). The distinction between speech presentation and introspective thought is emphasised by the lack of narrator interference in the former. There is consequently a distinct change in atmosphere between the first and second paragraphs of the extract, as Eddie moves from an external presentation of speech with no narrator interference to a highly introspective presentation of thought.

What is also interesting in relation to speech and thought presentation in the extract is the presentation of narration (the Narrator's Report of Action, as Short 1996 terms it in relation to discourse presentation). While the narration in paragraph one is conveyed in full sentences, paragraph two has some marked differences. Sentences nine, ten and twelve are all minor sentences, lacking a main verb. In this respect, they have more in common with dramatic stage directions than conventional past tense prose narration. This sparse narration has a tendency to occur when Eddie is alone (see McIntyre 2011 for further comment on this issue) and appears to belie a lack of concern on the part of the narrator for descriptive minutiae. The effect that this generates is the suggestion that Eddie has little regard for anything beyond his immediate concerns; the narration is the bare minimum needed to establish the sense of time, place and action that Eddie needs in order to relate what he considers to be the important elements of the story. Further evidence of this can be seen in the minimal use of reporting clauses for direct speech and the preponderance of free direct forms. This also creates something of a cinematic effect, in the sense that the emphasis here is on mimesis rather than diegesis.

Sentence length

Related to sentence structure is the issue of sentence length, which Leech and Short (2007) deal with analytically by comparing their analyses of this stylistic feature to the norms determined by Ellegård (1978) in his analysis of the sentence structures of texts in the Brown corpus. The so-called Ellegård norm for sentence length, determined through corpus analysis, is 17.8 words. The graph in fig. 3 compares the length of sentences in the *1974* extract against this norm:
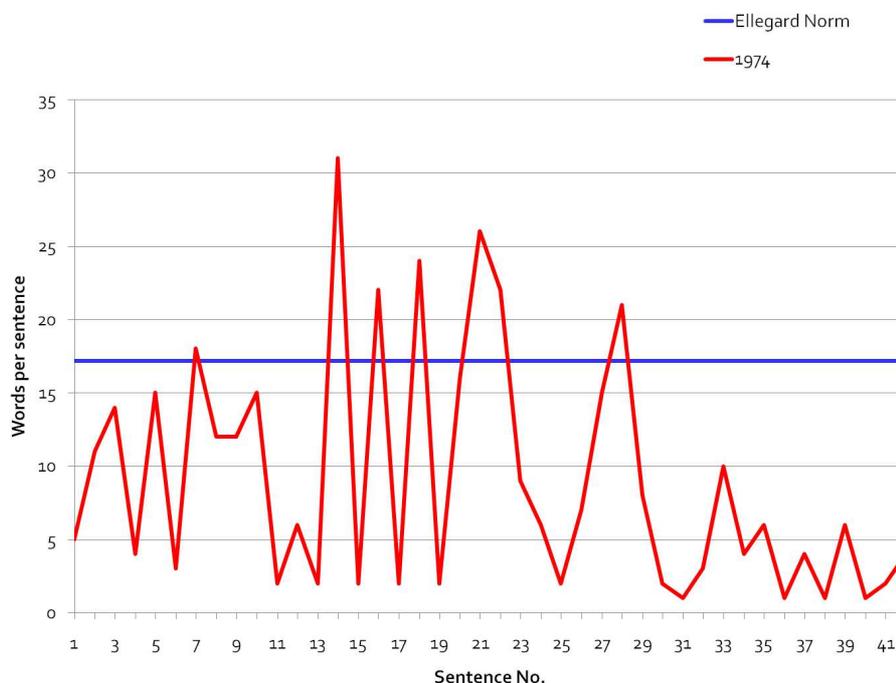
Lexical features

Related to the simple sentence structure that dominates the extract is a tendency towards direct and concrete expression in terms of lexical choice. Of the 64 nouns (excluding proper nouns), just eight are abstract. The dominance of concrete nouns is appropriate for a direct and plain-speaking narrator. Similarly, of the 30 adjectives there are just eleven types, the majority of which relate to fear (*shitless*, *scared*, *afraid*) and anger (*fucking*). The remainder are

strongly negative in connotation (e.g. *stifled*, *dead*, *bloody*). The lack of adjectival variation is also indicative of a limited vocabulary on the part of the narrator, which again works as a characterisation device. The past tense verbs in the passage are predominantly intransitive (13 of 21), perhaps emblematic of a lack of purposefulness on the part of Eddie. Adverbs are primarily emphatic (*still*, *actually*, *even*, *too*), which, in combination with the other lexical and grammatical features discussed, further contributes to the characterisation of Eddie as volatile and highly strung.

Supporting qualitative analysis with corpus-based analysis

The analysis in section three begins to explain the source of some of my impressionistic responses to the *1974* extract. The impression of volatility on the part of the narrator, Eddie Dunford, arises in some measure from his tendency to express the same level of anger towards minor and major issues. His plain-speaking nature is conveyed via his limited vocabulary, by the predominance of concrete rather than abstract nouns, and by the lack of concern for descriptive detail in narrative sentences. Maximal speech presentation forms and a lack of reporting clauses also contribute to this straightforward and sparse narrative style. Having established all of this through qualitative analysis, we might now return to the corpus analytical method to seek further support for some of the claims being made.

Key semantic domains

One possibility, offered by the Wmatrix software package (Rayson 2009), is to calculate not just keywords buy key semantic domains. Wmatrix does this by automatically applying semantic tags to every word in the target corpus using USAS (UCREL Semantic Annotation System). The USAS tagset is based on the *Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English* (McArthur 1981) and is essentially an inbuilt thesaurus, allowing the sorting of constituent words into semantic categories. Once this process has been completed, it is possible to compare the distribution of semantic domains in the target corpus to that of the semantic domains in a reference corpus, in order to determine those that are over- or under-represented in relation to the norm. The log-likelihood statistical test that Wmatrix applies in order to work this out has numerous cut-off points depending on the degree of confidence we wish to express in terms of the how likely it is that the observed result is a significant one. Given that the extract from *1974* is short, it is sensible to choose the highest cut-off point of 15.13, a figure which indicates 99.99 per cent certainty ($p < 0.0001$) that the result we are seeing is not down to chance alone. Using the BNC Written Imaginative

sampler as a reference corpus and applying this cut-off point to the list of key semantic domains generated, we find that the highest ranked key semantic category to be over-represented in the *1974* text is FEAR/SHOCK. The keyness of this domain perhaps emphasises the degree to which the narrator, Eddie, is under stress, as well as potentially explaining his volatile behaviour. Also key are the domains HINDERING and EXCEED; WASTE. The former domain comprises the words *fought*, *fight*, *fighting* and *stifled* and the category of HINDERING may well be a source of the perceived negative atmosphere. That EXCEED; WASTE is also a key category is a further trigger for this response. Key semantic domains, then, can be useful in determining the source of thematic concerns in the text.

N-grams

Another analytical option afforded by corpus linguistic software is to view n-grams, or repeated word sequences of a defined length (*n* stands for any number, hence a 4-gram would be a sequence of four words that occurs more than once). In *1974* as a whole, the complete list of 5-grams which appear more than ten times is as follows (the number of instances of each 5-gram is given in square brackets):

1. [21] at my father s watch
2. [19] North of England Crime Correspondent
3. [13] Detective Chief Superintendent George Oldman
4. [13] I looked at my father
5. [13] looked at my father s
6. [12] Dunford North of England Crime
7. [11] Edward Dunford North of England
8. [10] did as I was told

These repeated sequences are interesting stylistically because of the light they shed on the narrator's character. This information can then be brought to bear on the qualitative analysis presented above. For example, the most repeated 5-gram is *at my father's watch* (the genitive *'s* is treated as a separate word by Wmatrix). The fact that Eddie repeatedly makes a point of referring to the watch as his father's rather than his own (Eddie's father is dead) is potentially indicative of his sense of loss and, perhaps, ongoing grief. This may be a contributory factor to Eddie's fragile mental state in the novel (evidence of which can be seen in the extract discussed above). Numbers four and five in the list above are sequences related to the first 5-gram. 5-grams numbers two and three are also indicative of Eddie's character. Eddie has a propensity for referring to the police officer leading the murder investigation by his full title,

i.e. *Detective Chief Superintendent George Oldman*. What is clear from the contexts in which he does this is that this use of Oldman's full title is not done to convey respect. Rather, the use is disparaging, aimed at demonstrating the arrogance of Oldman and his fellow officers as they hide behind the protective hierarchy of the force. Interestingly, though, Eddie's reference to himself as the newspaper's *North of England Crime Correspondent* is similarly disparaging, suggesting both his awareness of the parochial nature of his position and a degree of self-loathing at being part of a hierarchy of his own. Throughout the novel, Eddie displays a tendency to despise himself for his own failures, and the self-mockery he exhibits in his use of his job title to refer to himself conveys this. The 5-gram is useful for showing up this aspect of his character across the whole novel, and the information gleaned from this can be applied to the extract discussed above in order to shed further light on what motivates Eddie's behaviour in this passage.

Conclusion

Inevitably, my analysis of the extract from *1974* is, like any other stylistic analysis, incomplete. It may be superseded by any analysis which offers a greater level of detail and interpretative insight, or it may be invalidated if evidence from the novel as a whole counters my claims regarding the specific extract that I have analysed qualitatively. Nonetheless, I hope to have shown that a qualitative analysis that is informed by evidence derived from corpus analysis is more robust than one which ignores quantitative evidence completely. Corpus methods can be used in the selection of texts for qualitative analysis, as well as to support and test the claims made in such analyses. Ideally, corpus methods should inform qualitative stylistic analysis which, in turn, should determine the focus of further corpus-based research. Achieving this methodological blend is likely to lead to more reliable and more replicable analyses, as well as greater insights into the source of literary stylistic effects.

Bibliography

ANTHONY, Lawrence, 2011. *AntConc* 3.2.4. Waseda University, Tokyo: School of Science and Engineering. Available at: http://www.antlab.sci.waseda.ac.jp/software.html

BUSSE, Beatrix, McINTYRE, Dan, NØGAARD, Nina and Toolan, Michael, 2010. « John McGahern's stylistic and narratological art », *Lexis* 5: 101-31.

CULPEPER, Jonathan, 2009. « Keyness: words, parts-of-speech and semantic categories in the character-talk of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet », International Journal of Corpus Linguistics 14(1): 29-59.

ELLEGÅRD, Alvar, 1978. *The Syntactic Structure of English Texts: A Computer-based Study of Four Kinds of Text in the Brown University Corpus*. Gothenburg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.

FISCHER-STARCKE, Bettina, 2010. *Corpus Linguistics in Literary Analysis: Jane Austen and Her Contemporaries*. Londres: Continuum.

LEECH, Geoffrey and SHORT, Mick, 2007. *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose*. Londres: Pearson.

MAHLBERG, Michaela and McINTYRE, Dan, 2011. « A case for corpus stylistics: analysing Ian Fleming's *Casino Royale* », *English Text Construction* 4(2): 204-27.

McAARTHUR, Tom, 1981. *Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English*. Londres: Longman.

McINTYRE, Dan, 2011. « The place of stylistics in the English curriculum », in JEFFRIES, Lesley and McINTYRE, Dan, Eds, *Teaching Stylistics*, pp. 9-29. Basingstoke: Palgrave/English Subject Centre.

PEACE, David, 1999. *1974*. London: Serpent's Tail.

RAYSON, Paul, 2009. *Wmatrix: A Web-based Corpus Processing Environment*. School of Computing and Communications: Lancaster University. Available at: http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/wmatrix/

SHAW, Katy, 2010. *David Peace: Texts and Contexts*. Sussex: Sussex Academic Press.

SHAW, Katy, Ed., 2011. *Analysing David Peace*. Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press.

SHORT, Mick, 1996. *Exploring the Language of Poems, Plays and Prose*. London: Longman.

SHORT, Mick, 2007. « Thought presentation 25 years on », *Style* 41(2): 225-41.

WALKER, Brian, 2010. « Wmatrix, key concepts and the narrators in Julian Barnes's *Talking it Over* », in McINTYRE, Dan and BUSSE, Beatrix, Eds, *Language and Style*, pp. 364-87. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

VAN PEER, Willie, ZYNGIER, Sonia and HAKEMULDER, Frank, 2012. *Scientific Methods for the Humanities*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

IMITATION, STYLE, FICTION:
ETHICS OF WRITING,
ETHICS OF READING IN *CHATTERTON*,
BY PETER ACKROYD

Marie-Pierre Mounié
Université de Strasbourg

Résumé : L'article revient sur la réflexion menée par Peter Ackroyd sur les notions de style, de fiction et de réalité à travers le prisme de l'imitation ; il a choisi de le faire dans un roman intitulé *Chatterton*, dont le héros éponyme fut célèbre pour ses pastiches du style médiéval.

Mots-clés : style, réalité, fiction, imitation, pastiche, intertextualité, hypertextualité

Introduction

The concepts of "style" and "imitation", are essential to the works of Peter Ackroyd and Thomas Chatterton.

Peter Ackroyd is a prolific contemporary British writer who is particularly interested in British culture and history, as well as language and literature. He has written a substantial number of novels and non-fiction books such as the biographies of TS Eliot, Charles Dickens and Shakespeare. He has always clearly shown his cultural lineage and is very talented at imitating, pastiching the voices and styles of his famous forebears. In *English Music,* which came out five years after *Chatterton*, one of the characters declares:

> "You honour your father by imitating him, just as we honour an author by the same means. For what we virtuously imitate we approve and admire; since we delight not to

> resemble our inferiors, we aggrandize and magnify those whom we copy." (Ackroyd 1993, 167)

Thomas Chatterton was a poet who died from arsenic poisoning in 1770 when he was seventeen years old. He is as famous for the poems he published under his name as for those he wrote under the name of Thomas Rowley, a 15th century monk he invented. He forged the style and vocabulary of the Middle Ages and wrote poems and history from some fragments of medieval culture that were taken to be authentic till his death.

Chatterton, which was published in 1987, is a novel, a work of fiction featuring fictitious and real characters in three layers in time whose (hi)stories are closely linked and reverberated. The first story takes place in the 20th century and mostly stages fictitious writers and painters, such as Charles Wychwood, Harriet Scrope and Philip Slack who get interested in the story of Chatterton after they found a portrait and manuscripts apparently written by the poet after the official date of his death. The second narrative shows Henry Wallis and George Meredith during the realisation of the painting "The death of Chatterton" in 1856. The then young poet serves as a model for Wallis in order that the scene should be more realistic, according to what the Pre-Raphaelites advocated. This painting, which is at the core of the three narratives of Ackroyd's novel, is best known as "Chatterton" and can be seen at the Tate Gallery in London[1]. It shows a realistic representation of the dead poet in his garret, with all his manuscripts torn down on the floor. The third narrative unfolds in the 18th century; it is that of Chatterton, after he settled in London. A third person narrator tells of his very last days in his garret in Holborn.

These three narratives allow Peter Ackroyd to reflect about style, reality and fiction through the notion of imitation. Already present and promoted in his early literary manifesto *Notes for a New Culture*, which he wrote in 1970, imitation and copying are at the core of Peter Ackroyd's works in general, and *Chatterton* in particular. Browsing the novel reveals an impressive number of occurrences of the words "copy", "imitation", "style", but also "real", "true" or "fake". First, a discussion is brought about around the relations between art and reality, or between language and reality. Ackroyd questions the act of representing reality, notably by carefully mingling real and fictitious elements, which inevitably triggers a reflection on the status and value of texts and works and on the way they should be read. Then his conclusions about language and imitation pave the way for a further polemical discussion on the writer's ethic

---

[1] The painting can be seen on the Tate Gallery's website:
http://www.tate.org.uk/servlet/ViewWork?cgroupid=999999961&workid=15906&searchid=10238&tabview=image (consulted 02/07/2011)

of writing, which is tackled in many ways in the echoing plots of the novel, mainly through the notions of hypertextuality and intertextuality according to Gérard Genette and Julia Kristeva; imitation and borrowing are confronted to the problems of property and origins. This focus on writing and reading will help me show that the novel appears to deal first and foremost with textuality, making language emerge as the most important subject of literature according to Peter Ackroyd.

Imitation, representation, reality

Among the many lines devoted to the question, some particularly challenging cues are worth quoting, such as:

> "I said they were **fakes**, I didn't say they were not **real**" (219)
> He managed to **create** an **authentic**[2] medieval style (foreword)

The use of two stylistic devices, respectively antithesis with the parallel structure of antithetical words (fakes/real), and oxymoron that juxtaposes antithetical terms (create/authentic) suggests that fakery is here associated with art and considered to be authentic material. The dichotomies real/fake, imitation/reality, along with the notion of origin, are thoroughly blurred by Ackroyd whose aim is to argue that reality cannot be objectively depicted or realistically represented because it is hardly possible to fix what reality "really" is. In order to illustrate those issues, Ackroyd has chosen two examples: art, which is dealt with through the story of Henry Wallis painting Chatterton on his death bed, and history, through the story of Chatterton whose name was chosen for the title itself as it would have been in a biography.

These two modes of representation are constantly tackled in their relation to life and reality. Let us first briefly see how realistic painting is depicted. On page 132 the 19th century plot begins with Henry Wallis and his model Georges Meredith. The two have a different conception of reality and its representation. Henry Wallis sticks to realism and declares "I can only paint what I see" (133) and "I am glad that you're amused at my poor attempts at realism (137)", thus justifying his need for a model, for rehearsals and his efforts to stage again the "true" setting of the poet's death place. Meredith answers "And what do you see? The real? The ideal?"; he is reminding Wallis of the myth of Plato's cave. He adds "Of course there is a reality but (…) it is not one that can be depicted", and later: "Call it verisimilitude" (137). Wallis's devices to achieve realism lead George Meredith to declare: "so the greatest realism is also the greatest

---

[2] The highlighting is always mine, unless specified.

fakery" (139), pointing at the fact that he is the one who is pretending to be dead and is represented dead on the couch, not Chatterton. We can feel all this challenging in another question by Meredith while he is posing: "Is it becoming more real?" (138). Of course, as the scene is gradually depicted, the painting resembles not Chatterton's death itself, but the real painting more and more; in that sense only is it becoming "more real". The reader is reminded that the real painting by Henry Wallis is the starting point of all the plots imagined by Ackroyd but more than that it is strongly suggested that painting cannot imitate but another painting, not reality, as language can only imitate language.

This challenging of mimesis in art goes along with the challenging of history, or historical narratives as being the depiction of reality. From the very beginning of the novel, stable referents, like reference books or authoritative texts, seem fallible. Let us give an example:

> 'If you don't believe me.' He found the **reference book** he wanted and read at loud. (21)

> Charles got up quickly and went back to the **reference book** which he had consulted a few minutes before [...] 'Thomas Chatterton completed the fake medieval poem, *Vala*, a few days before his suicide'. (23)

These examples mention the word "reference" implying official knowledge and standing for truth; the use of that word is quite telling about the status of the "reference book". And yet, the trust to place in it is immediately debunked, as *Vala* was not written by Chatterton but by Blake in 1797. So very early in the novel the status of historical narratives in relation to reality is questioned, and Charles directly formulates this on page 40:

> 'It's a question of language. Realism is just as artificial as surrealism, after all. The real world is just a succession of interpretations. Everything which is written down immediately becomes a kind of fiction.'

This clings to Hayden White's theory of history or historical narratives, in which events emerge as plotted stories ("emplotment")[3]. Reality is equated to fiction as it is constructed and therefore subjective. Subjectivity is thus affirmed as inevitably mediating representation, which is why there is "reality but not one that can be depicted" (133).

---

[3] See White 1987 and 1999: "It is only by troping, rather than by logical deduction, that any given set of the kinds of event we would wish to call historical can be (first) *represented* as having the order of a chronicle, (second) *transformed* by emplotment into a story with identified beginning, middle and end phases; and (third) *constituted* as the subject of whatever formal arguments may be adduced to establish their "meaning". (9)

This inevitable bias is in fact alluded to very early in the book, in the paratext where a short biography of Thomas Chatterton precedes the actual beginning of the novel. It occurs before the initial fragments and before "Part One", and is typographically differentiated from the novel as it is written in italics, a convention that leads the reader to consider it as non-fiction material, as a reference to official information on Chatterton's life. While the reader is legitimate in reading it as the "true" life of the poet, it already encompasses the notion of unstable truth or reality:

> It was here on the morning of 24 August 1770, **apparently** worn down by his struggle against poverty and failure, that he swallowed arsenic. […] An inquest was held and a verdict of *felo de se* or suicide was announced.

The adverb "apparently" leaves room for another interpretation of his death. Despite the mention of an enquiry stating his suicide, doubt is cast on this version. It has to be noted that the different biographies of Chatterton or the entries in encyclopaedias are not completely assertive on his suicide, though they most often implicitly allude to it. Let us look at a few of them. In 1813, Joseph and Louis Gabriel Michaud indicate in their *Biographie Universelle, Ancienne et Moderne*: "After several days without eating, he poisoned himself with arsenic (286)"[4]. They do not clearly mention his suicide but seem to establish a causal link between Chatterton's starving and his taking of arsenic. Charles Bonnycastle Wilcox, in the biographical part of *The Poetical Works Of Thomas Chatterton with Notices of his Life* published in 1842, clearly asserts his suicide: "The suicide was effected by arsenic mixed with water" (CXXXIX). The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Micropaedia vol.3 1986, 140) uses the same technique as Michaud's: "Though literally starving, Chatterton refused the food of friends and, on the night of August 24, 1770, took arsenic in his Holborn garret and died." In 1989, Louise J. Kaplan while mentioning his taking of arsenic, alludes to another version - some say he tried to cure himself from gonorrhoea - and proposes a critical survey of this hypothesis. While this explanation does not usually appear in Chatterton's biographical notice, Ackroyd precisely chose to use it in his fictional biography. The adverb "apparently" introducing doubt in the biographical notice already paves the way for his challenging of historical narratives. Thus, he shows the reader that his version might be as true as the official one – and he read a lot about Chatterton before writing this novel – as nobody can know the truth. Ackroyd even stages Harriet Scrope inventing her memoirs in chapter 7, so as to prove again that any writing is – at least – partly apocryphal. This echoes

---

[4] My translation of "Après avoir passé plusieurs jours sans manger, il s'empoisonna avec de l'arsenic". In both French and English the reflexive can simply mean that he "introduced" something into himself without knowing the consequences.

Ackroyd's seeing biography as "a convenient fiction" (Lewis 2007, 34) and leads Charles to say on page 127: "If there were no truths, everything was true". Origins and reality are equated as unstable, ungraspable and unrecoverable.

Ackroyd's challenging of reality is furthered in the novel thanks to several devices. First, he constantly blends fictitious and real elements, be it blatantly or more subtly. For instance, true and invented quotations sometimes mingle in an ironic way. Charles is reading the manuscript of Chatterton he has just discovered:

> And then he read out: '**Arise now from thy Past, as from the Dust that environs thee**. When Los heard this he rose weeping, uttering the original groan as Enitharmon fell towards dark Confusion.'
>
> 'Blake.' Philip looked at the vacant seat beside him, as if someone had just moved into it. '**That's William Blake**.'
> 'I know that.' Charles was suddenly very calm. 'But then why is it signed T.C.?' and as the train took them homewards Charles read out, in mounting excitement, another line from the same page. '**Craving & devouring; but my Eyes are always upon thee, O lovely Delusion**.' (60)

The first lines ("Arise now from thy Past" etc) are immediately identified as Blake's by both writers, while they do not exist and have obviously been pastiched by Ackroyd. It is actually the last lines ("Craving and devouring; but my eyes are always upon thee my lovely delusion") that are unmistakably Blake's. They were taken from *The Four Zoas (Vala).* Here, Ackroyd shows the easy blurring of origins and shows the art of pastiche as he created an "authentic" Blakian verse.

The second example calls on intertextuality in a very particular way. Near Saint Mary Redcliffe, Charles enters the garden of Chatterton's house and sees verse inscribed under a sundial:

> Had restless time whose harvest is each hour
> Made but a pause to view this poet's flower
> In pity he'd have turned his scythe away
> And left it blooming to a future day (57)

This text does not seem to have been written by a famous writer but what is sure is that it was not invented by Ackroyd. Indeed, this text exists and lies on the tomb of Peggy Irving in Arthuret, a town in Cumbria, with a slight difference in the second line: "But deign'd to pause and view this lovely flow'r" (Graham 1821, 138). Moreover, Chatterton's house does exist in Bristol and does have a garden; but there is no sundial in it, or at least none that can be seen by a passer-by as a huge wall hides part of the garden. And the descriptive records of the town do not mention a sundial at all. Thus, once again, Ackroyd

displaced existing text into a half-fictitious situation. By blurring texts and origins, existing and invented material, doubt is therefore cast upon every single element, and their reality or truth becomes unstable.

Then, fiction even seems to become reality for some characters:

> It was then that he saw the picture. He had the faintest and briefest sensation of being looked at, so he turned his head to one side – and caught the eyes of a middle-aged man who **was watching him**. (11)

> When she eventually opened her eyes, Thomas Chatterton **was staring at her**. (188)

In these examples characters painted on a canvas are treated as if they were lively or "true" people; Charles and Harriet feel Chatterton's painted face actually watching them. This tinge of romance or even magic realism that we can find elsewhere in the novel sustains the feeling that fiction becomes reality. The blurring of the two has come to a complete reversal; Meredith's wife thinks that her husband is "more natural on paper" (141) and Meredith himself claims:

> 'I can endure death; it's the representation of death I can't bear.' (138)

> 'The invention is always more real.' […] 'No one had properly understood the medieval world until Chatterton summoned it into existence. The poet does not merely recreate or describe the world. He actually creates it'. […] 'And that is why', he added quietly, 'this will always be remembered as **the true death** of Chatterton.'(157)

Here, art clearly seems to be claimed to surpass reality; it does not only represent it, it creates it. The reader is led to reflect upon the work of Chatterton under the name of Rowley, when he created medieval knowledge though he was only supposed to depict it. Moreover, by having Meredith call the painting "the true death of Chatterton", Ackroyd insists both on the uncertainty of history, of its construction, its textuality and on the fact that art has an influence on life. The acute concern for details in this last scene staging Chatterton's death seems to transform it into a realistic representation of Wallis's painting. Mimesis seems to be reversed here. It is also most likely that Peter Ackroyd chose a romanticised ending that matches the alleged realistic execution of the painting in order to enhance the irony of the term "true death", as Chatterton dying from arsenic was probably not smiling when he died.

Imitation, style and intertextuality

If reality cannot be copied or imitated, language can: just as a painting can be imitated by a painter, words can be imitated by a writer, and the subject is tackled in quite a polemical way in *Chatterton*. Ackroyd gives a blatant

demonstration in chapter 6 when he stages his imitation of Joynson imitating Chatterton imitating medieval style (Now Rowlie ynne these mokie Dayes/Sendes owte hys shynynge Lyghte, 87).

From the very beginning the reader gets the idea that echoes are constituent of the book. Pages 2 and 3, which come before the first part entitled "Part One", are bits, echoes of the novel we are going to read and each of them displays a particular topic. The three layers of time are represented and each echo of the novel to follow has been chosen for its link with the notion of reproduction of language (quotations) or truth and reality (representation). It has to be noted straight away that those fragments do not strictly reproduce the parts of the novel they allude to. The writer engages in a distorted play of echoes- or a play of distorted echoes- as soon as the peritext[5]. Here are two of those fragments:

> […]
> 'I am not so poor that I need pity from such as you!' Chatterton ran out into the open fields, pushing his face against the wind that chilled him; then he stopped short, sat down on the cropped grass and, gazing at the tower of St Mary Redcliffe, muttered the words that had so powerfully swayed him:
>
> > The time of my departure is approaching.
> > Nigh is the hurricane that will scatter my leaves.
> > Tomorrow, perhaps, the wanderer will appear-
> > His eye will search for me round every spot,
> > And will, -and will not find me.

He looked at the church and, with a shout, raised his arms above his head.

<div align="center">*</div>

> Harriet Scrope rose from her chair, eager to deliver the news. 'Cut is the bough,' she said, 'that might have grown full straight.' And she doubled up, as if she were about to be sawn in half.
>   'Branch.' Sarah Tilt was very deliberate.
>   'I'm sorry?'
>   'It was a branch, dear, not a bough. If you were quoting.'
> Harriet stood upright. 'Don't you think I know?' She paused before starting up again. 'We poets in our youth begin in gladness. But thereof in the end come despondency and madness.'
> […]

---

5 The word "peritext" refers to the paratextual elements inside a book (cf. Genette 1987).

The first lines uttered by Chatterton (the character) illustrate the technique of pastiche; they are Ackroyd's creation, not a quotation from Chatterton's works; we are already given the idea that the book will constantly play with authentic and invented material, and challenge the notion of "authenticity". Then, these lines point to one of the main questions of the novel: is the poet going to survive after his death thanks to his work? Will his voice be identified as his own even in the texts of others? In the second extract, the reader witnesses Harriet Scrope quoting or rather misquoting lines by Marlow ("Cut is the branch etc") and by Wordsworth ("We poets in our youth.."), those lines coming from the very stanza in which the poet mentions "Chatterton, the marvellous Boy". Quotation is once again at the core of the peritext, in the mouth of a writer who (incorrectly) takes up the words of previous writers. These misquotations clearly allude to intertextuality and probably raise the question of origin.

These borrowings from Ackroyd's own novel announce many other borrowings inside the novel and, indeed, many deliberate or hidden quotes run through its entire space. In other words, the novel is highly intertextual. We may be more precise and use Gérard Genette's terminology to identify the types of borrowings that can be found in *Chatterton*: intertextuality (allusions, quotes and plagiarism), hypertextuality and hypotextuality (Genette 1982 and 1987). Another category should be added here, as the novel sometimes borrows from itself or from Ackroyd's other works: this is called "autotextuality", or 'internal/autarchic intertextuality'[6]. The fragments aforementioned belong to this category.

The reader gets the idea of a whole dialogical space, be it literary or not, riddled with voluntary or involuntary quotations or borrowings:

> And at once he [Charles] realised that these were not his words, but those of someone other. (78)

> 'I [George Meredith] never know what is mine any more.' (134)

Words and voices reverberate inside the speakers' minds and mouths. This clearly raises the question of origin and this question is even more blatant when famous quotations in the novel appear to be unmistakably anachronistic. On page 85, Chatterton says: "Schoolboy tho' I was, it was even at this time that I decided to shore up these ancient Fragments with my own genius". This sentence is highly reminiscent of a line by T.S. Eliot, written almost two centuries after Chatterton's death: "These fragments I have shored against my

---

[6] "Internal intertextuality" was used in Ricardou (1971) and Dallenbach coined the term "autotextuality" and defined it as "autarchic intertextuality" (see Dallenbach 1976).

ruins" (*The Waste Land* 1922). Less than casting doubt on the origin of Eliot's line, it highlights the circulation of words in time and the normal blurring of origins. The text seems to be "woven entirely with citations, references, echoes (…) antecedent or contemporary, which cut across it through and through in a vast stereophony" (Barthes 1971, 1473).

This question on origins is further dealt with in the debate concerning "influence" and "anxiety of influence" displayed in the novel. Indeed, some writers in the book show how ethically problematic to them it can be to be influenced by other texts or other writers. They see the influence of a hypotext through borrowings or imitation as an ethical fault called plagiarism[7] or fakery (and we must remember that all the plots are closely linked to these notions). Let us have a look at a conversation between Harriet and Charles:

> Then she [Harriet] sighed. 'But Eliot took me under his wing.'

> Charles stopped writing for a moment and looked up at her. ' Why should the aged

> 'What?'
> 'It's a quotation from Eliot.'

> 'It sounded like Shakespeare to me'.

> 'It was Eliot.'
> 'Well you know these writers. They'll **steal** any..." (100)

This conversation stages a distorted case of intertextuality, which is quite common in the novel. Charles takes up Harriet's mention of "Eliot" and "wing", and quotes half a line from *Ash Wednesday* "Why should the aged eagle" (stretch its wings). Harriet identifies it as being Shakespeare's, which is actually not the case. But Ackroyd playfully hints at a real case of intertextuality between Shakespeare and Eliot in the same poems:

> Because I don't hope to turn
> **Desiring this man's gift and that man's scope**
> I no longer strive to strive towards such things
> (Why should the aged eagle stretch its wings)
> (*Ash Wednesday*, l.3-6)

> When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
> I all alone beweep my outcast state
> And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries

---

7   There is a difference here in the way Ackroyd's characters define "plagiarism" and the way Genette defines it. While the latter considers plagiarism as a literal borrowing and thus labels it "intertextuality", plagiarism seems to be clearly linked with hypertextuality in the words of the characters. They are anxious about borrowing plots or styles from previous texts, from hypotexts.

> And look upon myself and curse my fate,
> Wishing me like to one more rich in hope;
> Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,
> **Desiring that man's art and that man's scope**,
> With what I most enjoy contented least;
> > (*Sonnet 29* l.1-8)

The lines are almost identical. Of course, the choice of the verb "steal" is quite telling of the ethical blame in Harriet's mind. She is herself quite ashamed of having borrowed plots from another writer, which she calls "plagiarism" (103). The same trouble occurs for Philip:

> Not only had he written with painful slowness and uncertainty, but even the pages he had managed to complete seemed to him to be filled with images and phrases from the work of other writers whom he admired. It had become a patchwork of other voices and of other styles, and it was the overwhelming difficulty of recognising his own voice among them that had led him to abandon the project. So what right did he have to **condemn** Miss Scrope? (70)

The same vocabulary of fault and guilt appears here. Both are an example of Harold Bloom's 1997 anxiety of influence theory; they cannot accept their forebears' influence and cannot be creative thanks to – or because of – their previous readings. Both are quite anxious to be recognised as "authors" and both long for originality as writers, thus clinging to the romantic concept of creation which warns against "the hazards of imitation" which "denies one's own potential for greatness[8]" (Leitch 2001, 427).

Meanwhile, mimesis and hypertextuality are elsewhere advocated in the novel to achieve creation:

> Chatterton knew that original genius consists in forming new and happy combinations, rather than in searching after thoughts and ideas that had never occurred before (58).

The choice of the adjective "original" in this statement acts as a counterpoint for the romantic conception of originality aforementioned. In chapter 6, Chatterton's art of forgery (or pastiche) is described and the reader is shown how the forger has to master the original material. Hypertextuality is highlighted, and pastiche of great authors advocated as creation and not mere imitation. This is reminiscent of Ackroyd's conception of "the history of English literature as the history of plagiarism" and his description of TS Eliot as "a great plagiarist" (Smith 1987 in Finney 1992, 245) "absorb[ing] and articulat[ing] voices from the past" (Finney 1992, 245). TS Eliot's position

---

8   Edward Young' "Conjectures on Original Composition" were written in 1759 and the first modern printing of them dates back to 1918.

itself is that "each poem exists within the tradition from which it takes shape and which it, in turns, redefines" (Leitch 2001, 1089), a position that Bloom harshly criticizes but that finds an echo in Kristeva's 1969 analysis of poetic language as dialogical:

> Poetic language appears as a dialogue between texts. […] Every sequence has a double orientation: towards the act of reminiscence (evoking the other writing) and towards the act of summation (transforming this writing). The book refers to other books and […] gives those books a new way of being (181).[9]

The positive aspect of the concept of borrowing is furthered and illustrated in the image of the father and son relationship that runs through the novel. While at first Edward is scolded by his father while imitating Mr Leno ("it's rude to imitate people", 44), at the end of the novel, his perfect imitation of his dead father acts as a palimpsest:

> And in his expression at that moment she could see the lineaments of Charles's face: her husband was dead and yet he was not dead.

This echoes another cue by Chatterton in chapter 6: "Thus the living and the dead were to be reunited". We seem to be given the idea that authors and their texts acquire immortality thanks to this palimpsestic condition, the past and present figures having thus a reciprocal benefit on each other. However, there is no clear-cut view about the place of the author. While some passages suggest his supremacy, as hypertextuality compels a mastery of the hypotext, some other might allude to his disappearance, to "the death of the author" whose text, so full of alien voices and writings, totally submerges him. The episode of Chatterton's portrait restoration by faker Stewart Merk looks like a metaphor for this statement. Having discovered that the portrait was a fake and asked by Harriet to make it "authentic", the faker realises that "the painting contained the residue of several different images, painted at various times" (205). And when he finds out the original painting underneath, the portrait begins to dissolve, showing a palimpsest of faces before being totally destroyed. Here the search for origin is shown as doomed or useless and the work of art is seen as a composite, multi-layered and autonomous object. This recalls Barthes's definition of text as "a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash" ("The Death of the Author" 1968).

---

9 My translation.

Concluding remarks

Though in Chatterton the reader can never hear the opinion or the voice of the implied author whose heterodiegetic, unintrusive narrator stages different characters with different opinions without creating a distance or a bias, he can nevertheless recognise some of Ackroyd's polemical literary claims already exposed in his *Notes for a New Culture*.

First, the ethics of writing are staged in terms of mimesis after a predecessor. In the novel, when characters manage to get rid of their anxiety of influence and transform it into influence, they become creative and travel from mimesis to poiesis. There is a claim that writers are first readers and as such that the circulation of texts is inevitable and to be sought after. Intertextuality and hypertextuality help celebrate words and language: quotations and pastiche of style are recognised as the only possible mimesis. Words can only imitate words.

Conversely, the structure of the novel including heterogeneous elements, both fictional and actual, realistic and romanced ones, helps convey the idea that "reality", contrary to words, cannot be represented entirely realistically as it is necessarily mediated by the subjective eye of the viewer. Thus following Plato's cave myth, and White's theory, Ackroyd challenges representation as imitation in general, and historical narratives as reference in particular. A strong linguistic claim is prevalent throughout the novel and the referential value of texts is somewhat undermined. Ackroyd invites the reader to critical distance, to adopt an ethic of reading and to appreciate texts and literature for their linguistic value, for what he calls "le jeu de la forme", the free play of linguistic forms, in his *Notes For A New Culture* (Onega 1998, 7).

Bibliography

"Chatterton". 1986. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Micropaedia vol.3, 15th edition.

"Edward Young", 2001. LEITCH, Vincent, general editor. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism,* New York, Norton and Company, 426-437.

"T.S Eliott", 2001. LEITCH, Vincent, general editor. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism,* New York, Norton and Company, 1088-1104.

ACKROYD, Peter, 1987. *Chatterton*, London, Penguin.

------------------, 1993. *English Music*, London, Penguin.

BARTHES, Roland, 1968 . "The Death of the Author". Translated by Stephen Heath in *The Norton Anthology. Theory and Criticism* 2001, New York, Norton and Company, 1466-1470.

--------------------------, 1971. "From Work to Text". Translated by Stephen Heath in *The Norton Anthology. Theory and Criticism* 2001, New York, Norton and Company, 1470-1475.

BLOOM, Harold, 1997.*The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*, Oxford University Press.

DALLENBACH, Lucien, 1976. « *Intertexte et autotexte* », Poétique n°26: 282-296.

FINNEY, Brian, 1992. "Peter Ackroyd, Postmodernist Play and Chatterton", *Twentieth Century Literature*, Vol. 38 N°2: 240-261. Accessed 15/06/2010. http://www.jstor.org/stable/441621.

GENETTE, Gérard, 1982. *Palimpsestes,* Paris, Seuil.

--------------------. 1987. *Seuils*, Paris, Seuil.

GRAHAM, William, 1821. *A Collection of Epitaphs and Monumental Inscriptions, Ancient and Modern, with an Emblematic Frontispiece*, Carlisle, London, C. Thurman.

KAPLAN, Louise J., 1989. *The Family Romance of the Impostor-Poet Thomas Chatterton*, Berkeley, University of California Press.

KRISTEVA, Julia, 1969. *Semeiotike. Recherches pour une Sémanalyse*, Collection « Tel Quel », Paris, Seuil.

LEITCH, Vincent B., general ed., 2001. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, New York, W. W. Norton and Company, inc.

LEWIS, Barry, 2007. *My Words Echo Thus. Possessing the Past in Peter Ackroyd*, Columbia, University of South Carolina Press.

MICHAUD, Joseph François et MICHAUD Louis Gabriel, ed. 1813. *Biographie universelle, Ancienne et Moderne, ou Histoire, par Ordre Alphabétique, de la Vie Publique et Privée de tous les Hommes qui se sont Distingués par leurs Écrits, leurs Actions, leurs Talents, leurs vertus ou leurs Crimes*, Paris, Frères Michaud Imprimeurs.

ONEGA, Susan, 1998. *Peter Ackroyd*, Plymouth, Northcote House.

RICARDOU, Jean, 1971. Pour une théorie du nouveau roman, Paris, Seuil.

WHITE, Hayden, 1987. *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins University Press.

--------------------, 1999. *Figurative Realism: Studies in the Mimesis Effect*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins University Press.

WILCOX, Charles Bonnycastle, 1842. *The Poetical Works Of Thomas Chatterton with Notices of his Life, History of the Rowley Controversy, a Selection of his Letters, and Notes critical and Explanatory*, Cambridge, W.P. Grant.

TOTAL REPORT IN ALAN BENNETT'S "A CREAM CRACKER UNDER THE SETTEE"

Manuel Jobert
Université Jean Moulin – Lyon 3
Paris Ouest Nanterre la Défense CREA - EA 370

Résumé : L'objet de cet article est d'analyser comment Alan Bennett parvient à provoquer l'empathie du spectateur dans la séries *Talking Heads*. En effet, dans ces monologues, la structure narrative peut être perçue comme un frein à l'implication émotionnelle et les thèmes abordés, s'ils sont universaux, ne sont guère remarquables. Or, ces monologues – qui sont devenus des classiques de la littérature contemporaine – fonctionnent et emportent l'adhésion des spectateurs / lecteurs. Le monologue de Doris dans « A Cream Cracker Under the Settee » est pris comme exemple du tour de force dramatique accompli par l'auteur.

Mots-clés : empathie – double allocutaire – mémoire – narration orale

Introduction

The title of this presentation could apply to any of the *Talking Heads* monologues. Indeed, each speaker reports one or several episodes of his / her life. In "A Cream Cracker Under the Settee", (henceforth CC) however, things are more strained as the speaker, Doris, looks back upon her life before preferring death to being sent to an old people's home. The monologue starts *in medias res* with Doris lying on her sofa with her hip probably broken after falling off a buffet while dusting.

The major episodes of Doris's life pass through her mind as if this monologue was the extended dramatized version of the split second that precedes death, during which our whole life is said to unfold before our eyes. This undoubtedly adds to the dramatic effect of the piece and gives the

impression that time is both suspended and running out. This total report then will also be a final report. Furthermore, "reporting" is also a major ingredient of the plot as Zulema, the home help, threatens Doris: "I have to **report** on you" (140) and Doris, when she finds a cream cracker left by Zumela under her settee exclaims: "She wants **reporting**", assuming that this discovery will be enough to save her from Stafford House by blackmailing Zumela.

The obvious problem with such narratives is that they may come across as technically contrived and thematically anecdotal. The puzzle is that such unlikely literary constructs work and the *Talking Heads* monologues actually boosted Alan Bennett's career.

Paradoxically perhaps, CC is a very lively monologue, somewhat full of humour almost until the end. The report of previous conversations partly accounts for this impression and I shall analyse how reported direct speech (DS) actually structures the narrative and appears as a counterpoint to the few actual verbal interactions. Nevertheless, at first glance, these monologues appear deceptively superficial and trivial but Doris's verbal and physical divagations – the word being taken both literally and figuratively – manage to take viewers by surprise and make them empathise with an old English Northern lady they may have nothing in common with.

1. Talking to oneself … and others

A complex discourse structure

As Mick Short (1996, 173) suggests in *Exploring the Language of Poems, Plays and Prose*, "Alan Bennett's *Talking Heads* series of TV dramatic monologues (which have one actor producing a monologue throughout) have non-prototypical structures". By this, the author suggests that there are more than two discourse levels, which is the typical case in dramatic pieces. Although the discourse situation is not as complex as that exhibited in *The Lady in the Van* for instance (see McIntyre 2006), it deserves to be made explicit. It is often believed that the prototypical monologue belongs in the theatre. However, its origins can be traced to the medieval period when it was used in narratives to make thoughts explicit. As the novel developed, narrators found more efficient ways of providing this type of information. The monologue appeared somewhat unnatural. In the theatre, the monologue is still a useful convention and the audience have learnt to play along with it. Alan Bennett (2001, 40) claims that:

> […] to watch a monologue on the screen is closer to reading a short story than watching a play.

Bennett's point is that because there is a single point of view expressed, the onus is on the viewer's imagination to make sense of the monologue, making it more like reading a short story than watching a play. Although this statement could be debated or should at least be qualified, the fact of having a single vantage point is comparable to certain narrative constructs with homodiegetic narrators. A monologue, from the Greek *mono*, "one" and *logos*, "discourse", implies a single viewpoint and seems to negate any plurality of voices or any type of interaction. But even homodiegetic narrators sometimes adopt another character's point of view. At this stage, Benveniste's (1974, 82) comments may be useful:

> [...] dès qu'il se déclare locuteur et assume la langue, il implante l'*autre* en face de lui, quel que soit le degré de présence qu'il attribue à cet autre. Toute énonciation est, explicite ou implicite, une allocution, elle postule un allocutaire.

To paraphrase Benveniste, the moment someone starts speaking, the image of an addressee is necessarily formed. Burton (1980, 177-8) in *Dialogue and Discourse*, applies this linguistic principle to the concrete reality of the theatre:

> When it comes to play-talk, clearly we have, somehow, to map on another dimension to cope with the fact that, when a character is speaking to his fellow characters, he is also in some sense, and possibly indirectly, speaking to the audience as well. Thus the addresser has two different categories of addressees – one in the **microcosm of the play**, one in the **macrocosm of the theatre**.

This "dual audience principle" is here complicated by the fact that within the microcosm, the speaker is also addressing herself and we therefore have a "triple audience". Finally, several devices are at work to make the audience believe they belong in the microcosm, thus creating a merger between two categories of addressees and blurring the lines between actors and viewers. It is useful to keep this complex communication situation in mind to account for Bennett's narrative pieces.

By definition, a monologue is produced in direct style. Whether it is to be analysed as direct speech or direct thought is, in the present case, of minor interest. The Discourse World such as it is defined in Text World Theory, is based on a certain amount of contextual parameters. In CC, the speaker is called Doris, she is 75 and is alone in her living-room. She has a northern accent and lives in the Leeds area. The discourse participants, in addition to Doris, are the viewers and four other characters who, *de facto*, seem to be on the same plane as the viewers, enhancing viewerly involvement in the story. From the start, viewers are under the impression that Doris is speaking to

herself as elderly people are wont to do and the viewers are in the somewhat uncomfortable position of eavesdroppers. This narrative strategy would be difficult to maintain if it was not for the fact that even in every day conversational interaction elderly people are prone to ramble on, impervious, as it were, to the linguistic activity around them. In other words, we shift from a formal stage convention to a one-sided conversation viewers may very well be familiar with in the extra-linguistic reality. This makes the cumbersome and sometimes awkward presence of the addressees in the macrocosm less of an oddity. This device enables them to "willingly suspend their disbelief" and makes them feel they belong to the microcosm. The odd direct addresses to the viewers ("You feel" (141) and "You see" (142)), although their pragmatic status remains a matter of debate, possibly add to this feeling of belonging.

Linguistic interaction in the microcosm

In CC, there are four attempts at communication with other characters. Each one signposts Doris's psychological evolution. Although these attempts interrupt the smooth unfolding of the monologue, they are closely related to it. The first one is with the cracked picture of her husband and is uttered in a jocular tone:

> Cracked the photo. We're cracked Wilfred. (141)

This utterance is in keeping with the viewer's "old-widow-talking-to-her-late-husband" schema (see Jeffries & McIntyre 2010, 127-132) and reinforces the "speaking alone" motif of the sequence. In terms of characterisation, Doris appears as a humorous woman full of resources who relishes playful language. In the second instance, Doris realises that her injury might be a serious one. She is determined to get some help as the stage directions indicate: "She cranes towards the window"; "She begins to wave" and remains optimistic as the exclamation "salvation" (145) shows. Her fighting spirit is intact and when she realises the boy is actually "spending a penny" in her garden, she chases him away, verbally abusing him, thereby letting slip her chance of being rescued. In the third instance, Doris appears tired and less determined when she realises that the person who has dropped some ads through the letter box has gone away while she was nodding off. She produces token "Hellos" and her exclamation "Oh stink" (147) underscores her resignation.

These three failed attempts at communication are crucial as they clearly signal the psychological evolution of the character from playfulness to resignation. They are all ordinary and plausible but the anecdotal component of each of them should not distract viewers from their essentially functional role as they clearly anticipate the end of the monologue. The final verbal interaction

with a bobby on the beat is made up of four adjacency pairs (see Levinson 1983). This interaction is crucial in the sense that before Doris was trying to get some help whereas now she deliberately refuses it, thereby accepting death as the only possible outcome of her dusting accident. The first adjacency pair is particularly telling:

> Policeman: Hello, Hello. Are you all right?
> Doris: **No**, I'm all right. (151)

In conversation analysis, this exchange is regarded as neutral although the preferred answer would be "Yes, I'm all right". Doris uses a "short cut" here and construes the policeman's question as a pre-request of the type "Is there a problem?" and answers the unstated request rather than the actual one. Such forms are thus interpreted as positive answers (Yule 1996, 67-8). However, Doris's answer seems to encapsulate the dilemma she has been fighting with so far. Being rescued implies admitting she was dusting and then running the risk of being sent to a home. Not being rescued implies accepting death in *her* home. Similarly, when the policeman takes his leave, the exchange goes as follows:

> Policeman: Sorry. Take care.
> *He goes.*
> Doris: Thank you.
> *She calls again.*
> Doris: Thank you.

The first "Thank you" is the preferred answer to the policeman's first part. The second one, however, seems to carry more interpretative ambivalence. It is tempting to assign different pragmatic values to these two second parts. The second "thank you" can be interpreted as Doris's final attempt at communication altogether as if she was giving life a last shot. Conversely, and although this may be stretching interpretation, her last "thank you" could suggest that Doris is grateful that the policeman should – unwittingly – let her have her own way and decide it is time for her to go.

Embedded Direct Speech

Parallel to these verbal exchanges, the content of Doris's monologue is packed with various reports of conversation, mainly with Zumela, her home help, and Wilfred her husband. Embedded DS is thus foregrounded. There are only four instances of indirect speech. All the other reported interactions are in DS, which is in stark contrast with Doris's other conversations in which she is fairly laconic. In terms of characterisation, this device is also a splendid way of

presenting Doris as a brilliant storyteller. In the monologue, DS is exclusively introduced by the verb *say*. As Alan Bennett (2001, 40) explains:

> 'Said' or 'says' is generally all that is required to introduce reported speech, because whereas a novelist or short story writer has a battery of expressions to choose from ('exclaimed', 'retorted', 'groaned', 'lisped'), in live narration such terms seem literary and self-conscious. Adverbs too ('she remarked tersely') seem to over-egg the pudding or else acquire undue weight in the mouth of supposedly artless narrators.

What Alan Bennett fails to mention is the fact that all the paralinguistic notations (see Brown 1990) he mentions (phonetic markers indicating emotions) are in fact taken care of by the speakers of his monologues and directly reach viewers as most of the illocutionary force is conveyed through the speakers' "tone of voice". These chunks of reported speech represent world-switches that actually report past conversations. In the following example, Doris plays both parts extremely well:

> […] When she's going **she says**, 'Doris. I don't want to hear that you've been touching the Ewbank. The Ewbank is out of bounds'. **I said**, 'I could just run round with it now and again?' **She said**, 'You can't run anywhere. You're on trial here.' **I said**, 'What for?' **She said**, 'For being on your own. For not behaving sensibly. For not acting like a woman of seventy-five who has a pacemaker and dizzy spells and doesn't have the sense she was born with.' **I said** 'Yes, Zumela' […] (104)

In other cases Doris rehearses what she intends to say to Zumela to "get her own back", that is to win the Stafford House battle:

> I'm going to save this cream cracker and show it her next time she starts going on about Stafford House. **I'll say**, 'Don't Stafford House me, lady. This cream cracker was under the settee. I've only got to send this cream cracker to the Director of Social Services and you'll be on the carpet. Same as the cream cracker. I'll be in Stafford House, Zumela, but you'll be in the Unemployment Exchange.' (144)

These two conversations dramatize the discrepancy between reality (the first conversation) where Doris is forced into a submissive position (as the speech acts used by Zulema make clear). Prosodically, Doris beautifully renders Zumela's condescension when addressing her as a child and forcing her to surrender. In her imagined verbal counterattack, Zulema is forced into silence by Doris's crescendo salvo. In other cases, Doris's reports don't involve any precise characters and although Doris remains witty and articulate, her hope for a positive ending seems to be waning.

> 'What's your name? Doris? Right. Pack your case. You belong in Stafford House'. (150)

These world-switches, although they are not on the same plane as the actual interactions between Doris and other characters, play a functionally similar role. They are more lively and entertaining but the same evolution is

perceived. However, there is a major contrast between the scarcity of the words exchanged in the microcosm and the vividness and eventfulness of the reported dialogues. Past, future and even hypothetical conversations instantly appear as counterpoints to the situation at hand. Nevertheless, these three reports, presented here in chronological order, clearly signal that the trap is closing on Doris and that she is acutely aware of this. As Alan Bennett (2001, 40) points out:

> Only Doris, the old lady who has fallen and broken her hip in *A Cream Cracker Under the Settee*, knows the score and that she is done for, but though she can see it's her determination to dust that's brought about her downfall, what she doesn't see is that it's the same obsession that tidied her husband into the grave.

Doris is indeed trapped in the material world surrounding her both literally and figuratively. Her final re-evaluation of her life is based on objects and people rather than on feelings and ideas. Falling off the buffet and finding a cream cracker can be easily handled. Facing death and coming to terms with the past is a more difficult venture. Doris's train of thoughts is dictated by her immediate environment. According to Norrick (2003) in *Conversational Narrative*, this is characteristic of such narratives. In CC, the consequence is the juxtaposition of trivial and existential notions, humour and desperation, something which also happens to be Alan Bennett's trademark.

2. Talking trivia?

"A Woman of No Importance"

The first and the final lines of CC give the impression that the whole monologue is about trivial events and that it is too late to do anything. The use of the present perfect gives the viewers an impression of a *fait accompli*; the adjective "silly" underscores the mundane nature of the situation; the self-addressed "never mind" seems to close the case:

> It's such a **silly** thing to **have done**. (140)
> **Never mind**. It's done with now, anyway. (152)

The whole monologue is punctuated by such statements, putting an end to Doris's various anecdotes. When she reports her husband never fixed the garden gate for lack of time, she concludes: "Well, he's got a minute now, bless him" (142). When she complains that the neighbourhood keeps changing and that she doesn't know anybody anymore, she explains (144):

> Then she went and folks started to come and go. You lose track. I don't think they're married half of them. You see all sorts.

Doris's discourse actually welds matter-of-fact comments as well as strings of prejudices that may be expected from an ageing lady. This apparent trivia is presented in a familiar, colloquial and sometimes dialectal language. The use of dialect is notoriously difficult to render and Bennett is quite frugal in his use of it. With Leech & Short (2007, 136) we can say that authors "are more interested in the illusion, the living flavour, of dialect, rather than with exact reproduction". On top of the odd lexical items, "sneck" (142) or "lasses" (150), Bennett remains quite circumspect and only a few syntactical constructions are suggestive of a Northern or of a non-standard dialect: "Them's her leaves" (143) or again "Don't let's jump the gun, Wilfred" (146). The rest of the Northern flavour is taken care of by Thora Hird. Lexical repetition is a typical feature of Bennett's monologues which instantly makes them sound authentic, natural and fluent:

> **Zumela** doesn't **dust**. She **half dusts**. (140)
> She's not **half done** this place, **Zumela**. (144)
>
> The dog would be his **province**.
> I said. 'Yes, and whose **province** would all the little hairs be?' (145)
>
> "The dusting is **my department**" (140)
> "We can be self-sufficient in the vegetable **department**" (145)
>
> 'Lock it and put it on the chain Doris. You never know who comes. It may not be a **bona fide caller**.' It never is a **bona fide caller'**. (146)

This device increases the cohesion of the piece, setting up a system of repetitions and echoes. Linguistic creativity is another important feature of this monologue. About the dog Doris and her husband wanted to have, she says:

> I didn't want one of them great lolloping, lamppost-smelling articles. (145)

In the introduction to *Talking Heads*, Bennett attributes this sentence to his own father. When used in conjunction, all these features have a massive impact on the viewers:

> **Mix**. I don't want to **mix**. Comes to the finish and they suddenly want you to **mix**. I don't want to be stuck with a lot of **old lasses**. And they all **smell of pee**. And **daft** half of them, banging tambourines. You go **daft** there, there's **nowhere else for you to go** but **daft**. Wearing somebody else's frock. They even mix up your teeth. […] And Zumela says, 'You don't understand, Doris. You're not up to date. They have lockers, now. Flowerbeds. They have their hair done. They go on trips to Wharfedale.' I said, 'Yes. **Smelling of pee**.' She said, 'You're prejudiced, you.' I said, 'I am, where hygiene is concerned.' (150)

Involuntary memories

What, at first glance, appears to be a disconnected set of random recollections / reflexions is in fact a highly organised construct. During the entire monologue, Doris slowly crawls in her house in order to get some help. She goes from the place she has fallen to the fireplace and the window before finally reaching the front-door. The different parts of the house actually chart Doris's life and trigger memories in a pattern akin to Proustian memory, i.e. with ordinary objects conjuring up involuntary recollections.

In each case, everyday objects are foregrounded: Wilfred's cracked photo, the sneck, the bush etc. enable Doris to remember the past and to project herself into a time and into a place where things were different. In this sense, the viewer's experience is similar to visiting an old lady who goes through her photo album and knick-knacks in order to re-live happy memories. Doris's account is very much embodied in as much as all her senses are alert: she watches Wilfred's photo and sees the leaves coming down, she hears people outside, she feels her "numby leg" and even tastes the cream cracker she has discovered. Viewers are literally invited to feel with her, to empathise with her. However, the most poignant recollection is brought about by the very absence of an object:

> **This is where** we had the pram. **You couldn't get past for it**. Proper pram then, springs and hoods. Big wheels. More like cars than prams. Not these fold-up jobs. You were proud of your pram. (146)

The deictic and spatial references as well as the precision of the description make it ever so real despite its absence. The subject of the pram is then dropped and followed by a satirical interlude involving Jehovah Witnesses. A crucial stage direction reintroduces the pram as main topic:

> *She looks at the place where the pram was.*
> I wanted him called John. **The midwife said he wasn't fit to be called anything <u>and</u> had we any newspaper?** Wilfred said. 'Oh yes. She saves newspaper. She saves shoeboxes as well.' (147)

It is striking that the midwife's words should be reported in free indirect speech, one of the few instances in the monologue. The conjunction introduced ("and") in the reported speech adds a sense of urgency and violence to the episode. Similarly, Wilfred's practical sense verging on enthusiasm couldn't be presented in a more negative light. Doris's evaluation, indirect as it may be, encapsulates the emptiness of her married life:

> I don't think Wilfred minded? A Kiddy. It was the same as the allotment and the fretwork. Just a craze. He said, 'We're better off, Doris. Just the two of us'. (148)

This apparent lack of feeling on Wilfred's part is reminiscent of what Alan Bennett describes in *Untold Stories* about his own father whom he only kissed once, just before his death and about men in his family who were not very good at showing emotions.

"In my end is my beginning"

The lost baby and the threat of being sent to Stafford House are clearly the two major themes upon which the monologue pivots. The evocation of the lack of hygiene in Stafford House where old ladies are believed to be "smelling of pee" triggers – by contrast – another memory of the time when Doris was pregnant. This evocation, resulting from two opposite notions (pregnancy and old age), is the opportunity for Alan Bennett to show his dexterity in evoking a by-gone age:

> When people were clean and the streets were clean and it was all clean and you could walk down the street and folks smiled and passed the time of day, I'd leave the door on the latch and go on to the end for some toffee, and when I came back Dad was home and the cloth was on and plates out and we'd have our tea. Then we'd side the pots and I'd wash up while he read the paper and we'd eat toffees and listen to the wireless all them years ago when we were first married and I was having the baby. (150)

Although the house remains the central element of Doris's life in her recollection, it is no longer a place of entrapment and pain but the symbol of the security of a home. Something quite different from the Home she is to be sent to. This analepsis is totally detached from the rest of the monologue. On the contrary, the final analepsis is anchored in the present. Doris has just refused the policeman's help and she concludes:

> You've done it now, Doris. Done it now, Wilfred. (151)

This parallel structure clearly indicates that they are both to be blamed for the present situation. Her final recollection turns back the clock even further:

> I wish I was ready for bed. All washed and in a clean nightie and the bottle in, all sweet and crisp and clean like when I was little on Baking Night, sat in front of the fire with my long hair still. (152)

This final evocation of the young girl Doris was, which couldn't be more different from the old woman the viewers have come to know during the monologue, can only incite them to reflect on their own mortality with the necessary gravity and the amused distance Alan Bennett manages to combine in his writing.

References

BENNETT, Alan. 2001. *Talking Heads*, Reading, BBC Books.

────────. 2005. *The Complete Talking Heads*, London, BBC Worldwide Ltd. 295 mins.

────────. 2005. *Untold Stories*, London, Faber & Faber.

BENVENISTE, Émile. 1974. *Problèmes de linguistique générale*, vol. 2, Paris, Gallimard.

BROWN, Gillian. 1990. *Listening to Spoken English*, London, Longman.

JEFFRIES, Lesley & Dan MCINTYRE. 2010. *Stylistics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

JOBERT, Manuel. 2012. '"Instant contextualisation" and readerly involvement in Alan Bennett's 'Bed among the Lentils,'' *Etudes de Stylistique Anglaise 3*.

LEECH, Geoffrey & MICK Short. 2007 [1981]. *Style in Fiction*, London, Pearson, 2nd edition.

LEVINSON, Stephen C. 1983. *Pragmatics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

McINTYRE, Dan. 2006. *Point of View in Plays*, Amsterdam, John Benjamins Publishing Company.

NORRICK, Neal R. 2000. *Conversational Narrative – Storytelling in Everyday Talk*, Amsterdam, John Benjamins Publishing Company.

SHORT, Mick. 1996. *Exploring the Language of Poems, Plays and Prose*, London, Pearson Education.

READERS AND POINT-OF-VIEW
IN CONTEMPORARY POEMS:
A QUESTION OF PRONOUNS

Lesley Jeffries
University of Huddersfield, U.K.

Résumé : Cet article étudie l'utilisation des pronoms dans une cinquante poèmes en anglais et suggère une typologie partielle de l'utilisation et de la signification des pronoms en poésie du point de vue de la réception.

Mots-clés : style, poésie contemporaine, utilisation des pronoms, deixis.

Introduction

Point of view has long been of interest to literary critics and stylisticians, probably because, as Stockwell (2002:41) says of reading literature:

> It is as if a threshold is crossed and readers can project their minds into the other world, find their way around there, and fill out the rich detail between the words of the text on the basis of real life experience and knowledge.

Much discussion of this phenomenon has been in relation to fictional texts, ignoring other genres and text types, as McIntyre (2006) points out, and focussing largely on the narrative role. McIntyre's aim is to consider point of view in dramatic texts and he notes that the usual absence of a narrator in plays and film scripts is not necessarily a stumbling block, though the usual approach to point of view "does not take into account the position from which readers of dramatic texts interpret events in the fictional world" (McIntyre 2006:14). It is

precisely the position of readers in relation to the worlds created by, in my case, poems, that this article wishes to address.

The aim of this article is to explore the position(s) readers may take up in relation to a poem's deictic centre(s) as a result of the poem using particular combinations of personal pronouns. Drawing on deictic shift theory (DST) and broader concepts of person deixis, I will demonstrate the range of reader positioning that appear to be favoured in a small corpus of contemporary poetry in English. These observations may have wider applications beyond the specific contemporary poetry used here and beyond poetry in English, but such applications await further investigation.

Person deixis

One of the three core types of deixis (person, place and time), person deixis is primarily communicated through the personal pronoun system in English. Unlike the other two deictic systems of space and time, person deixis does not exhibit clearly the distinction between proximal and distal deixis whereby the linguistic items concerned indicate that the speaker is near to (proximal) or far from (distal) the referent concerned. The place and time referred to by the adverbs *here* and *now* identify the speaker's current position and time of speaking whereas *there* and *then* indicate a time and place distant from the speaker at the time of speaking.

It is tempting to continue this pattern when considering the normal (conversational) use of personal pronouns, labelling *I/me/we/us* as proximal and *you* as distal. In face-to-face interaction, they seem to behave like the adverbs of place and time in indicating the most proximal referent to the speaker (*I*) and the distal (*you*) in the form of the addressee[1]. The problem with this is that personal pronouns form a three-part system which has another member, the third person pronoun (*she/he/her/him/they/them*). The proximity of their referents to the speaker seems to be at another remove – somehow 'super-distal'. The alternative is to see the *I-you* dyad as deictic, but the third person pronouns as non-deictic because a change of speaker does not necessarily lead to a change in the referent of third person pronouns. But this ignores the fact that third person pronouns themselves do still shift in reference, depending on who is being discussed. In addition, it is not clear that it is always

---

[1] There is, in addition, the complication of inclusive versus exclusive *we/us* which can (or needn't) include the addressee as a referent. This just makes the proximal/distal distinction even more complex in relation to person deixis.

the change of speaker itself that lends deictic items the referential power of other deictic forms. Though *here* is linked in some way to the personal consciousness of the speaker, for example, other accepted deictic items, such as *last week* or *opposite* (the house) owe more to their temporal context or surroundings than to the identity of the speaker.

Below, I will consider the question of how readers identify with the referents of pronouns in texts and specifically in poems, but first it will be helpful to address the question of how textual deixis works when the text is not part of face-to-face interaction.

Deictic Shift Theory

If deixis is, as it appears to be, a function that evolved from the conversational context of face-to-face interaction, then one of the questions that stylistics needs to address is how this works in contexts where the speaker (or author/narrator etc in written texts) is not present in the same time and space as the hearer (or reader). In face-to-face interaction, the deictic centre is clear, as the speaker is the producer of the text and her/his positioning in time and space defines the deictic centre. When the turn changes to another speaker, the deictic centre also changes. This basic process can also be used when the speakers are at a distance in time (e.g. in exchanging of letters or emails) and/or space (e.g. speaking on the phone) because one of the linguistically-based abilities that human beings have developed is the ability to project into their addressee's deictic centre. They are able, for example, to imagine the place where the addressee is, even from the other end of a telephone, and give directions as if they were seeing the scene from the point of view of the hearer. This is the first shift of deixis from a direct situational ability to a virtual ability to envisage a time/space envelope different from that of the speaker him/herself.

Deictic Shift Theory (Duchan et al 1995) is the next step; allowing for the ability of readers or hearers to mentally place themselves at the deictic centre of texts where they have no direct experience of the situation being referred to. This is the ability which enables us to enjoy reading fiction, listen to personal anecdotes, imagine non-existent worlds or places and times we have no opportunity to experience. McIntyre (2006:104) describes it as:

> an attempt to explain how it is that readers often come to feel deeply involved in narratives, to the extent that they interpret events in a narrative as if they were experiencing them from a position within the story world.

The theory of deictic shifting suggests that what readers do when they navigate such a text is to imagine the situation, the time and the people involved and mentally place themselves within that situation – possibly as one of the protagonists or as the omniscient narrator if there is one. As the narrative focus of the text changes, the reader is encouraged by the deictic elements to 'shift' to different vantage points, either by changing the persona they are identifying with or by mentally moving from one place or time to another as suggested by the text.

What has not been clearly examined in this attractive account of reader positioning in texts is the question of whether the reader always and only identifies with the proximal end of the deictic range, which seems to the implication of deictic shift theory. In Jeffries (2000) I first worried about the problem in relation to poetry when confronted by the line:

> Downstairs they will think I have lost my mind

In this poem ('Small Female Skull') by Carol Ann Duffy, the narrator is apparently locked in the bathroom cradling her head in her hands (with a hangover? a headache?) whilst the assembled company (downstairs) wonders what is going on. As a reader, I am conscious of being split between identifying with the first person of the narrator (*I*) and with the others who are *downstairs*, even though the latter are referred to by the third person, super-distal, *they*. This experience raises the questions of how deictic centring impinges on reader positioning and whether the point of view of a reader can be multiple (e.g. both in the bathroom with the narrator and downstairs with the others, wondering whether she has lost her mind) or switching (e.g. from the bathroom to the downstairs) even against the tendency to stay with proximal deictic features.

At this point, I would like to address the specific generic expectations that we might postulate for the reader of poems. Whilst there remains much to say about reader positioning in general, this article is concerned with poems in particular and I would argue that there are some generic expectations which impinge on the reader position in poetic text worlds and might not work in the same way for other texts.

The first of these generic expectations is that in the absence of other evidence (such as a clear indication that the poem is the voice of a particular person apart from the poet), the reader will make the assumption that a first person voice is that of the poet, rather than another author. This means that unlike fiction, where (unless it is specifically stated to the contrary) we do not usually assume that it is 'true', poetry has the illusion of being potentially a

truthful narrative of real people and events, albeit through the prism of rather elaborated and often obscure language.

Another generic assumption, culturally evidenced in the use of poetry for the inside of greetings cards and for recitation at weddings and funerals, is that poetry produces – or perhaps requires – high levels of reader involvement on the emotional plane which have social functions in expressing strong emotions on behalf of the reader at culturally and personally significant points in the reader's life. Thus, the stereotypical love poem is not just a message from the original poet to the original addressee, but performs a function for us all in (we hope) expressing those feelings we are less able than the poet to put into words. Similarly, of course, with bereavement poems, poems of joy at the birth of a child and so on. Other forms of literature, short fiction, novels and plays, do not have anything like the same range of potential social functions as poetry, despite the fact that they also may express human truths in aesthetically pleasing and emotionally satisfying ways.

Two further generic expectations are probably less deeply embedded in the historical function or form of poetry in English at least, but I think they have become part of the contemporary poetry reader's expectation of the reading experience. The first of these is the expectation that contemporary poetry will involve some relatively sudden deictic shifts which may well cause the reader to have to work quite hard to piece together anything approaching a 'narrative' in the poem. The second expectation is that there may well be a high level of what we can call referential vagueness in contemporary poems.

Taken together, these generic expectations lead the reader to the default assumptions that follow:

- The first person narrator is the poet

- Any second person narrator is probably a real person addressed by the poet

- As a reader, I am expecting/expected to become emotionally involved in the poem

- There may well be some surprising and/or superficially incomprehensible cracks in the smooth narration of the poem. As a reader, I will have to work out what is missing from the text which will make sense of the narrative.

Pronoun reference in English

Before presenting the research underlying this article, let us consider Wales' (1996) view of the various pronominal forms of English. Wales' study of pronouns, though primarily describing the range of form and meaning of pronominal forms in English decontextually, nevertheless refers to the contextual function of pronouns:

> While we can take the canonical speech situation as our starting-point, it is more illuminating for the analysis of pronominal behaviour, roles and changes to think, for example, of speaker-orientation and addressee-orientation... Viewed in this way, the traditional distinctions of first, second and third person become blurred, since, for example, the first person 'slot' can be filled with we, you, and one as well as I   (Wales 1996: 7)

Wales (1996: 69) rightly points out that the actual discoursal uses of the traditionally-labelled first, second and third person forms vary to the extent that reference in relation to pronouns is very slippery indeed, even if you know who the speaker is. For example:

> apart from *they* and *it*, all the personal pronouns (including *one*) can be used egocentrically... Conversely, the 1PP I appears to be fixed in its reference to the 'ego' who speaks, and so is essentially reflexive. One interesting exception, however, has implications for this common view that the basic 'deictic anchorage' is speaker-oriented... *I* meaning *you* occurs in utterances such as
>
> *I should ring them up*

Thus, although any of the pronouns can be used to refer to the speaker, *I* normally has only the speaker as referent, though she provides one exception to that rule.

Finally, and most relevantly for my discussion here, Wales points out that:

> In view of the wide range of potential references for *you*, it is not surprising, as Fludernik (1993) illustrates, that readers of so-called 'second person' fiction may have initial difficulties in deciding whether the *you* refers to themselves as readers, people in general including the reader and/or narrator, a specific narrattee or the actual narrator."
>
> (Wales 1996: 79)

These observations, whilst relevant and insightful, do not quite capture the whole picture of pronoun use, reference and reader involvement as seen in contemporary poems. The remainder of this article will attempt to bring some light to bear upon these issues.

The present study

The study reported here follows from Jeffries (2008) in which I analysed two poems to try and establish how the text appears to 'invite the reader in' and what it might mean when they *don't* do so. In this study, I expanded the sample to fifty contemporary poems; categorised them according to their pronoun usage and other person deixis features and made an assessment of the *potential* for reader involvement in the poems as a result of the person deixis. The real test of these findings will be to find a way to use reader responses to assess whether there is anything generalisable about the impact of personal deixis on reader involvement. This will have to wait for another project.

Here, I first of all categorized each poem according to the combination of pronoun forms which were used in them. The categories that emerged from the fifty poems were the result of considering the pronoun forms with little regard initially for their reference. I then considered each poem individually to ascertain whether some of the pronouns appeared to have referents apart from their 'textbook' ones, as pointed out by Wales and Fludernik. The resulting categories of pronoun combination are discussed below.

First person narration with no addressee

Whilst not the largest group, there is nevertheless a recognisable group of poems in my data with a first person narrator, no other pronoun use and few (if any) other foregrounded participants. This makes it likely that the reader will identify with the only available personal deictic centre. Where there is a clear persona other than the poet being referenced by the first person – and particularly perhaps where it is plural (e.g. the *we* of Armitage's 'The Tyre'?) – there may be less inclination to identify with that persona on the part of the reader, though the reader may well have their own personal memories of similar events triggered.

Vicki Feaver's 'Ironing' is a poem about a woman who goes through phases of domestic servitude (characterised by the unnecessary ironing of towels), isolation and depression (indicated by a complete lack of ironing) and finally freedom (signified by ironing of only personal items of clothing). Though clearly a poem about being abandoned, the strength of this poem partly lies in the lack of addressee or referent. She might have indicated her resentment of the absent lover, either in addressing him/her (*you*) or in referring to him (*s/he*) – and this is what does happen in other poems as we will see below. But Feaver decides instead to indicate her (her narrator's?) changing emotions

through the variation in activity of a familiar domestic chore. This leaves us in no doubt about her frustration and anger in the first phase (*I stood like a horse/with a smoking hoof*), her indifference in the second phase (*I converted to crumpledness*) and her contentedness in the third phase (*breathing the sweet heated smell*) but she never addresses, nor refers to, the absent lover directly.

First person narration with one specific third person referent

Poems which combine the first person with a specific third person seem to congregate around three themes in my data. First, there are the poems in which the narrator expresses anger, usually in relation to (but not directly at) a lover/partner or ex-lover/partner. These include, for example, Duffy's poem 'Havisham' about the jilted bride from Dickens' *Great Expectations*:

> Not a day since then
> I haven't wished him dead.
> 'Havisham' (Duffy)

Secondly, there are poems whose topic is the memory of a dead person/people or sometimes of a historical/mythical or fictional character. In my data, these include 'Elegy for the Bee God' (Hill), 'Requiem for the Croppies' (Heaney), 'Captain Marsh' (Sweeney). It is worth noting that none of these refers to a dead lover or partner, though some of them, such as 'Mid-term break' (Heaney), 'Mittens' (Sansom) seem to refer to dead family members:

> Cutting bread brings her hands back to me
> 'Doorsteps' (Gililan)

Finally, there are a small number of exceptions to the topics of anger and memory (with/about a person/people) and what is striking about these is that they have a tendency to have *plural* third person referents as in 'Litany' (Duffy) or in the case of 'The Thought Fox' (Hughes), an animal referent. This group are also 'memory' poems in that they tend to refer to particular incidents in the memory of the narrator, who is the first person referent of the poem and likely to be interpreted as the poet, given the generic expectations I discussed above. Unlike the second category, where the memory is about a specific person/people, these third person referents appear to be present in the backgrounded deictic field of the incident rather than being the main focus of the memory itself:

> My eyes search their faces for
> the son I don't yet have.
> 'Pond Dipping' (Wardle)

The options for readers identifying with the deictic centre of people in these poems are relatively restricted. The most likely deictic centre for the reader to opt into is the first person narrator's, though one could question (or explore through reader-response questionnaires) whether this depends on gender, where gender is known, in the case of the poems about anger in relation to a partner/lover. It seems very unlikely that readers will identify with the dead person in the second group, partly because they are referred to in the third person, but mostly because they are dead. In the third group, the nature of the narration (an incident in memory) will predispose readers to identify with the first person narrator and not the other characters in the poem, partly because they are mentioned in the plural or are not human (the fox) and partly because they are part of the scene rather than the focus of the poem itself.

First person narration with addressee

In the case of the classic *I/you* combination of pronouns, we might expect these poems to be largely love poems of a relatively traditional kind. There are such poems in my data, including 'The Kaleidoscope' (Dunn) and 'Valentine' (Duffy) where the addressee is clearly the lover. In 'The Kaleidoscope', Dunn is addressing his dead wife, which on the evidence of the last category, would indicate using the third person to refer to her. However, this poem's theme is the (unfulfilled) expectation he has of seeing her still in her bed and so the immediacy of addressing her directly (using *you*) is one that feeds into the emotional centre of the poem.

We might ask how the reader is likely to place him/herself into the deictic field of such a poem. Normal conversational experience would incline the reader to take up the position of addressee, identifying with the beloved. Perhaps the immediacy of Dunn's wife being addressed directly could overcome the reader's otherwise likely avoidance of identification with a dead person. It also feeds into the universal habit of day dreaming about how people will react to our death. Individual readers may be more inclined to identify with the narrative voice if they are male (heterosexual) and/or have lost a (female) partner, though readers are probably able to mentally 'translate' the genders/sexuality of protagonists and often do so in response not just to poems, but to song lyrics. Duffy's lover in 'Valentine' is perhaps even more likely to be the focus of the reader's deictic positioning as it is a clear cut *I/you* love poem, albeit sung with onions, rather than flowers (*I give you an onion*).

Another possibility with these poems is that the reader will identify with the first person rather than the addressee. This goes against norms of conversational interaction, but fits the generic expectations of poetry, particularly love poetry, where the dyad of the lover and beloved opens up the possibility of identification with either role. There is a tradition of the lover being male and the beloved female, but I would anticipate that this tradition no longer predisposes readers in quite the same way. What we can conclude about this kind of pronoun usage is that it is no predictor on its own of which persona the reader will identify with and that the other content as well as the background of the reader can influence this deictic relationship either way.

A third possibility is that the *I/you* dyad leaves no room for the reader, who is therefore obliged to mentally 'hover' above the scene like a cupid in flight, observing but not participating in the scene deictically. This is perhaps even more likely to be the case in poems with specific referents such as 'St Brendan explains to the Angel' where there is less scope for reader identification with either saints or angels than with the lover and beloved of other poems. However, it should be added that the generic expectation in prose fiction would be that it is more likely for readers to identify with omniscient narrator deictic centres when the narrative is in the third person. The assumption in relation to prose is that first person narration draws the reader into the narrator's deictic centre. The difference, of course, with much prose fiction is that there is rarely an explicit addressee who is referred to in the second person.

In addition to the classic *I/you* dyad poems, there are others in the data that bring in additional possible deictic centres for the reader to identify with. These include poems like 'A small slaughter' (Lorde) where there is some evidence that the second person pronoun form (*you*) is at times a specific addressee and at other times might be the reader. A similar deictic shift in reference happens in the holocaust poem 'Shooting Stars' (Duffy) where the *I/you* referents are both dead (*You waited for the bullet*) but the reader is also addressed, presumably from beyond the grave, by the narrator:

How would you prepare to die, on a perfect April evening
with young men gossiping and smoking by the graves?

There are also poems where the direct addressees are multiple, as in Harrison's 'Long Distance'. Here, there is the complicating factor of speech presentation (in italics) where the deictic centre of the first person shifts from the narrator (poet) to the father. The addressees are both of his parents and this probably precludes the reader identifying with them.

Another variation on the *I/you* poem is where the first person narrator includes someone else in the reference by using the plural *we*. Deakin's 'Prescription', for example, includes a main referent (the dead mother) as *you* and has a backgrounded narrator who is hardly mentioned, but occurs in an exclusive *we* which does not include the addressee but possibly includes other siblings or family members. Most readers would easily identify with this unspecified family in contemplating a dead mother or relative. A different effect is achieved by Hughes in 'Robbing Myself' where the narrator is captured in the singular pronoun *I* but the plural first person *we* seems to be the addressee (his wife, Sylvia Plath) and the specificity of the storytelling in the poem does not really invite the reader to take up either of the available deictic centres of Hughes or Plath. This produces the desirable effect of making the protagonists seem unreachable by those of us not included in their very tight-knit (and as we know from this distance, dysfunctional) relationship.

Third person narration

Though not providing such a great challenge to the reader in some ways, poems which are written as 3rd person narratives do produce a puzzle for the reader who has the generic expectation that s/he will be able to take up one of the deictic centres of the poem's characters. It is interesting, therefore, to see that the poems which are purely 3rd person narratives in my data do seem to find ways of providing a viewpoint for the reader to take up.

In 'Strange Fruit' for example, Heaney allows us only the position of the narrator/viewer of the ancient corpse of a girl by the use of the proximal 'here' to demonstrate that we are not seeing through the girl's eyes:

Here is the girl's head like an exhumed gourd.

By contrast, in 'Up on the moors with Keeper', despite all the participants being referred to in the third person, Dooley manages to make the viewpoint of the poem that of the three Bronte sisters, not their brother or father, by their prominence in the poem. The sisters are mostly the actors in material action processes, whereas their brother and father appear only as bit-part players in optional prepositional phrases, and usually referred to by a full noun phrase where the head noun indicates a relationship with the women, whereas the women themselves are more intimately referred to by the collective *they*:

They've kicked up their heels at a dull brother

So, as far as this data shows, 3rd person narratives despite their lack of obvious positions for the reader nevertheless guide the reader either to a participant's or to an omniscient narrator's point of view by means of other deictic or semantico-syntactic features.

Poems with a range of pronoun use

A very large number of the poems in my data, though short in length, combine a range of pronoun usage which gives the reader a much more unsettled experience and less chance of settling into a singular or unambiguous position in relation to the poem's deictic centre(s). There are, for example, poems written largely in first person, but with the occasional deictic 'pointing' to the universal use of *you*. Here it is in 'Blackberry-picking' (Heaney):

You ate that first one and its flesh was sweet

This poem is almost entirely narrated in the first person plural (*we*) but here, the reference to what *you* (= one) did becomes foregrounded internally by its departure from the *we* of the narration. Suddenly, the specific story of Heaney and his contemporaries as children invites the reader to take up the parallel position that any child out blackberry picking might occupy and even readers with no experience of this late summer activity will thereby be enabled to create, as it were, a false memory of such an experience.

Other poems seem to move between different possible pronoun combinations, meaning that the generic expectations of the reader that poetry will be 'difficult' to read are fulfilled as the reader repeatedly has to re-orient to the person deixis of the poem. 'Against Coupling' (Adcock) begins in the first person, but this is generalised by the use of *one* (*not feeling a trespassing tongue / forced into one's mouth*) so that although there is a lot of detail which seems to relate to the narrator's own experience of sex, the appeal to the reader is to position him/herself in this universal deictic centre. However, in stanza two, Adcock switches to third person (*as his gaze / stirs polypal fronds in the obscure / sea-bed of her body*) which the reader might conclude is a memory of young love seen as though from afar. The final stanza brings the reader to his/her own deictic centre again as the poem uses you to address the reader directly:

I advise you, then, to embrace it without
encumbrance.

The earlier use of *one* for universal reference makes the reader more inclined to view this later use of *you* as second person reference and the explicit nature of the speech act (*advise*) also places the reader directly in the position of addressee. I haven't addressed the question, here, of how male or lesbian readers would react to what is fairly obviously a heterosexual female narrative, but would be interested to conduct some kind of reader experiment to establish how the possible tensions between potential reader position and reader identity might manifest themselves in the reading process.

Second person narration

Perhaps the most common and certainly one of the most interesting uses of pronouns in the data considered for this project was the second person narrative. In these cases, there is no first person usage and the *you* becomes the default deictic centre of the poem. The result is that it is often possible to read a whole poem with *you* referring to the universal 'one' (which of course includes the reader) and also, by dint of the detail in the poem, clearly referring also to the narrator of the poem itself (i.e. equal to *I*). In 'Pain tells you what to wear', for example, McGuckian appeals first of all to some kind of existential experience of nature (*Once you have seen a crocus in the act / of giving way to the night*) which encourages the universal interpretation of the pronoun, but the increasingly specific detail in the rest of the poem belies this interpretation and implies that the narrator is telling her own story:

> Of all silences, the hardest to bear
> is the strange vegetation of your clothes,

Of course, there remains only one potential reader position here, so the merging of the universal with the particular does not cause a rift in the deictic position of the reader who moves smoothly from thinking in terms of universal human experiences to imagining the specific experience of the narrator from the inside. The additional effect of this smooth transition is that the narrator is experienced by the reader as being estranged even from her own experience, unable to use *I* of herself and seeing the world as suddenly alien and antagonistic:

> a brand-new sleeve becoming haggard
> with a garden's thousand adjoining moods.

A similar effect is created by the relatively delayed use of pronouns in 'Summer Evening' (Sansom) where the first stanza sets a very specific scene but includes only incidental participants, sometimes even deleted by the use of

the passive voice (*the garden centre's scented colours / <u>are loaded</u> in the backs of estates*) or by judicious personification (*that saw <u>offices undress</u> for lunch*) and there is no apparent internal point of view as a result. The second stanza, however, brings in a *you* pronoun which is repeated throughout a very detailed set of scenes as the persona walks by the river and emerges as having (possibly) been the narrator throughout the poem after all. The reader is therefore, gradually sucked into a specific deictic viewpoint of a character who, it seems, is not just having a pleasant walk on a summer evening, but is also having some relatively dark thoughts about oblivion:

> you imagine
> being out on that water, the drag
> and viscous ripples as you pull,
> then shipping oars and just letting it drift.

The chilling effect of the end of this poem which seems to begin very cheerfully is partly delivered by this careful use of narrative voice, starting very distant (or even impersonal) but ending as a very clear narrative viewpoint. By this stage the reader may be incapable of staying aloof from such a narrative viewpoint and the deictic effect of the poem on the reader thereby mimics the imagined effect of the river on the narrator.

Some poems make use of this potential of the pronoun form *you* to link the reader, the narrator and the universal (everyone) as a way of presenting emotions and experiences that can be interpreted personally though the reader's own experiences. 'Song of the Non-existent' (Rumens) for example, sets out a scene of unease at dusk where 'Anxiety walks across to the polished counter' and where first of the two occurrences of the pronoun *you* is interpretable as *I* (i.e. the poet/narrator):

> **This is the page on which you write the word 'angels'**

and the second is more clearly potentially both the narrator and the reader:

> **your sudden reluctance to remember**
> **How hard it was, and how beautiful, to live.**

It would be premature to assume that all such uses of you as the sole deictic centre of poems were equally anxious or depressed, though my data does bear out this interpretation.

Conclusions

One of the clearest conclusions of this project is that there is some interesting scope for reader response research to be carried out in relation to reader positioning in poems. However, this is not at all easy to do and there are many obstacles in the way which would make such research perhaps less satisfactory than we would wish. In the meantime, I am of the opinion that there is a great deal that we can say about the way that texts use linguistic features to predispose readers towards taking up one or other (or more than one) point of view.

One amongst a number of the features of language which seems to be particularly powerful in this regard is personal deixis as realized largely through personal pronouns. This project, therefore, took fifty contemporary poems and traced their use of a range of personal pronouns to establish what options the reader had in relation to taking up a viewpoint within the narrative. The resulting partial typology is as follows:

- I – first person narration

- I /you – first person narration with addressee

- I / (s/he) – first person narration with specific 'other'

- S/he – third person narration with implied omniscient narrator

- S/he - third person narration with one or more participants as focalizer

- you - second person narration where you refers to I, one or you (the reader)

These categories are not watertight, nor do they adequately represent those poems where there are repeated shifts of viewpoint. There is further work to be done on the complete range of potential 'identity points' in poems, which can be an entirely linguistic task. It could be followed by a reader response project, to see whether the hypotheses produced by the linguistic analysis is matched by the responses. Both of these may be variable.

A full theory of personal deixis and reader positioning in poetry is still some way off, but there seem to me to be patterns emerging from this limited set of data which indicate that the effort is worthwhile and the insights into poetic meaning which result are useful.

References

DUCHAN, J. F., BRUDER, G. A. and HEWITT, L. E. (eds) (1995) *Deixis in Narrative: A Cognitive Science Perspective*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

FLUDERNIK, M. (1993) *The Fictions of Language and the Languages of Fiction: The Linguistic Representation of Speech and Consciousness*. London: Routledge.

JEFFRIES, L. (2000) 'Point of view and orientation in Carol Ann Duffy's Poetry', in Jeffries, L. and Sansom, P. (eds) *Reading Contemporary Poetry*. Huddersfield: Smith Doorstop Books. 54-68.

JEFFRIES, L. (2008) 'The role of style in reader-involvement: deictic shifting in contemporary poems', *Journal of Literary Semantics* 37(1): 69-85.

MCINTYRE, D. (2006) *Point of View in Plays: A Cognitive Stylistic Approach to Viewpoint in Drama and Other Text-types*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

STOCKWELL, P. (2002) *Cognitive Poetics: An Introduction*. London: Routledge.

WALES, K. (1996) *Personal Pronouns in Present-Day English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

COETZEE'S STYLE IN *DISGRACE*

Simone Rinzler
Université Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense– CREA – EA 370

Résumé : Cet article défend la thèse selon laquelle la lecture et l'analyse du style de grands auteurs est l'enfance de l'écriture et de l'être-au-monde. L'écriture et le style sont intimement liés dans le style du roman *Disgrace* de Coetzee. Grâce au recours d'un style impersonnel qui, selon Deleuze, « pousse le langage à sa limite », l'auteur beckettien et kafkaïen opère une adaptation stylistique (involontaire) du concept de « Neutre » chez Barthes. Le *style neutre* de Coetzee s'attaque à de nombreuses questions qui intéressent tout autant les spécialistes (et les amateurs) de littérature, du langage et du style, que ceux qui s'interrogent sur les rapports entre écriture, conceptualisation et être-au-monde dans un monde terrifiant, sans cesse en cours de remaniement.

Mots-clés : affect, Barthes (Roland), Beckett (Samuel), bégaiement, Coetzee (John Maxwell), Deleuze (Gilles), *Disgrace*, répétition grammaticale, répétition lexicale, rythme, minoration de l'anglais, nature, neutralité lexicale, voix passive, prosodie, qualification, répétition, reformulation, rythme, style, style beckettien, style deleuzien, style Neutre, style plat, tempérament.

> *Sous chaque mot chacun de nous met son sens ou*
> *du moins son image qui est souvent un contresens.*
> *Mais dans les beaux livres, tous les contresens*
> *qu'on fait sont beaux.*
> *(Marcel Proust, Contre Sainte-Beuve, 361)*

Introduction

Nobel-prize winner John Maxwell Coetzee is well known for his strong liking of Beckett, so much so that he is referred to as being a Beckettian author, together with Scot James Kelman and Spaniard Enrique Vila-Matas. Just because most of his main characters are reminiscent of the protagonist of *The*

Unnameable (*L'Innommable*) does not necessarily make him a Beckettian author. Is he so because of his linguistic or his thematic style? Or because of his specific use of language–brief, concise, laconic, tight—yet accurate and sharp—compact and condensed—yet repetitive? Or is it due to the existential themes he deals with—the pain of being, the pain of *unbelonging*, the pain of incommunicability?

Another issue must be addressed. Does being a Beckettian author mean that the written style should necessarily be Beckettian from a linguistic and stylistic point of view? Were it to be the case, is style to be defined as a literary and philosophical atmosphere, or as a language-driven criterion?

The answer is that it should be defined as both, of course. I contend that in strongly *committed*[1] texts, style from its linguistic, formal viewpoint, cannot be dissociated from content.

In the preface to his partly biographical, partly critical work *Doubling the Point*, Editor David Attwell (1992) reveals that Coetzee's doctoral dissertation was a stylostatistic study of Beckett's work *Lessness* (*Sans* in French). His linguistic and stylistic critical approach was language-driven and computer-assisted. It shows that the former Professor of Literature in the University of Cape Town, apart from being the international renowned writer of *Waiting for the Barbarians*, *Foe*, *Disgrace*, *Elisabeth Costello*, etc. is also a linguist specialised in style and mostly in Beckett's style. He is also a prolific and unrelenting critic. His praise of classical literature is illustrated in the essay "What is a classic? A Lecture" (Coetzee, 2001, 2002, 1-19)—which I will use to study his style.

Studying the style of an author in a novel could be considered as a betrayal of the craft and skill of the author, of his craftsmanship. But this is precisely what Coetzee did with Beckett and Beckett's style. In *Doubling the Point*, he acknowledges that his research did not lead him–or anyone–very far, but studying closely and so to say scientifically the style of an admired author was a determining factor in helping him to become the author he is. Trying to grasp the secrets of a style is learning the tricks of the trade for anyone who writes through a practical experience, by observing, classifying, looking for some hidden or quasi magical patterns. It is the childhood of writing in which the writer behaves like a child, eager to understand the world and copy the model of his elders, masters and "role-models" in order to grow up and to be able to fend for himself.

---

[1] The concept of a *committed* text is part of the French culture. It does not have an equivalent in English. The term *committed* here is to be understood with the connotation of *engagé* in the French expression *littérature engagée*.

This is precisely what Coetzee says when he compares music to literature. In his lecture "What is a classic?", he compares Bach to Eliot:

> 1. This is the point where parallels between literature and music, the literary classics and the musical classics, begin to break down, and where the institutions and practice of music emerge as perhaps healthier than the institutions and practice of literature. For the musical profession has ways of keeping what it values alive that are quantitatively different from the ways in which the institutions of literature keep submerged but valued writers.
>
> Because becoming a musician, whether executant or creative, not only in Western tradition but in other major traditions of the world, entails long training and apprenticeship, because the nature of the training entails repeated performance for the ears of others and minute listening and practical criticism, together with memorization, because a range of kinds of performance has become institutionalised, from playing for one's teacher to playing for one's class to varieties of public performance – for all these reasons, it is possible to keep music alive and indeed vital within professional circles while it is not part of public awareness, even among educated people. (*Stranger Shores*, "What is a Classic? – A Lecture 17)

Thanks to this parallel, one can understand how the years spent working on Beckett's style, but also on linguistics, was true stylistic training for the author-to-be. This can be found in the interview and the essays published in the chapter entitled "Syntax" (*Doubling the Point*, Chap; Syntax, 139-194): "The Rhetoric of the passive in English" (*ibid.*, 1980, 147-169), "The Agentless Sentence as Rhetorical Device" (*ibid.* 1980, 170-180) and "Isaac Newton and the Ideal of a Transparent Scientific Language" (*ibid.*, 1980, 181-194). In these studies of other authors and of impersonal rhetorical devices such as the use of the passive, Coetzee was developing his thought on language and style and it led him to link it with the intentions of the author by practising, criticising, studying and writing. This is where his simile between apprenticeship in music and literature came into being.

His position in the cultural and literary field is that of a *polygraph*, a term used by Barthes and developed by Benoît Denis—who notes that the figure of the *polygraph* was personified by Sartre in France (Denis, 2000, 259-299). Coetzee's multiple interests and skills encompass computing, linguistics, stylistics, music, literary criticism and writing. Thanks to his now worldwide fame, he has also become an original, reluctant—but powerful and forceful—orator. Thanks to his versatility, he has become a major voice in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

In this study, I will show that a neutral stuttering style can be more forceful than a florid, flamboyant Rushdie-like style.

Concepts

The Neutral after Barthes

I contend that his style verges on *the Neutral*, a concept developed by Roland Barthes in *The Neutral* (*Le Neutre*, 2002). In that sense, his style is not only Beckettian, but it is Barthesian too in that it conforms to what Barthes has developed. Yet, the categorization shouldn't end here. His style being "*neutral*" from a Barthesian viewpoint—as I will show—is also Deleuzean in that, first it stutters and makes language stutter, and second, its verges on a *neutral style*. This makes him also a Kafkaian writer.

With an author of his calibre, the depiction/presentation of singular characters and plots sited in singular historical, social, political and cultural contexts opens up the way to the universal. I will show that a *neutral style*, in the case of his novel *Disgrace*, makes it possible to erase the marks of the presence of the author to better control and, of course, convey his universal and existential intentions.

In singular non-neutral plots in which there is tremendous violence and strong affect—Deleuze talks about literature as *capture d'affect*—, writing less amounts to telling more. By the absence of visible style effects, Coetzee's writing not only tells more, but it also tells raw reality through his use of fiction. Fiction serves the presentation of the Real—and not its representation. The Neutral is raw. It presents raw reality and is more telling than any essay or any audio-visual documentary, precisely because it is presented under the guise of fiction. The Neutral in style documents reality in the way the Belgian TV programme *Strip-Tease* has revolutionised the often too wordy and demonstrative genre of the documentary by avoiding any off commentary. This is what Coetzee's fiction does in *Disgrace*. And, in this instance, academic papers are part and parcel of writing. Note that Coetzee himself has written a great number of papers and literary criticisms on the question of style, from a linguistic viewpoint.

The Neutral in style refuses analysis and commentary. It presents bare facts – no asides, no auctorial "stage directions" or *didascalies* disturb the presentation of raw fictional facts and raw "not-so-fictional" reactions to the Real. Being non-garrulous, it is not directive. It compels the reader to achieve his own *Bildung* together with the protagonist David Lurie, an aging white *Picaro* lost in Post-Apartheid South Africa.

A Deleuzean style: the minorization of English pushed to its limits

Coetzee can also be considered as a Kafkaian author. His novels tell the stories of anti-heroes struggling with life. Their existential problems prevent

them from feeling that they belong. Such is the case of David Lurie/Gregor Samsa. The theme is Kafkaian, but the comparison runs deeper still. The style also bears a strong resemblance to Kafka's use of language. This was studied by Deleuze & Guattari in *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (1986) or *Kafka : pour une littérature mineure* (1975). In the same way as Kafka "minorized" German–which was not his mother tongue–, Coetzee, of Dutch descent and whose mother's "mother tongue" was German, "minorizes" English. His specific use of English makes language "*stutter*". He uses English as if he wrote in a foreign language. Writing in a language which is not theirs is the peculiarity of most postcolonial authors. In the Deleuzean concept, it is not necessary to be a non-native speaker to make language stutter and "write like a foreigner in one's own language". The quotation is taken from Proust's conclusion of his *Contre Sainte-Beuve*:

> 2. Les beaux livres sont écrits dans une sorte de langue étrangère.

Starting from this idea, Deleuze, together with Guattari, developed this concept of language and style which has been analyzed extensively by Jean-Jacques Lecercle in *Deleuze and Language*. For Deleuze, the aim of the writer is to "push language to its limits":

> 3. It would seem, then, that in Deleuze, 'writing' is the site of a problem ('the problem of writing' is the object that Deleuze, in his preface to *Critique et Clinique*, undertakes to tackle in that collection of essays), and style is the concept that names the problem. In *L'Abécédaire*, in the *'E comme Enfance'* section, the problem is indeed formulated as one of becoming: to write is to become, but not to become a writer (an obvious allusion to Proust); it consists in pushing language to its limits, not in recovering the trivial memories of one's childhood. Again, the very concept of style is a protest against theories of the individuality, and originality, of the author. (Lecercle, *Deleuze and Language*, chap. 6 "Another Philosophy of Language: Style and Stuttering", 2. Style, 221)

In the case of Coetzee, the plot of singular individuals with their own "temperaments" and reactions to the hardships of the Real leads the reader to build his own *Weltanschauung* from a universal point of view. This is due to the way Coetzee pushes English to its limits, using all the devices at hand to come to what Deleuze calls "the fourth person", meaning not the I, the YOU, or the HE or THEY, but the impersonal. Further on, Lecercle notes:

> 4. Deleuze insists on the impersonality of style, a tenet he shares with Foucault, the exact opposite of the commonsense conception of style. (*ibid.*, 223)

No wonder Coetzee can render this impersonality so well. He has worked extensively on the passive voice, one of the most powerful ways to achieve impersonality and thus a *neutral style*, through what Coetzee calls "the short passive", i.e. the agentless passive. The characteristic of Coetzee's Style in

Disgrace is not the passive in itself. Various other rhetorical and linguistic means are used to get to this kind of impersonality. This is how singular destinies get a universal status.

Some Characteristics of Coetzee's style in *disgrace*

Lexical neutrality

The most striking thing about this novel is the overall lexical simplicity used to serve, not a modernist representation of what *could* be real, but a postmodern presentation of a story triggering an inevitable suspension of disbelief. Here, fiction *is* the real. The neutrality of the words used serves a neutral style, not a neutral text or story.

The apparent lexical neutrality is not to be taken as a form of flatness. The Neutral is not what could be called "the flat". The Neutral requires the use of chiselled stylistic devices which are not meant to be discovered, but rather, if I may say so, must appear as non-existent, that is, disappear from "the visible". The less apparent the stylistic efforts are, the more the stylistic effects affect the reader.

From the very beginning, an interpolated clause suggests the novel is not going to be a mere story, but an intellectual, conceptual work encompassing a universal view of humanity through the depiction of a few singular characters. It is stated clearly with a very simple expression taken from everyday vocabulary. The clause *to his mind* finishes the first line of the incipit but not the sentence. Here is the clause in its context:

> 5. For a man of his age, fifty-two, he has, to his mind, solved the problem of sex rather well. (*Dis*, chap. 1, 1, incipit)

I suspect the succession of four commas in the first two-line sentence would probably not be advised in a course of creative writing. And what a shame! If the sentence did not have these apparent truncations due to the separation achieved by the commas, the style would be flat. Let us try to remove the four commas and see what happens:

> 5a. For a man of his age, he has solved the problem of sex rather well.

In this first transformation, the two interpolated clauses have disappeared. Let us now keep one of them which can hardly be dispensed with:

> 5b. For a man of his age, fifty-two, he has solved the problem of sex rather well.

This transformation takes us from *the neutral* to *the flat*. Far from the flourish of many an opening sentence, the inaugural neutral sentence written by

Coetzee exhibits an unseen transparency. The effect of this transparency is paradoxical. Meant to be unperceived, it is present, however, and bears a meaning. It is a truth universally unacknowledged that, as I have contended elsewhere, "*Silence is language too*[2]" and that *the neutral* in style, together with what Coetzee calls "the short passive" (i.e. the agentless passive), says more, that is, much more than is usually thought. It allows the unknown presence of the author-utterer (or enunciator) under the guise of a linguistic presence-absence. Being linguistically unmarked, in the same way as agentless passives–i.e. unconstrained by language, but resulting from an enunciative mental operation–*the neutral* goes unheeded and can operate in the obscurity provided by transparency.

This hidden meaning conveyed by the neutral is intentional. As in a photographic negative, it reveals the presence of the author and, thence, his intention. Indeed, the question of auctorial intention is important for Coetzee who, in *Doubling the Point*, studied how the use of some intriguing passives by authors such De Foe, Swift and Beckett brings to light the deep thought of the author and his intentions. The novel is not about the protagonist's sexual habits with a prostitute, not about his (half-consented, half accepted) "rape" of a student, but about the workings of his mind. The clue *to his mind* is brought out, embedded between the two commas cutting the main clause into two parts. It leaves the somewhat shocking revelation in a rhematic position, at the end of the sentence–where the new piece of information is all the more enhanced as it has undergone a delaying process.

What is more, the syntactic device with its interpolated clauses enables the sentence to begin the novel with a rhythm recalling metrical feet. The question of rhythm is relevant, as David Lurie toys with the idea of writing an opera. To show the rhythm of the sentence, strong syllables are enhanced in bold:

5c. For a **'man** of his **'age**, **'fif**ty-**'two**, he **'has**, to his **'mind**, **'solved** the **'pro**blem of **'sex 'ra**ther **'well**.

The whole sentence is composed of:

a) two anapaests: *For a man / of his age*,
b) one trochee: *fifty-two,*
c) one iamb (which may be considered as a trochee or a spondee[3]): *he has,*

---

[2] The concept "Silence is language too" is adapted from the work of plastician Letizia VOLPI, 1990 "Silence is Music too #2" (RINZLER, 2007).

[3] The choice between iamb, trochee or spondee for c), an incomplete clause, depends on the interpretation of the text by the reader and hence on her representation of the appropriate intonation. For a silent reader has a mental representation of the appropriate intonation of what is read with the eyes only. The neutral first reading of an incipit should be considered. Rather than stressing the pronoun *he*–which would be an

d) one anapaest: *to his mind,*
e) two trochees followed by two iambs: *solved the problem of sex rather well.*

The versified first sentence, with its changes in metrical feet and its violations of simple syntax, imposes a singular hypnotic rhythm on the whole novel, somewhat reminiscent of the unbalanced step of the gnome with his crooked legs in *Pictures at the exhibition* by Modest Mussorgsky. Coetzee's style reveals the balance of the unbalanced, the rhythm of the Badiousian "Event" in an ever growing horror.

Lexical repetition

Coetzee practices lexical repetition *ad libitum* and in that respect he can be seen as the champion of this stylistic and characterizing device. It starts from the very first page, first with the adverb *technically*:

> 6. Technically he is old enough to be her father; but then, technically, one can be father at twelve (*Dis*, chap. 1, 1)

The adverb, with its denotation, hints at the character being described by an omniscient narrator. Technique is the thing, not emotions, as the reader discovers gradually each new situation after each new situation.

Yet, it does not prevent Coetzee/Lurie from thinking about pleasure. But then again, it is the technical point of view which is chosen, not the sentimental one. Pleasure is not love, and this is precisely the core of the novel and of Lurie's problems with his environment wherever he goes.

> 7. Because he takes pleasure in her, because his pleasure is unfailing, an affection has grown up in him for her. To some degree, he believes, this affection is reciprocated. Affection may not be love, but it is at least its cousin. (*Dis*, chap. 1, 1)

Fate or *fatum* seems to be the key word in this pessimistic novel as is revealed by the noun *temperament*, repeated seven times in four consecutive paragraphs:

> 8. That is his <u>temperament</u>. His <u>temperament</u> is not going to change, he is too old for that. His <u>temperament</u> is fixed, set. The skull, followed by the <u>temperament</u>: the two hardest parts of the body.
>
> Follow your <u>temperament</u>. It is not a philosophy, he would not dignify it with that name. It is a rule, like the Rule of St Benedict.

---

emphatic reinterpretation– or the two words *he has*, regarding the following co-text on the right–which is a possibility– it feels normal for the reader to discover the incipit of the text by following the basic rules of intonation. According to these rules, an auxiliary at the end of a clause, sentence, or before an interpolated clause cannot be reduced and is thus stressed.

> He is in good health, his mind is clear. By profession he is, or has been, a scholar, and scholarship still engages, intermittently, the core of him. He lives within his income, within his <u>temperament</u>, within his emotional means. Is he happy? By most measurements, yes, he believes he is. However, he has not forgotten the last chorus of *Oedipus*: call no man happy until he is dead.
>
> In the field of sex his <u>temperament</u>, though intense, has never been passionate. (*Dis*, chap. 1, 2)

Only now does the attentive reader perceive the importance of this concept in Lurie's mind. Yet, the term has already been used in the first page:

> 9. In bed Soraya is not effusive. Her <u>temperament</u> is in fact rather quiet, quiet and docile.

Temperament as a key word prevents Lurie from thinking about behaviour—social behaviour, professional behaviour, familial and political behaviour, but also language behaviour, seem to be completely foreign to him. Everything is shown as if nothing could be changed, as if temperaments ruled everything. This will be emphasized in the second part of the novel, after the catastrophe in this post-Apartheid context opposing representatives of the former Masters, the Whites, and former oppressed black people.

Grammatical repetition

The repetition of the same pattern enables the author to show the reciprocity envisaged by David Lurie between Soraya and Lurie himself *in Lurie's mind*, of course:

> 10. Given their unpromising beginnings, they have been lucky, the two of them: <u>he to have found her</u>, <u>she to have found him</u>. (*Dis*, chap. 1, 2)

The pattern evokes a chiasmus. It makes it possible to show what's on Lurie's mind, which is quite distinct from the real. Whereas Coetzee could have written:

> 10a. Given their unpromising beginnings, they have <u>both</u> been lucky <u>to have found each other</u>. (manipulation)

The manipulation shows a true reciprocity, when the chiasmus reveals an intention of the author through the use of language. The manipulation would have been simpler and shorter, but it would not have conveyed the auctorial irony hidden in the choice of that syntactic structure. The utterance, starting with Lurie's expression of his luck posed as the first element of comparison shows the unfolding of Lurie's thoughts. He thinks of himself first and then, thanks to a psychological projection, imagines that what he feels is, term to term, what Soraya should necessarily feel. The syntactic structure iconicises

Lurie's *Weltanschauung*. Everything is filtered through his own apprehension of the world. Apprehension here is to be taken in both senses of the term in English as well as in French: *appréhender* meaning both *understanding*, or *dealing with*, and *fearing*. This recalls the initial interpolated clause "*to his mind*".

Qualifying through adjectival reformulation

The depiction of the *temperament*s of the characters follows a repetitive pattern which is the pattern of reformulation. The right qualification can be achieved through the repetition of adjectives which are complemented with another qualifier:

> 11 (9) Her temperament is in fact rather quiet, quiet and docile. (*Dis*, chap. 1, 1)

The first qualification here comes from the adjective *quiet* to which an addendum is appended. When used for the second time, the first qualifier is linked (by *and*) with another one *docile* meant to specify the idea to the point of verbal perfection. This is achieved with the use of punctuation, with a comma, then with the use of *and* coordinating both adjectives to create a whole new qualification. The whole qualification is composed of the whole qualifying group composed of *quiet, quiet and docile*. Grammatically speaking, the qualification is proposed through the recourse to the enunciative operator BE which is a marker of identification. The subject of the sentence *her temperament* (that is, Soraya's temperament) is identified with the complex adjectival group built around repetition and complementation. The addendum with *docile* is enhanced by the repetition of the very first adjective. Had the sentence been syntactically simpler:

> 11a. Her temperament is in fact rather quiet and docile.
> the idea conveyed would have been much less striking.

With the repetitive pattern of adjectival repetition and addition, Coetzee makes language stutter, through an affect of language itself – as Deleuze has shown in "Bégaya-t-il…" (Deleuze, 1993, 135-143). The stuttering does not come from repetition itself, as would happen with a true stutterer (such as King George played by Colin Firth in *The King's Speech*). It comes from a language use which, despite being apparently simple and neutral, actually reveals a grammatical complexity leaving an impression of simplicity. This is in accordance with how Barthes conceptualized "the Neutral". The Neutral is not the simple. It is an apparent simplicity operated through a stylistic working of language. From this stylistic research of *the neutral* a conceptual complexity emerges through small strokes leading to the creation of verbal portraits of "temperaments".

The passive

I will not have time to deal with the special use of the passive here. It would require an entire study. But one thing is very striking. When after the catastrophe, Lurie becomes at last able to talk and communicate with his daughter, he talks of rape, not in the passive voice, but in the active. This is a very astonishing stylistic device. Indeed, usually, like a few other verbs in which a "patient" undergoes a detrimental act on behalf of a an indeterminate group, the verb "rape" is used in the passive, due to what I termed long ago "*the maxim of human compassion*" in my doctoral thesis (Rinzler, 2000, 579-581). The use of the active:

> 12. They do rape.

is a strong linguistic signal that something is definitely changing. The plot changes dramatically. Formerly unable to vent his thoughts and emotions, to talk with the others and to have a rather normal father-daughter relationship with his lesbian daughter, Lurie not only begins to talk. But when he does, he truly "pushes language to its limits" in a *neutral style* according to Deleuze's theory of style revealed by Lecercle (2002).

CONCLUSION

I started with a few questions and some have still not completely been answered because they probably cannot.

My feeling is that style cannot be separated from content. I have already made this contention elsewhere in relation to the genre of the manifesto—and that of *committed* literature or *littérature engagée* which acts as a new form of manifesto (Rinzler, 2010).

Style is both the maid and the master of content. In the case of *Disgrace*, a *neutral style* enables the author to depict singular fictional behaviours in a singular situation with, as a result, the grasping of the universal in the Real. The choice of a *neutral style* enhances the post-modernist presentation of the world in all its rawness. It demolishes modernity, not only for the benefit of former post-colonial areas, but for the benefit of humanity.

This is why stylistic studies must be strongly defended in these hard times, particularly those experienced by the humanities. Abandoning our *untrivial* pursuits is not on our agenda. Defending style in literature is defending the universality of mankind. It is our best tool against barbarism[4]. We will not be *waiting for the barbarians*.

---

[4] The "barbarism" may be understood as well from its linguistic or its cultural and historical meaning.

Bibliography

Literary corpus

COETZEE, John Maxwell. 1999, 2000. *Disgrace*, London, Vintage, Random House.

Critical corpus

BARTHES, Roland, 1968. *Writing Degree Zero.* New York, Hill and Wang.

BARTHES, Roland, 2002. *Le Neutre. Cours au collège de France (1977-1978).* Texte établi, annoté et présenté par Thomas Clerc. Paris, Traces écrites, Seuil / IMEC.

BARTHES, Roland, 2002, 2005. *The Neutral: Lecture Course at the Collège de France (1977–1978)*, Columbia University Press: New York.

BECKETT, Samuel, 1953, 2004. *L'Innommable*. Paris, Les Éditions de Minuit.

COETZEE, John Maxwell, 1992. *Doubling the Point. Essays and Interviews*. Edited by David ATWELL. Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, Harvard University Press.

COETZEE, John Maxwell,1996. *Giving Offense. Essays on Censorship*. Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press.

COETZEE, John Maxwell, 2001, 2002. *Stranger Shores. Essays 1986-1999.* London, Sydney, Auckland (Australia), Parktown (South Africa), Vintage, Random House .

COETZEE, John Maxwell, 2007. *Doubler le cap. Essais et entretiens.* Paris, Seuil.

COETZEE, John Maxwell, 2007, 2008. *Inner Workings. Essays 2000-2005.* London, Vintage, Random House.

DELEUZE, Gilles, 1993. *Critique et clinique*, Chap. XIII « Bégaya-t-il… » (134-143). Paris, Les Éditions de Minuit.

DENIS, Benoît, 2000. *Littérature et engagement – De Pascal à Sartre*, Paris, Collection Inédit/Essais, Points, éditions du Seuil.

LECERCLE, Jean-Jacques, 2002. *Deleuze and Language*. Basingstoke & New York, Palgrave Macmillan.

LECERCLE, Jean-Jacques, 2004. *Une Philosophie marxiste du langage,* Paris, Actuel Marx Confrontation, Presses Universitaires de France.

PROUST, Marcel, 1954. *Contre Sainte-Beuve*. Paris, NRF, collection *Idées*, Gallimard.

RINZLER, Simone, 2000. « Passifs et passivoïdes en anglais contemporain – Étude d'un corpus informatisé sous MS® Excel » - Thèse de linguistique anglaise sous la direction de M. le Professeur Jean-Louis Duchet, Poitiers, Université de Poitiers.

RINZLER, Simone, 2007. "Hantise du langage : pragmatique du silence dans *Disgrace* de Coetzee" in DELOURME Chantal et Richard PEDOT (eds.), *Tropismes N° 14 La Hantise,* Nanterre, CREA EA 370, Publidix, Université Paris Ouest Nanterre (179-198).

RINZLER, Simone, 2010. "Euphémisme et revendication dans *GB 84* de David Peace » in JOBERT Manuel & Denis Jamet (eds.). *Empreintes de l'euphémisme. Tours et Détours.* Paris, L'Harmattan (133-149).

VIOLA, André, 1999. *J.M. Coetzee – romancier sud-africain*. Paris, L'Harmattan.

CONTRIBUTORS

GAY Marie-Agnès

Breach of Contract: Pragmatic Variations on a Theme in Richard Ford's Short Story "Privacy"

Marie-Agnès Gay is Professor of American Literature at the University Jean Moulin – Lyon 3. She specializes in 20th- and 21st-century American fiction. She has published extensively on F. Scott Fitzgerald, Richard Ford, Allan Gurganus, and Asian American writers (her latest field of study); her research always favors a stylistic approach to literature.

HAMILTON Craig

"The Rhetoric of Text" Reconsidered in Fiction and Autobiography

Craig Hamilton is Senior Lecturer in English Cognitive Linguistics at the University of Haute Alsace and member of the Institut de Recherche en Langues et Littératures Européennes in Mulhouse. Before coming to Alsace in 2006, he taught at the University of California-Irvine, the University of Nottingham, and the University of Paris 8. He has written dozens of articles on topics in cognitive poetics, cognitive rhetoric, and cognitive stylistics. He is currently working on the third edition of *Persuading People: An Introduction to Rhetoric* (Palgrave Macmillan).

JEFFRIES Lesley

Readers and Point-of-view in Contemporary Poems: a Question of Pronouns

Lesley Jeffries is Professor of English Language at the University of Huddersfield and was Chair of PALA from 2007 to 2010. She works on the stylistics of contemporary poetry and critical stylistics of political texts. She is co-author (with Dan McIntyre) of *Stylistics* (C.U.P. 2010).

JOBERT-MARTINI Vanina

Readerly Involvement in the First Chapter of Edna O'Brien's
The Country Girls

Vanina Jobert-Martini is Senior Lecturer at the University of Lyon (Jean Moulin-Lyon 3). She teaches translation, Irish literature and stylistics. She regularly publishes articles in the last two fields. So far, she has mainly concentrated on 20th and 21st century novelists and short-story writers like John McGahern, Edna O'Brien and Nuala O'Faolain.

JOBERT Manuel

Total Report in Alan Bennett's "A Cream Cracker Under the Settee"

Manuel Jobert is Professor of English Language at the University of Lyon (Jean Moulin - Lyon 3) where he specialises in Stylistics and Phonetics. He currently chairs the *Société de Stylistique Anglaise* (SSA).

LEECH Geoffrey

Virginia Woolf Meets Wmatrix

Geoffrey Leech is Emeritus Professor of English Linguistics at Lancaster University (U.K.). He has written, co-edited and co-authored over 25 books, including *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry, Style in Fiction* (with Mick Short) Longman 1981, and *A Comprehensive grammar of the English Language* (with Sidney Greenbaum and Jan Svartvik). Professor Leech is a Fellow of the British Academy and a member of Academia Europaea.

MAJOLA-LEBLOND Claire

The Three S's of StyliSticS

Claire Majola-Leblond is Senior Lecturer in Stylistics at the University of Lyon (France) where she teaches stylistics and literature. She wrote a PhD thesis on the stylistic markers of point of view in Dylan Thomas's short-stories. Her research focuses on short-story writing and Irish literature.

MALLIER Clara

The Meaning of Concessive Clauses in Jim Harrison's Work: a Grammatical Reading of Mind Style

Clara Mallier is Senior Lecturer in American literature at the University of Bordeaux 3 (France). She is the author of a narratological analysis of Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* (The Sun Also Rises: roman holographique) and has published various articles in the field of stylistics on Hemingway, John Steinbeck and Jim Harrison.

McINTYRE Dan

Language and Style in David Peace's 1974: a Corpus Informed Analysis

Dan McIntyre is Professor in English Language and Linguistics at the University of Huddersfield (UK) where he teaches stylistics, corpus linguistics and the history of the English language. His major publications include *Point of View in Plays* (John Benjamins, 2006), *Stylistics* (Cambridge University Press, 2010; with Lesley Jeffries) and *Language and Style* (Palgrave, 2010; co-edited with Beatrix Busse). He is Reviews Editor for *Language and Literature* and Series Editor for Continuum's *Advances in Stylistics* series.

MOUNIE Marie-Pierre

Imitation, Style, Fiction: Ethics of Writing, Ethics of Reading in **Chatterton***, by Peter Ackroyd*

Marie-Pierre MOUNIÉ is Senior Lecturer at the University of Strasbourg (France) where she teaches narratology, stylistics, linguistics, translation and grammar. Her research focuses on stylistics and linguistics applied to translation and to the study of contemporary literary texts.

PILLIÈRE Linda

Mind Style: Deviance from the Norm?

Linda Pillière is Professor in English Language and Linguistics at Aix-Marseille Université (France). Since completing a PhD on a linguistic analysis of the style of Virginia Woolf, she has written various articles in the fields of linguistics and stylistics. More recently she has been researching the adaptation of British novels for the American market.

RINZLER Simone

Coetzee's Style in Disgrace

Simone Rinzler is Senior Lecturer (HDR) at the Université Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense (France). After a PhD on the English passive, she turned to the philosophy of language and the history of ideas. She has written many articles on pragmatics, rhetoric, language and linguistics, most of them applied to the genre of the manifesto. She is the author of a book on manifestos in the 20th century English-speaking world *La Parole manifestaire : manifestes et manifestations de revendication au XXe siècle dans l'aire anglophone*. She is a specialist of discourse analysis and stylistics. She has worked on a theory of committed macrolinguistics. Her philosophical, historical, social and political approach is language-centred.

SHORT Mick

Discourse Presentation and Speech (and Writing, but not Thought) Summary

Mick Short is Emeritus professor in the Department of Linguistics and Modern English Language at Lancaster University (U.K.). He co-authored *Style in Fiction* (with Geoffrey Leech) Longman 1981, and is the editor of *Reading, Analysing and Teaching Literature* (Longman, 1989). He was also the founder of the *Poetics and Linguistics Association (PALA)* and the founding editor of its international journal *Language and Literature*.

TOOLAN Michael

"Is Style in Short Fiction Different from Style in Long Fiction?"

Michael Toolan is Professor of English Language and currently Head of Division of English Language and Applied Linguistics at the University of Birmingham. His research focuses mainly on Stylistics and Narrative Analysis. He is the editor of the *Journal of Literary Semantics*.

RÉSUMÉS - ABSTRACTS

Marie-Agnès GAY
Université Jean Moulin - Lyon 3 – IETT EA 4186

Breach of Contract:
Pragmatic Variations on a Theme in Richard Ford's Short Story "Privacy"

Résumé :

Tout en ayant recours à divers outils pragmatiques, l'article emprunte principalement à la théorie de William Labov sur les six étapes de tout récit oral afin d'analyser les ressorts trompeurs de la narration dans « Privacy » de Richard Ford. Cette courte nouvelle à la narration homodiégétique permet, par sa longueur et son mode narratif, d'évidents prolongements avec un récit oral. L'article scrute la façon dont le texte fait mine de suivre à la lettre la structure classique d'un récit pour mieux la subvertir, le texte rejouant ainsi dans sa forme, et plus particulièrement au niveau de la relation narrateur/narrataire, son motif thématique principal qui est celui du leurre et de la tromperie. Au-delà, il démontre que le jeu avec le narrataire et la violation des règles de communication masquent, paradoxalement, une tentative plus radicalement solipsiste d'auto-aveuglement de la part du narrateur.

Abstract:

While resorting to various pragmatic tools, the paper draws especially on William Labov's theory of the six stages of oral story-telling in order to analyze the deceptive mainsprings of narration in Richard Ford's "Privacy". This five-page short story told by a homodiegetic narrator offers obvious parallels, because of its short length and its narrative mode, to an oral tale. The paper scrutinizes the way the text pretends to abide very strictly by the classical structure of story-telling in order the better to subvert it, the text thus reproducing in its very form – and more particularly at the level of the narrator/narratee relationship – its central thematic motif of deception. Beyond this, the paper demonstrates that the play with the narratee and the violation of communicative rules paradoxically mask a more radically solipsistic attempt at self-deception on the narrator's part.

Keywords: Pragmatics, Stylistics, Discourse Analysis, Narrator / Narratee relationship, William Labov, Richard Ford, *A Multitude of Sins*

Mots-clés : Pragmatique, Stylistique, Analyse du Discours, Relation narrateur / narrataire, William Labov, Richard Ford, *A Multitude of Sins*

Craig HAMILTON

Université de Haute Alsace - ILLE EA 3437

"The Rhetoric of Text" Reconsidered in Fiction and Autobiography

Résumé :

L'article présente plusieurs principes rhétoriques que Leech et Short ont introduit dans "The Rhetoric of Text," chapitre sept de *Style in Fiction,* afin d'analyser des textes de Hemingway (fiction) et de Sting (non-fiction).

Abstract:

The paper presents several rhetorical principles that Leech and Short first introduced in "The Rhetoric of Text," chapter seven of *Style in Fiction*, in order to then analyze texts from Hemingway (fiction) and Sting (non-fiction).

Keywords: rhetoric, stylistics, end focus, imitation, iconicity, viewpoint

Mots-clés : rhétorique, stylistique, imitation, iconicité, point de vue

Lesley JEFFRIES

University of Huddersfield, U.K.

Readers and Point-of-view in Contemporary Poems: a Question of Pronouns

Résumé :

Cet article étudie l'utilisation des pronoms dans une cinquante poèmes en anglais et suggère une typologie partielle de l'utilisation et de la signification des pronoms en poésie du point de vue de la réception.

Abstract:

This paper explores pronoun usage in fifty contemporary poems in English and proposes a partial typology of poetic pronoun use and meaning, from a reader's perspective.

Mots-clés : style, poésie contemporaine, utilisation des pronoms, deixis.

Keywords: style, contemporary poetry, pronoun use, deictic shift theory

Vanina JOBERT-MARTINI
Université Jean Moulin - Lyon 3 – ERIBIA GREI EA 2610

Readerly Involvement in the First Chapter of Edna O'Brien's
The Country Girls

Résumé :

En se fondant sur une étude stylistique du premier chapitre de *The Country Girls*, l'article s'attache à montrer comment s'établit la relation entre la narratrice et son lecteur. La focalisation interne et les adresses directes au lecteur permettent à celui-ci de se projeter dans le monde rural irlandais des années 50, cadre de l'enfance de la narratrice. Les apports de la stylistique cognitive sont utilisés pour mettre en évidence le jeu des inférences et le caractère prototypique des personnages ou des situations. La dernière partie de l'article s'intéresse aux questions touchant l'évaluation, c'est-à-dire les jugements portés par les personnages, mais aussi par la narratrice et son lecteur, l'ensemble débouchant sur la réception du roman par la critique.

Abstract:

This paper is a stylistic analysis of the first chapter of *The Country Girls.* It focuses on the way in which the relationship between narrator and reader is gradually established. Internal focalisation and direct addresses to the reader encourage the latter to operate a projection into the narrator's Irish rural world. Cognitive stylistics is used to deal with inferences and prototypicality, while the last part of the paper focuses on the question of evaluation, i.e. characters passing judgment on one another and influencing the reader's perception, but also the way in which O'Brien's work was received by critics.

Mots-clés : stylistique – narratologie – stylistique cognitive – focalisation – inférence – schèmes – évaluation – réception critique – O' Brien – féminisme – Irlande – réalisme.

Keywords: stylistics – narratology – cognitive stylistics – focalization – inference – schemata – evaluation – critical reception – O'Brien – feminism – Irishness – realism.

Manuel JOBERT
Université Jean Moulin – Lyon 3
Paris Ouest Nanterre la Défense CREA - EA 370

Total Report in Alan Bennett's "A Cream Cracker Under the Settee"

Résumé :

L'objet de cet article est d'analyser comment Alan Bennett parvient à provoquer l'empathie du spectateur dans la séries *Talking Heads*. En effet, dans ces monologues, la structure narrative peut être perçue comme un frein à l'implication émotionnelle et les thèmes abordés, s'ils sont universaux, ne sont guère remarquables. Or, ces monologues – qui sont devenus des classiques de la littérature contemporaine – fonctionnent et emportent l'adhésion des spectateurs / lecteurs. Le monologue de Doris dans « A Cream Cracker Under the Settee » est pris comme exemple du tour de force dramatique accompli par l'auteur.

Abstract:
The purpose of this article is to analyse how Alan Bennett manages to make viewers empathise with the narrators of his *Talking Heads* monologues. Indeed, in these monologues, the discourse structure of the narratives could very well be perceived a hindrance to readerly involvement and the themes touched upon often appear mundane despite their universality. However, these monologues, which have become contemporary classics, are effective: viewers / readers manage to feel with the different narrators. Doris's monologue in "A Cream Cracker Under the Settee" is analysed here as an example of Alan Bennett's dramatic *tour de force*.

Mots-clés : empathie – double allocutaire – mémoire – narration orale.

Keywords: empathy – dual audience – memory – oral narrative.

Geoffrey LEECH
Lancaster University, U.K.

Virginia Woolf Meets WMatrix

Résumé :
Le logiciel WMatrix, créé par Paul Rayson, permet une analyse stylistique comparée d'un texte au regard d'un corpus de référence, c'est-à-dire un corpus représentant un « style d'anglais » pertinent pour la comparaison. Pour cette étude expérimentale, j'ai choisi la nouvelle de Virginia Woolf intitulée « The Mark on the Wall » (1917) comme texte soumis à l'étude. Cette étude s'est révélée assez concluante en ce qu'elle a permis de mettre en lumière des mots-clés ainsi que d'autres items que j'avais, de manière impressionniste, jugés pertinent d'un point de vue stylistique et thématique.

Abstract:
Le logiciel WMatrix, créé par Paul Rayson, permet une analyse stylistique comparée d'un texte au regard d'un corpus de référence, c'est-à-dire un corpus représentant un « style d'anglais » pertinent pour la comparaison. Pour cette étude expérimentale, j'ai choisi la nouvelle de Virginia Woolf intitulée « The Mark on the Wall » (1917) comme texte soumis à l'étude. Cette étude s'est révélée assez concluante en ce qu'elle a permis de mettre en lumière des mots-clés ainsi que d'autres items que j'avais, de manière impressionniste, jugés pertinent d'un point de vue stylistique et thématique.

Mots-clés : WMatrix – corpus – analyse stylistique

Keywords: WMatrix – corpus – stylistic analysis

Claire MAJOLA-LEBLOND
Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3 - ERIBIA - GREI EA 2610

The Three S's of Stylistics

Résumé :
Cet article est une réflexion sur la méthodologie stylistique, librement inspirée du travail de G.Leech et M.Short, appliquée à une nouvelle de William Trevor, « Solitude ».

Abstract:
This paper is a free meditation on the methodology of stylistics, inspired by G.Leech and M.Short's seminal work, *Style in Fiction* and offering interpretative perspectives on one of William Trevor's short stories, "Solitude".

Mots-clés : nouvelles, saillance, ligne serpentine, silence, stylistique, William Trevor.

Keywords: short-stories, stylistics, salience, serpentine line, silence, William Trevor.

Clara MALLIER
Université Michel de Montaigne Bordeaux 3

*The Meaning of Concessive Clauses in Jim Harrison's Work:
a Grammatical Reading of Mind Style*

Résumé :
A travers une étude de cas (l'emploi des propositions concessives dans l'œuvre de Jim Harrison), cet article aborde sous un angle grammatical le phénomène de « mind style », montrant que la singularité d'une vison du monde peut s'incarner dans des choix grammaticaux aussi bien que dans des préférences sémantiques ou lexicales.

Abstract:
Through a case study (the analysis of Jim Harrison's use of concessive clauses), this article deals with the grammatical side of "mind style", showing that the singularity of a worldview can be expressed through grammatical choices as well as through lexical or semantic preferences.

Mots-Clés : stylistique, linguistique énonciative, Jim Harrison, mind style.

Keywords: stylistics, enunciative linguistics, Jim Harrison, mind style.

Dan McINTYRE
University of Huddersfield, UK

Language and Style in David Peace's 1974*: a Corpus Informed Analysis*

Résumé :

Cet article entend démontrer le potentiel interprétatif de l'analyse de corpus pour conforter ou corroborer une analyse stylistique qualitative. En s'intéressant à un passage du roman de David Peace, *1974*, on démontre que l'analyse de corpus permet de valider des assertions qualitatives et de proposer une méthode relativement objective permettant de sélectionner un passage pour une analyse qualitative.

Abstract:

This article demonstrates the potential of corpus linguistic methods for supporting and informing qualitative stylistic analysis. Focusing on an analysis of an extract from David Peace's novel *1974*, it is argued that corpus linguistic techniques offer a means of validating qualitative claims as well as providing a relatively objective method for selecting a text sample for qualitative analysis.

Mots-clés : 1974, AntConc, linguistique de corpus, David Peace, "keyness", *Wmatrix.*

Keywords: *1974*, *AntConc*, corpus linguistics, David Peace, keyness, *Wmatrix.*

Marie-Pierre MOUNIÉ
Université de Strasbourg

*Imitation, Style, Fiction: Ethics of Writing, Ethics of Reading in Chatterton,
by Peter Ackroyd*

Résumé :

L'article revient sur la réflexion menée par Peter Ackroyd sur les notions de style, de fiction et de réalité à travers le prisme de l'imitation ; il a choisi de le faire dans un roman intitulé *Chatterton*, dont le héros éponyme fut célèbre pour ses pastiches du style médiéval.

Abstract:

The paper discusses the way Peter Ackroyd reflects about style, fiction and reality through the notion of imitation. He purposely entitled his novel *Chatterton* after the eponymous writer who was famous for pastiching medieval style.

Mots-clés : style, réalité, fiction, imitation, pastiche, intertextualité, hypertextualité.

Keywords: style, reality, fiction, imitation, pastiche, intertextuality, hypertextuality.

Linda PILLIÈRE
Aix-Marseille Université – LERMA EA

Mind Style: Deviance from the Norm?

Résumé :
Cet article revient sur l'interprétation courante du terme « mind style », pour démontrer que d'autres facteurs, l'importance du contexte socio-culturel et le rôle du destinataire, jouent un rôle fondamental dans la mise en place du « mind style ».

Abstract:
The paper seeks to demonstrate that the manner in which the concept of "mind-style" has been used by critics tends to focus too heavily on abnormal individual mind-styles, thereby neglecting other important factors, such as authorial mind-style and the socio-cultural context.

Mots-clés : style, mind-style, stylistique, déviance, contexte socio-culturel.

Keywords : style, mind-style, deviance, socio-cultural context.

Simone RINZLER
Université Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense– CREA – EA 370

Coetzee's style in Disgrace

Résumé :
Cet article défend la thèse selon laquelle la lecture et l'analyse du style de grands auteurs est l'enfance de l'écriture et de l'être-au-monde. L'écriture et le style sont intimement liés dans le style du roman *Disgrace* de Coetzee. Grâce au recours d'un style impersonnel qui, selon Deleuze, « pousse le langage à sa limite », l'auteur beckettien et kafkaïen opère une adaptation stylistique (involontaire) du concept de « Neutre » chez Barthes. Le *style neutre* de Coetzee s'attaque à de nombreuses questions qui intéressent tout autant les spécialistes (et les amateurs) de littérature, du langage et du style, que ceux qui s'interrogent sur les rapports entre écriture, conceptualisation et être-au-monde dans un monde terrifiant, sans cesse en cours de remaniement.

Abstract:
In this paper, I contend that reading and analyzing the style of great authors is at the root of writing and being. Writing and style are part and parcel in the style of Coetzee in *Disgrace*. Thanks to the use of an impersonal Deleuzian style "pushing language to its limits", the Beckettian and Kafkaian author (involuntarily) gives a stylistic adaptation of Barthes's concept of "The Neutral". Coetzee's *"neutral style"* addresses many issues for all those interested in the interaction between literature, language and style, but also in writing, thinking and being in an ever-changing and terrifying world.

Mick SHORT
Lancaster University, U.K.

Discourse Presentation and Speech (and Writing, but not Thought) Summary

Résumé :
Cet article examine les modalités d'un phénomène relativement peu étudié dans le domaine du discours rapporté, à savoir le *sommaire* de propos rapportés (oraux et écrits, mais pas intérieurs), et il mesure son impact sur la théorie du discours rapporté. Par une attention minutieuse portée au sommaire de propos oraux et écrits, ainsi que d'autres cas où les propos sont de toute évidence *présentés* mais pas *rapportés*, on peut retravailler la notion canonique des degrés de fidélité dans le discours rapporté, ce qui est nécessaire, me semble-t-il, pour expliquer les effets prototypiques des différentes catégories sur l'échelle de présentation des propos rapportés dans des contextes (en l'occurrence fictionnels) où les propos sont indiscutablement présentés mais pas rapportés. Je distingue entre ce que j'appelle « sommaire de propositions » (dans lequel sont résumées des propositions individuelles) et « sommaire de discours » (le résumé de portions plus longues de discours) ; j'avance que, alors que le sommaire de propositions est généralement associé à ce que l'on a coutume d'appeler la « représentation d'un acte de parole » par le narrateur – qu'il s'agisse de propos écrits ou oraux –, le sommaire de discours peut en principe utiliser n'importe laquelle des catégories de l'échelle du discours rapporté. Par conséquent, je voudrais proposer une échelle des modalités du discours *représenté* pour compléter l'échelle des modalités du discours rapporté existante. Je formule également l'hypothèse que la notion de sommaire s'applique mal à la représentation de pensées, et je m'interroge sur les conséquences de ce phénomène. Cette réflexion me permet (1) de présenter un changement mineur, mais que j'espère utile, dans la désignation des catégories de présentation du discours, (2) de commenter quelques cas qui sont intéressants par leur ambiguïté, (3) de considérer les indices qui nous montrent que des propos sont résumés et (4) de corriger quelques erreurs de Short (1988) et du chapitre 10 de Leech et Short (2007 [1981]).

Abstract:
This paper outlines the detailed nature of a relatively neglected phenomenon in discourse presentation and considers its consequences for discourse presentation theory. Careful consideration of the phenomenon of clearly intended speech and writing summary, as well as other phenomena where discourse is clearly *presented* but not *reported*, helps us to preserve in a focused way the canonical notion of varying degrees of faithfulness in the reporting of speech and writing originating in anterior contexts, something which is necessary, in my view, to explain the prototypical effects of the different categories on the discourse presentation scales in contexts (e.g. fictional speech) where speech is clearly being presented but not reported. I make a

distinction between what I call 'proposition-domain summary' (where individual propositions are summarized) and 'discourse-domain summary' (the summary of larger stretches of discourse), and suggest that, whereas proposition-domain summary is usually associated with what has usually been called the Narrator's/reporter's Representation of a Speech Act (NRSA) on the speech presentation scale and its equivalent (NRWA) on the writing presentation scale, discourse-domain summary can in principle be presented using *any* of the categories on the speech and writing presentation scales. Consequently, I want to propose scales of speech and writing discourse-domain summary to match the traditional speech and writing presentation (i.e. 'proposition presentation') scales. I also suggest that the notion of summary does not sensibly apply to thought presentation and consider the theoretical consequences of this. Along the way, I will (i) propose a minor, but hopefully helpful (because I think it is more accurate and clearer), change in the naming of the discourse presentation categories and their associated acronyms, (ii) discuss some interesting ambiguous cases, (iii) consider how we become aware in reading the presenting text that discourse is being summarized and (iv) correct some errors in Short (1988) and chapter 10 of Leech and Short (2007 [1981]).

Mots-clés : sommaire de discours, présentation de discours, ambiguïté dans la présentation de discours, discours rapporté, discours représenté, fidélité, sommaire de propositions, sommaire citationnel, sommaire de paroles, sommaire de propos écrits.

Keywords : discourse-domain summary, discourse presentation, discourse presentation ambiguity, discourse report, discourse representation, faithfulness, proposition-domain summary, quotative summary, speech summary, writing summary

Michael TOOLAN
University of Birmingham, U.K.

"Is Style in Short Fiction Different from Style in Long Fiction?"

Résumé :

Le style des fictions brèves est-il le même que celui des fictions longues ? Plus précisément, les nouvelles diffèrent-elles stylistiquement des romans (même si on ne considère que quelques types de nouvelles et quelques types de romans et que l'écart soit plus une question de degré que de nature) ? Dans le contexte d'un colloque sur le Style dans la Fiction, cet article définit quelques traits spécifiques à la nouvelle, en particulier quand ils diffèrent de ceux que l'on observe dans le roman. L'article débute avec des exemples dans lesquels il est difficile d'observer des différences notables entre nouvelles et romans. Je rappelle ensuite quelques caractéristiques généralement associées à la nouvelle. Enfin, mon étude se porte sur l'utilisation, dans certaines nouvelles (mais pas, telle est ma thèse, dans les romans) de ce que je nomme des passages de Grande Implication Emotionnelle qui diffèrent du reste de la nouvelle d'un point de vue formel et fonctionnel.

Abstract:

Is style in short fiction different from style in long fiction? More specifically: are short stories different stylistically from novels (even if we talk only of *some* types of short stories, vs *some* types of novels; and differing in degree rather than in kind)? In the context of a symposium on Style in Fiction, this essay makes some points about style in short fiction, and a particular respect in which it may differ from style in novels. I begin with some observations about some domains

where it is hard to see a short story/novel stylistic contrast; I then make some points about what are widely accepted as features characteristic of stories; thereafter I focus on the occurrence in some stories (but not, I hypothesize, in novels) of what I call High Emotional Involvement Passages, which are distinct in form and function from ambient story text.