Logos & Littera

Journal of Interdisciplinary Approaches to Text

Institute of Foreign Languages
University of Montenegro

Editor-in-chief Neda Andrić

LOGOS & LITTERA
Journal of Interdisciplinary Approaches to Text

CONTENTS

Joseph W.H. Lough[1]

A DEADLY SILENCE: SPIVAK'S SUBALTERN IN CRITICAL CULTURAL STUDIES

Abstract: *Over twenty years have passed since Professor Gayatri Chakrovorty Spivak invited us to consider how our scholarly practices might be helping to silence the subaltern. Professor Lough invites us to reconceptualize our silencing of the subaltern as part of a much longer and deeper project to silence the body as such – the body of language, the body of knowledge, the body of literature. Recuperating this body will require more than talk. It will engage our bodies.*

Key words: *Spivak, the subaltern, critical cultural studies*

Introduction

It is difficult today to find a literary scholar or linguist unfamiliar with Professor Gayatri Chakrovorty Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?"(Spivak 1994). Indeed, most would eagerly own their sympathy for her project. And, yet, perhaps at no other time in history have our institutions and our teaching, our scholarship and our publications, displayed greater hostility toward the subaltern than they do today. Professor Spivak counseled us to attend to the body of language. And yet we continue to focus our attention on language disembodied. The cause for our Janis-faced appreciation for and appropriation of Professor Spivak's critique is seated in our failure to adequately understand the formation of our own science and its complicity in undeterred political project of globalization, neo-colonialism, and imperialism. Coming to terms with our complicity however is no easy manner. It will require first that we grasp the social and

---

[1] Professor at the University of California, Berkeley.

historical mechanisms that first led to the isolation of the sublime from its material form of appearance in fourteenth century western Europe. We will then have to explore how this initial fragmentation of the body of language gave rise to a discourse about language and about the body that continues to haunt our discipline.

To scholars of a certain age — I am 57 — the mere mention of Professor Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and her best-known article is enough to bring wistful tears to the eyes and understanding nods to the head. Do you remember? I do. That was because when I entered graduate school in 1990 with an eye to becoming a critical theorist everything French was the rage: not simply Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan, Jean-François Lyotard, and Roland Barthes, who were already dinosaurs, but the newcomers: Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, Jean Baudrillard; and, for the as yet unconverted Marxists — there was always Pierre Bourdieu. Theodore Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Jürgen Habermas — the Germans in general? — all dead; all that is except for *Messr. Heidegger*. Which is no doubt why our professor, the feminist cultural theorist Professor Leora Auslander, had us read Professor Spivak's essay.

It was as though someone had thrown ice cold water in our theoretical *visage*. Had *we* silenced the subaltern? Was it at *us* that she was directing her criticism?

Briefly — for it has no doubt been some years — Professor Spivak takes the two French icons Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze to task for their refusal to critically interrogate their own complicity and the complicity of post-structuralist cultural studies in the premature emancipation — which is to say the silencing — of the subaltern. In order to expose this complicity, Professor Spivak directs our attention to texts long ago dismissed by her colleagues on both sides of the Atlantic; texts composed by Karl Marx.

Marx had fallen into disfavor within critical cultural studies not only on account of the political excesses of comrades Lenin and Stalin, but also on account of the profound deficiencies

evident in Marxian critical theory *per se*. Marxian critical theorists seemed incapable of thinking outside of a binary code that it ought to have instead been their object to critique. Instead of emancipating labour and emancipating society from labour, Marxian critical theorists were still found for the most part anticipating a future in which all would equally be bound to this peculiar form of self-domination; and, instead of articulating a clear and compelling case against the role industrial expansion had played in colonialism and imperialism, Marxian critical theorists had simply folded both of these monstrosities into the inevitable stages of economic development, soon to be overcome with the defeat of the bourgeoisie and its replacement by the industrial working class; to say nothing of the hopelessly productivist framework within which most Marxian critical theorists plied their trade.

Making all the more astonishing Professor Spivak's favorable invocation of Marx in her ground-breaking 1988 article "Can the Subaltern Speak?", an article whose own theoretical framework owed more to Derrida than to Marx or his theoretical successors.

Why Karl Marx?

The problem, as Professor Spivak laid it out, was that critical cultural studies had not yet articulated ways to come to terms with either capitalism or imperialism, except to fault power as such and to speak and write imperiously of the need to free the victims of capital and empire from the categories imposed upon them by "the West" and so allow them the room to speak for themselves. In other words, they did not seem the least aware that their failure to offer a substantive critique of capitalism as such and imperialism as such — indeed, their dismissal of all criticism of these historical forms as naïve and simplistic — was itself a part of the academically sanctioned mechanism that enforced the subaltern's silence.

"White men are saving brown women from brownmen" (Spivak 92) was the sentence Spivak developed to capture the extent of critical cultural studies' blindness.

But why Marx? Was it only because of Marx's own refusal to ontologize and universalize the social subject; and his methodological refusal therefore to transhistoricize anything like an emancipatory subject? Was this it? Or was it not also Marx's insistence upon theories grounded in practice and therefore his instance upon theories that preserved the social and historical specificity both of emancipation and of the object of his critique?

In the end, Spivak is drawn to Marx on both accounts: both on account of his refusal to ontologize or universalize social subjectivity and practice; and on account of his instance on historical and social specificity. This meant, however, that the theorist is never outside of the object of her or his critique. Authorization to speak bears a heavy cost. It entails relationship. For when I critique I must also acknowledge and theorize my own complicity in the silencing of the subaltern; which is never only a linguistic silencing, but is always a social and historical silencing as well. Silence is inscribed on the "body of knowledge." Silence invites us to notice and to decipher its "body language."

In their deference to the muted voice of the subaltern, their reluctance to address either capital or empire; in their methodological predisposition to theorize always and only at dusk, when, according to Hegel, all cats are grey, they just as effectively silence the subaltern as if they had sold and bought shares in the Royal East India Company themselves.

We will consider in a moment Professor Spivak's cryptic story about the tragic Sati-Suicide and how this act of defiance might loose the tongues of the silenced subaltern; or, in any case, illuminate a path leading toward such loosening. Yet, it is one of the few shortcomings of Professor Spivak's otherwise extraordinary piece that she herself offers only glimpses of why and how France's intelligentsia, and, as it so happens, the last half century of critical cultural studies, has found itself aiding and

abetting the production of a silence they might instead have helped critique.

This conference of ours, "Word Across Cultures," obviously demands such a critique. But, if Professor Spivak is correct, and I believe that she is, we cannot hope to offer such a critique without shedding a critical light on the production of our own deadly silence.

As an initial attempt at a kind of recuperation or recovery of voice, I would like first to revisit the lineages of our own science and its complicity in the composition of our silence. The theme I have selected around which to organize this intervention is "the sublime"; and not just any sublime, but more specifically, the Kantian "sublime" — *das Erhabene*. "*Erhaben*," writes Kant, "is that, the mere ability to think which shows a faculty of the mind surpassing every standard of sense" (Kant 172 §25).

My reason for selecting the Kantian sublime as my point of departure is that it opens up in a particularly clear manner the way that western Europeans in the 18th century felt compelled to isolate the sublime from its material forms of appearance. This compulsion, I will suggest, was not purely or even primarily instrumental. Rather was it an attempt to intellectually account for a practical transformation that had already insinuated itself among all ranks of men and women in all corners of society; a *de facto* isolation of the sublime from its material form of appearance with which, by the late eighteenth century, western Europeans were finally beginning to come to terms. Yet, since this entailed also coming to terms with close to eight millennia of written and oral tradition that had closely linked the sublime to the body, that had believed the two inseparable, isolating the sublime from its body also required a critique of human experience as such.

We will see in a moment how and why the sublime emerges in thirteenth century Europe and how and why it is compelled to isolate itself from its body. For the moment, what is significant is how this isolation sets the stage for the isolation of regimes of knowledge transmission, which we as academics

compose; isolation of knowledge, that is, from both the bodies whose practices generate this knowledge and from the bodies that in turn are subjected to these regimes of power and knowledge. In this mutual constitution of the sublime and its body we are invited to discern and deconstruct the deadly silence that continues to haunt our disciplines. But first to the constitution of the Kantian sublime.

The birth of the sublime

It is no secret, of course, that western Europe was for centuries regarded as the backwater of the known world — a region without learning, without science, without law, without culture — occupied by roving bands of wild and violent barbarians. Nor was this simply the opinion of scholars in India, China, Africa, or the Islamic Mediterranean, who universally excoriated the backwards peoples of the European west. It was also the opinion of those handful of Churchmen who, having some knowledge of classical languages and some familiarity with the world outside of Europe, knew that western Europe lagged hopelessly behind the rest of the civilized world (see e.g., O'Shea).

Like elsewhere, the forces that shaped the every day rhythms of life for Europeans were broadly defined by nature herself — by the movements of the constellations, by the lengthening and shortening of the day, by migrations of animal life, by the ebb and flow of tides, by seasonal weather patterns and, therefore, by rhythms of planting and harvest or, for most peoples, by their own migratory patterns, covering large territories and hundreds of years in duration. In these respects Europeans were quite similar to other communities elsewhere. And, yet, perhaps on account of its harsh weather and a dearth of good soil, northern Europe in particular never became the object of desire of other transcontinental empires. And when crusaders marched to Jerusalem to reclaim it for their God, they too were made aware of how utterly backward and uncivilized western Christendom was when compared to other places on the globe.

Yet, among the objects these crusaders brought back with them is a device that will completely change their world: the Chinese escapement mechanism (Landes 53-66). The escapement mechanism in China is used to calibrate the movements of the heavens with the movements inside the Imperial City around whose Emperor, of course, the Heavens naturally turn. Transported to the rocky, inhospitable and uninhabitable West, the escapement mechanism will serve a different function. It will tell brothers and sisters in cloistered communities when they need to pray; because the brothers and sisters in these communities have a problem. For much of the year, their water freezes and so they cannot use water clocks to measure the intervals between times of prayer. For similar reasons — because it is dark — sun dials are also of little use. The escapement mechanism when fixed to weights or to a metal spring will mark equal intervals of time at night and in daylight, when temperatures are below freezing or when they are unbearably hot. A peg fixed to a chain that is pulled through the escapement mechanism will cause a small bell to ring. The small bell will awaken Frere Jacques; and Frere Jacques will then ring a larger bell that will awaken the entire community for prayer.

By the late thirteenth century such devices had already begun to proliferate in cloistered communities everywhere throughout Europe. Which was a problem, because, as we already noted, Europeans were accustomed to rhythms governed by nature — in this case by the rising and setting of the sun. So that if you happened to be among the vast majority of Europeans who were not accustomed to praying seven times a day, who were accustomed to awakening with the rising of the sun and bedding down when the sun set, it was a terrible annoyance to be awakened by Church bells many hours before the sun rose, and equally annoying to be awakened after settling down for sleep.

Time, everyone knows, is variable. Even for us, EP Thompson reminds us, not all rhythms are governed by clock-time (Thompson 79). For the two or three years between birth and childhood, parents contend with the natural rhythms of their

children. People living in coastal regions must deal with tidal patterns whether they like it or not. And there are differing rhythms as we move from regions with high to low unemployment. At the beginning of the fourteenth century, variable time was the only time. Clock time did not yet exist. As David Landes tells us, it had not yet been invented.

The noise produced by the church bells must, therefore, at least initially, have been unbearable. And, yet, eventually we know exactly what happened. Eventually, entrepreneurs in the textile industry began to peg the workday less to diurnal rhythms than to the church bells. We know this because of the resistance textile workers displayed when they were forced to begin and stop work at "unnatural" times — either before or after the rising or setting of the Sun. And we know this because of the churchmen who came to workers' defense when employers began to pay their workers not in accordance with the just wage established by the church, but according to the hours they had worked; which, of course, were not "real" hours, hours as marched out by the real Sun, but deceitful hours, false hours; hours chimed out at arbitrary times that failed to coordinate with the movements of God's created order (Postone 202-215).

What was happening is that the authority to authorize time, to judge it, to measure it, was being stolen from the heavens and was being privately and individually deployed solely for personal gain. Time was being privatized. But that is not all. Already in the fourteenth century, new laws were appearing governing the regulation of time, the regulation of clocks, the regulation of bells. So that public attention — not only of those working in the shops or in the fields — but also of those working in the towns; public attention was being turned away from the natural rhythms set by Sun and Moon, stars, seasons, waters, plants and animals, and was being turned toward these abstract units. Prior to the thirteenth century, public rhythms had been negotiated among the leading corporations of society: the clergy, the nobility, the trades, the monarchy, and, increasingly, the towns folk. Now, or so it appeared, these negotiations were being

eclipsed by time itself. For when any of these corporations challenged the new measurement, they were immediately silenced by the undeniable, incontrovertible, observation that no one was being short-changed of time so long as the units of time marched out by the clocks were accurate.

And herein was born the Kantian sublime. For what else is the Kantian sublime than this practical isolation of value, value marched out by equal units of time, from its material form of appearance? As individuals labored in the fields and in the shops, as they came to view their action as the equivalent not of a just wage negotiated among all corporations, but as the equivalent of some number of minutes and hours marched out on a clock, they also began to experience value pulling free from the bodies in which it had once been contained; value pulling free from bodies and now finding itself inscribed in equal units of abstract time. Bodies, which once ruled, or which in any event held their own in a commerce among many bodies and their fields, now suddenly found themselves subject to the disembodied sequence of temporal intervals bound to human actions (Lough 21-38).

We know that this is what happened from several independent sources. Take, for example, the field of philosophy in general, or the philosophy of precious metals. Here, of course, for much of the Middle Ages, Plato was King. Metals hold the value they do on account of the substances they contain. Yet, as the new regime of time took hold, nominalism, which had always been a minority philosophy, began to pick up adherents. Precious metals held the value they did not on account of the substances they contained, but on account of the value with which we credit them (Weber 1996; Sargent 2014).

Or take the Virgin Mary; or, in particular, take her breasts. In the Middle Ages, Mary's breasts play a huge role in in spiritual iconography. Mary's body is a central feature of Medieval piety and spirituality. Thousands of sermons are told each year about how the Virgin seduces the Father with her Body to produce the Son. Yet, once the sublime began to practically separate itself from its material form of appearance, we begin to see a similar

bifurcation in the Body of the Holy Virgin. On the one hand, the Mother of God's Body is handed over to common pornographers and becomes a source of inspiration for something more than simply prayers. On the other hand, where the Virgin remains a source of spiritual sustenance, her body is compelled to retreat into the background and disappear. Mary becomes an Angel and is no longer permitted to disrobe and feed the church with her mother's milk (Ellington 2001; Miles 2008).

Or take the wounds of Jesus received upon the Cross. For most of the Middle Ages, in holy iconography these wounds are permitted to survive the resurrection and glorification. Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father, blood spilling from his side and cleansing his people below. Yet, with the introduction of abstract time and abstract value in the early modern period, a separation can be observed. On the one hand there is the all-too-human earthly body, covered with sores, eaten by worms, broken, bleeding, blistered, and subject to decay. On the other hand is the risen and glorified Lord, in whom no bodily distortion or imperfection is permitted and therefore on whose body no gory wounds, disease, or decay can be perceived (Widdicombe 2003).

Or, finally, of course, there is the Holy Eucharist itself. Modern day Catholics would of course like to believe that they embrace the same beliefs as their Medieval counterparts. They all believe in the Real Presence. But they don't. Yes, the Medieval practitioner tastes the Body and Blood. Yet, it is noteworthy that Saint Thomas, when he writes about the Holy Eucharist in his *Summa Theologica*(TP Q73), is anxious to explain why God is to be tasted only in this Bread and Wine. Why, since God is everywhere and in everything, why is God experienced only in these seven sacraments? Because, the fact is that Medieval Catholics did experience God in all kinds of natural phenomena; in weather patterns, in mountain streams, in forests, in herbs and in animal life. Since the sublime was not yet isolated from its material form of appearance, there was no reason not to experience the sublime everywhere and in everything.

But, then, as though on cue, in the fifteenth century all across Europe, wherever the new clocks were installed and the new time regime had been implemented, community after community suddenly realized how foolish they had all been to mistakenly feel that the eternal could be contained in and under mutable bodies in time. And all across Europe religious subjectivities suddenly shifted to fit the new regime of practice.

An earlier archeology (Weber 2002) held that this shift had itself been the trigger for the change in practice; that the new religious subjectivity had predisposed social actors to adopt what Max Weber had called a kind of "this-worldly asceticism." What instead appears to have happened was that as ever larger numbers of individuals calibrated their actions and subjectivities to the new rhythm of time marched out first on clocks installed in monasteries, but then on clocks installed in towns, social subjectivity itself had undergone a dramatic transformation. Martin Luther's 95 Theses were not so much the cause as much as they were a symptom of this broad social transformation (Lough 2006).

So that when three centuries later Immanuel Kant radically isolated the sublime from its material form of appearance he was in fact doing no more than calling attention to a *fait accompli*, an indisputable, objective truth already long ago inscribed on the bodies and in the practices of nearly all Europeans. If the sublime is ineffable, immaterial, everywhere and nowhere, dismembered, fragmented, lacking form, location, content — this fact is not simply an invention cooked up by latter-day Nietzscheans disgruntled by modernism's many oppressive totalities. The free-floating signifier is already there in the 15th century; already there in the practices of ordinary towns folk and country laborers who have grown accustomed to the new regime of time and labour. But this also means that the deadening silence had also already set in; not simply the muting of bodies, but the isolation of value from its material form of appearance, so that this value is no longer able to identify the practices or the bodies to which it might otherwise be related.

The double concealment

I noted earlier how we are complicit in the composition of this silence. For Professor Spivak, our complicity consisted in our unwillingness or inability to squarely face the ways our interpretive categories, along with the rituals of our interventions, actually serve to reinscribe the violence, but therefore also serve to enforce the interdiction on speech, upon those we have already muted. Loosing the tongues of the muted would, in Professor Spivak's case, at the very least involve foregrounding the roles that class and gender domination, and imperialism play not only in silencing subjects of class, gender and imperial domination. It would also entail critically interrogating the roles we and our institutions play in reproducing such forms of domination and so enforcing the silence.

So, in what might our complicity consist now, twenty-five years later? If in 1988 we already felt the walls closing in upon us, now, today, the doors and door frames have all been removed and the walls plastered over. We now occupy fully privatized, fully neoliberalized departments and institutions in which speaking risks almost certain banishment. Better therefore to maintain our silence willingly and to deploy our interventions quietly, obliquely, under the radar. We will foreground difference. We will explore the fragment. We will recover the trace. But we will not, we must not, foreground the regulatory regime that has transformed our institutions of learning into thinly- or not-so-thinly veiled bastions of privilege. We will not, we must not, call attention to the efficiencies extracted from laborers whose temporal rhythms compose both their and our silence. And we must not expose the self-enforced censorship with which we purchase the privilege of maintaining our own silence.

But how have we — ambassadors of the most talkative of professions — been silenced?

Let us suppose that the story I related just now about abstract time and value was in fact a story about the formation of capital and its sublime value form. And let us further suppose

that among the lessons this story might teach us is how some practices hold the power of concealing the conditions of their own possibility — covering their tracks so to speak — leading sublime value to openly and noisily disavow its connection to the body by which it has been composed. If this is so, then this authorizes us to speak of a two-fold concealment.

In the first concealment, the institution itself, the university and its department stands under an interdiction prohibiting it from speaking openly about the oppressive conditions that account for its perpetuation — the investment of its resources in private and public ventures around the globe whose *modus operandi* entail the extraction of labour in exchange for the right to simply to live, to say nothing of the right to live well or live free. Were we to point this out or were we to organize and pressure our presidents, our rectors, or our boards to disinvest and to reinvest in public ventures that aimed at the public good, we would surely be criticized for introducing politics into the educational venture; but we also might be punished for our unprofessional conduct, conduct unbefitting our title and responsibilities. And so our silence.

But alongside this first concealment is a second to which the first is intimately related. In this second related concealment on purely methodological grounds we prohibit ourselves — or are prohibited by our colleagues — from crossing the barrier separating the sublime from its material form of appearance, from looking for or finding the sublime once again in the bodies from which it has so recently been liberated. This liberation from bodies is often portrayed through a lens cut in the pragmatic isolation of narrative from scientific discourse — *a la* Jean-François Lyotard (1989) — where scientific discourse is itself conflated with its uniquely modernist form. Bodies are then mistaken for their nomothetic models and liberation from these models is then equated with liberation from the oppressive law-bound quality felt to adhere to all bodies in time and space. The least curiosity over the paths that might lead from the sublime to its material body and back again, or over the practical regimes by

which these paths might have been obscured, is often met with accusations that we are attempting to reintroduce structuralism surreptitiously back into the canon; or, worse still, that we are displaying Marxian or even Marxist tendencies in our research. At the very least, we are found guilty of the many flaws of modernism for which we must and will be duly punished.

This double-concealment then — the first institutional, the second methodological — helps account for the noisy silence that has become characteristic of our science. We speak but in a manner that silences on whose authority we speak. We speak but only so long as we pay homage — whether directly or indirectly — to the freely floating signifier speaking through us; absent its body. And herein we reinscribe at a much higher level a discourse about discourse — and so a metadiscourse — that silences the already muted bodies over which it rules with imperious resolve.

The initial attempt to recuperate or recover voice leads us to the statement: we are looking for the bodies of the sublime value form of the commodity.

But to this initial attempt at recuperation must be added a second; because the first attempt might still leave us only with the fully intact, fully recovered two-fold form of the commodity. So that our second attempt at recuperation or recovery of voice takes as its point of departure Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's reflections on the *Geist* whose production of the world — which is identical to its self production — Hegel likened to divine self-pleasuring or Godly masturbation.

In the famous "Preface" to his *Phenomenologie des Geistes*, Hegel attempts to resolve the phenomenological rupture disclosed in Kant's third critique, by taking objective spirit or mind as his point of departure. Not a sublime spirit isolated from its material form of appearance, therefore, but a spirit that is always already embodied, differentiating itself from itself, positing itself as its own objective presence, losing itself or very nearly losing itself in this self-differentiation, which is simultaneously and for this very reason a return to its own body.

The living substance, further, is that being which is truly subject, or, what is the same thing, is truly realized and actual solely in the process of positing itself, or in mediating with its own self its transitions from one state or position to the opposite. As subject it is pure and simple negativity, and just on that account a process of splitting up what is simple and undifferentiated, a process of duplicating and setting factors in opposition, which   [process] in turn is the negation of this indifferent diversity and of the opposition of factors it entails (Hegel 1977:10).

Let us stop here. "As subject it is pure and simple negativity." That is to say, as the simple sublime — as the ineffable, the unspeakable, the mute, the disembodied — it is pure and simple negativity; the not-body. And so it is not a living substance, not realized and not actual. There is no positing of itself and so also no self-mediation. Which helps to explain why, to continue with Hegel's account:

True reality is merely this process of reinstating self–identity, of reflecting into its own self in and from its other, and is not an original and primal unity as such, not an immediate unity as such (Hegel 1977:10).

Again, let us pause. Because it would be easy at this point to slip back into pure identity. Except that clearly this is not at all what Hegel is contemplating. Rather am I reflecting into my own self from the vantage point of my other, which is not other than my now differentiated self. And it is for this reason that Hegel insists that this "is not an original and primary unity as such, not an immediate unity as such."

There is no intending, initial, establishing event here pointing to an end. Rather, says Hegel, is there a purpose disclosed in this end, which we can then deduce is its purpose. "It is the process of its own becoming," writes Hegel, "the circle which presupposes its end as its purpose, and has its end for its beginning; it becomes concrete and actual only by being carried out, and by the end it involves."

Not idealism, therefore, but the critique of idealism. The recovery or restoration of the body to the sublime. And so we need to note here how the path that we can travel here, from the end to its beginning, we cannot travel without attending to the body. But to what can we liken this journey backwards, as it were, this search for origins? Hegel leaves no doubts as to what he likens this journey. It is according to Hegel the journey of divine self-pleasuring or Godly masturbation. "The life of God and divine intelligence," writes Hegel, "then, can, if we like, be spoken of as love disporting with itself," or so the English translation reads. The German is much more explicit. "Das Leben Gottes und das göttliche Erkennen mag also wohl als ein Spielen der Liebe mit sich selbst ausgesprochen warden" (Hegel 1907:13). Thus love pleasuring itself; or divine self-pleasuring.

In the end, therefore, as we can see, Hegel resolves Kant's isolation of the sublime from its material form of appearance by the self-objectification entailed in self-pleasuring or mastur-bation. The body of the sublime is restored. But since it is the commodified body that lies at the end of this process of restoration, it is a body that is always already subjected to and therefore submissive to the sublime value form. The body made whole by capital; or, which is the same thing, the masturbating body.

So, what is the outcome of this second attempt to recuperate or recover the voice of the silenced body? It resolves into the statement: the bodies of the sublime value form must be seen but not heard; or, which is the same thing: they must only speak when they are spoken to.

This too, however, is inadequate. For even though we are now permitted to explore the body of the sublime, as Hegel has observed just now, we are only permitted to explore this body from the vantage point fixed by the sublime value form's own curriculum vitae; reading, as it were, the history of this body backwards from this unfortunate end. But because this end entails the destruction of this body in its complete annihilation — that is to say in its consumption — its voice is once again drown

out by the value form and by its self-valorization. And it is this voice, the voice of self-valorizing capital, we are now permitted to hear and repeat, in all of its brilliantly, spectacularly, commodified forms.

There is a text in the 1930 edition of the *Der Grosse Brockhaus* that reads as follows:

Sublime: an object or process whose inner excellence abnormally heightens or threatens to shatter its material form of appearance. The force it exerts must be greater than normal. Examples: the stormy sea is sublime in contrast to other powerful expressions of nature, the expanse of the heavens is sublime in contrast to other experiences of space; the art of an Aeschylus, Dante, Michelangelo is sublime because in it humans are drawn up into the superhuman. As subspecies of the sublime, we often include "dignity," the "solemn" and the "pathetic." If we explore the subjective meaning of the sublime, we find many terrors, even fear, but always inner ennoblement, a certain compulsion to transgress the boundaries of normal everyday experience (*Brockhaus* 633).

So, once again, we are brought face to face with the threat the sublime poses to its own material form of appearance — the threat that the sublime will shatter this body, will transgress its boundaries — and, so finally, we again face our deadly and deadening silence.

Bodies of knowledge

Let me close by offering a few words about disrupting, dislodging, and speaking into and through this silence. The first thing I would like to say is that bodies do not naturally or inevitably lend themselves to being bearers and victims of the sublime. That is because, as we have seen, this peculiar relationship between the sublime and its body, historically, speaking is quite recent; certainly no older than the fourteenth or perhaps the thirteenth century. And this means that, particularly outside of western Europe, and prior to the fourteenth century, we are authorized to look for and find evidence of bodies that

have not yet been subjected to domination by the new regime of time and labour. But we are also authorized to look for and find evidence of bodies — body language — wherever regimes of practice are not governed by abstract labor time expended. At the same time, it strikes me that we need not feel compelled in any sense to transcribe the sublime onto histories or locations from which it is absent; nor are we compelled to naturalize, universalize, or ontologize the sublime, reading it in a Hegelian manner back onto histories from which it is absent. Bodies speak, but not when they are coerced into speaking the language of abstract value.

Second, it is equally important that we not permit the sublime to naturalize itself even in those social formations that have become its natural habitat. Bodies are not the natural *habitus* of the sublime. And when we read them under occupation as though they were only self-occupied, we silence them just as effectively as we would by ignoring them entirely. Releasing bodies from their domination by the sublime and so loosing their tongues therefore entails more than simply taking note of discursive variety or plenitude. This, I take it, was among the points that Professor Spivak wanted us to bear in mind. Social and historical critique are not secondary to our enterprise. Failing such critique, we effectively silence the bodies upon whose speech our entire enterprise depends.

This second point needs to be stressed because there are those at our institutions, in our faculties and in our administrations, who may feel that such criticism falls outside of our job description. We need to restrict ourselves to the sublime or to those bodies coerced into speaking on its behalf. But can we really any longer call an institution of higher learning any faculty that deliberately silences, suppresses, or excludes bodies of knowledge? Can we any longer call a faculty of higher learning any department that deliberately and knowingly does the same?

Yes, absolutely, unequivocally — this is *politics*. But it is also *politics* that seeks to silence the body of knowledge by selecting for faculty and for administrators predisposed to such

silence; or by silently or noisily threatening those faculty who still have voices with the likelihood of dismissal or refusal to advance. We must therefore say no to this Kantian gambit; to this false choice between science and power; between disembodied knowledge and bodies of knowledge.

There is nothing — absolutely nothing — that is *natural* about this isolation of the sublime from its material form of appearance; not now, not ever. So that vocal, militant, politically active criticism of this isolation and the silence that it entails is among the leading responsibilities of any scholar who claims that she or he is being methodologically or theoretically rigorous. Silencing any body of knowledge is the opposite of methodological rigor.

But, therefore, thirdly, and lastly, we are entitled and even professionally obligated to pay attention to bodies of knowledge — to what bodies are telling us and to what we may learn from these bodies. Meaning we are neither authorized nor privileged to ignore these bodies.

You will recall how a moment ago we dipped superficially into the itinerary traced by the sublime spirit in its constitution of a body suitable to its peculiar form. I want now to see whether we might translate this itinerary into a form somewhat more familiar, although still clearly estranged. Some of you will remember that it was after this passage in Hegel's Preface that Karl Marx modelled his own description of the sublime value form of the commodity. Wrote Marx:

It is constantly changing from one form into the other, without becoming lost in this movement; it thus becomes transformed into an automatic subject. If we pin down the specific forms of appearance assumed in turn by self-valorizing value in the course of its life, we reach the following elucidation: capital is money, capital is commodities. In truth, however, value is here the subject of a process in which . . . it changes its own magnitude . . . and thus valorizes itself independently. . . . [V]alue suddenly presents itself as a self-moving substance which passes

through a process of its own, and for which commodities and money are both mere forms (Marx 1990:255-256).

An older generation of Yugoslavians habitually mistook itself, the industrial working class, for this subject-object of history. And, yet, clearly here Marx would like us to entertain the idea that it is not the working class, but the sublime value form of the commodity that deserves this title. It and not the working class is the Self-Moving Substance that is Subject, the substance that finds in its end also its beginning. Or, in the alternative, it is the commodified working class, the working class in its fully commodified form, that is this Subject-Object of History. But this means that when we installed the industrial working class in the position of state actors, when we listened to this body, mistaking it for the body to whom we should listen, we were in fact only listening to another instance of the value form itself. However, there is no simple, straightforward, direct path to the body of knowledge; there is no i-device we can plug in to hear this body speak.

Put differently, if it is in their subjection to the value form that bodies are silenced, we may not anticipate their speaking to us except and until they are freed from their subjection to this sublime form. And we may not anticipate their emancipation from this sublime form until such time as human action is emancipated from abstract time itself and is permitted to again respond to the tugs and pulls of bodies that are no longer commodified.

We might be inclined to fault Hegel for theorizing a singular, even if highly differentiated, subject. In his defense, however, Hegel did capture the oppressive identity that has plagued human society from the moment abstract time and value began to coordinate all of our affairs. And when traditional Marxist theory proposed that we subject all of society to a singular, uniform subject — the industrial working class — there is little doubt but that traditional Marxists felt that this subject stood opposite, dialectically, their class enemy, the bourgeois subject and that their victory over this subject constituted the

emancipation of society. They had little appreciation for how this victory signaled no more than a mutation in the value form of the commodity. They mistook Marx's critique of this singular identity for his celebration of the same.

But since bodies by their nature are different and non-identical, recovering body language entails nearly the opposite of this traditional Marxist maneuver. It entails the recovery of difference, not dialectically, not in resistance to the same, not in opposition, and therefore not *a la Hegel*; but difference mediating difference. The suspicion, no doubt, is that this celebration of difference is no more than an aesthetic preference; or, even worse, that it is a way to surreptitiously import political opposition into what ought to be a neutral frame. But, the fact is that scholars cannot remain neutral about recovering bodies and their voices without abdicating their responsibility as scholars. We are obligated by our scholarly duties to listen to bodies; and where those bodies have been bound and silenced, we have an obligation to critically explore the mechanisms binding and silencing these bodies.

Is this political? Yes, of course it is. But so too is the ongoing campaign to bind and silence these bodies under the pretense that silence and paralysis is their nature state. Or as if our own silence and our own paralysis is the natural state of scholarship. Or, finally, as if scholarship — rigorous scholarship, cutting edge scholarship — was not always already political and engaged and active.

But, of course, our scholarly responsibility that is also therefore political also obligates us to critically interrogate our own methodologically and theoretically induced silences. Have we been too quick to disavow, ignore, or silence bodies? Have we focused so narrowly on the traces and fragments, on the polymorphous and de-centered, schizoid selves of language that we too, like Kant, are happy to liberate the sublime from its bodies?

Professor Spivak invoked Marx in her famous paper not in order to distance herself from the real progress made by her

colleagues. Her discourse is shot through with Derridean tropes. She is not inviting us to fall back upon an older and therefore more authentic analytical frame. And neither am I. Spivak invoked Marx in her paper because when Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze abdicated their responsibility to critically interrogate the roles that class, empire, gender and power had played in the composition of their own discourse, they themselves helped to actively silence the subalterns caught in the web constructed by these less than fictitious, less than imaginary forces. What Marx had understood better than Foucault and Deleuze is the necessity to recover the bodily character, the embodied character, not only of our domination, but also of our emancipation — not only of our silences, but also of our capacity to speak. For, as Spivak points out, dismissing the body does not on its own liberate the voice. Rather does it make that silence ontologically fundamental, universal, natural and so permanent.

Reflections on the bad sati

When, therefore, toward the end of her essay, Professor Spivak invokes the bad *sati*, the self-sacrifice for no dead husband, and so the suicide, Spivak makes clear that she is not inviting us to witness this act either in order to condone the suicide or the unbearable domination of which it is a sign. Writes Spivak:

Bhuvaneswari [the suicide-*Sati*]had known that her death would be diagnosed as the outcome of illegitimate passion. She had therefore waited for the onset of menstruation. While waiting, Bhuvaneswari, the *brahmacarini* who was no doubt looking forward to good wifehood, perhaps rewrote the social text of sati-suicide in an interventionist way. (One tentative explanation of her inexplicable act had been a possible melancholia brought on by her brother-in-law's repeated taunts that she was too old to be not-yet-a-wife.) She generalized the sanctioned motive for female suicide by taking immense trouble to displace (not merely deny) in the physiological inscription of her body, its imprisonment within legitimate passion by a single

male. In the immediate context, her act became absurd, a case of delirium rather than sanity (Spivak 103-104).

Is this an illustration of the body silenced? Yes and no. Bhuvaneswari was no doubt silenced. Her suicide was credited as absurd. "The subaltern as female cannot be heard or read" (104). And, yet, do not we no less than Professor Spivak have a professional, scholarly responsibility to recover not only this, but other "physiological inscriptions" on this and other bodies?

Because wherever we remain silent or indifferent to these bodies; whenever we disavow the bodily character of the voices we are exploring, or whenever we count their silence as natural or celebrate this silence as evidence itself of emancipation, we become complicit in the very acts through which this body is being eliminated. We join in the miscomprehension of this absurd, delirious display of insanity.

Or we can reclaim our obligation to recuperate and recover this our body of knowledge.

References

Aquainas, Thomas. *Summa Theologica*. Translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 2014.
http://www.ccel.org/ccel/aquinas/summa.html accessed 2014-07-09

Ellington, Donna Spivey. *From sacred body to angelic soul: understanding Mary in late medieval and early modern Europe*. CUA Press, 2001.

Der Grosse Brockhaus. 15th Edition. Volume 5, F.U. Brockhaus, 1930.

Hegel, Georg Wilhem Friedrich. *Phänomenologie des Geistes. Philosophische Bibliothek. Band 14.* Jubiläumsausgabe. In revidiertem Text herausgegeben undmit einer Einleitung versehen vonGeorg Lasson Leipzig: Verlag der Dürr'schen Buchhandlung, 1907.

Hegel, Georg Wilhem Friedrich. "Introduction," *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Translated by A.V. Miller with Analysis of the text and Foreword by J.N. Findlay. Oxford University Press, 1977.

Kant, Immanuel, and Werner S. Pluhar. *Critique of judgment*. Hackett Publishing, 1987.

Kant, Immanuel. *Kritik der Urteilskraft. Werkausgabe*. Volume 10. Edited by Wilhelm Weischedel. Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Wissenschaft 57. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Verlag, 1974.

Landes, David S. *Revolution in time: Clocks and the making of the modern world*. Vol. 2000. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1983.

Law, Jane Marie, ed. *Religious reflections on the human body*. Indiana University Press, 1995.

Lyotard, Jean-Francois. *The Postmodern Condition: a Report on Knowledge*. Theory and History of Literature 10. Translated by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi with a Foreword by Fredric Jameson. University of Minnesota Press, 1989.

Marx, Karl. *Capital: a critique of political economy*. Volume 1. Translated by Ben Fowkes. Penguin Books, 1990.

Miles, Margaret Ruth. *A complex delight: The secularization of the breast, 1350-1750*. University of California Press, 2008.

Lough, Joseph. *Weber and the Persistence of Religion: Capitalism, Social Theory and the Sublime*. Routledge, 2006..

O'Shea, Stephen. *Sea of faith: Islam and Christianity in the medieval Mediterranean world*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA, 2007.

Postone, Moishe, Louis Galambos, and Jane Eliot Sewell. *Time, labor, and social domination: A reinterpretation of Marx's critical theory*. Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Sargent, T. J. and François R. V. *The Big Problem of Small Change*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" In: *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*. Edited by Patrick Williams/Laura Chrisman. Harvester/Wheatsheaf, 1994. 66-111.

Thompson, Edward Palmer. *Customs in common*. New York: New Press, 1991.

Weber, Ernst Juerg. ""Imaginary" or "real" moneys of account in medieval Europe? An econometric analysis of the Basle pound, 1365–1429." Explorations in Economic History 33.4 (1996): 479-495.

Weber, Max. *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Kindle Edition. Translated by Peter Baehr and Peter G. Wells. Penguin Group, 2002.

Widdicombe, Peter. "The wounds of the ascended body: the marks of crucifixion in the glorified Christ from Justin Martyr to John Calvin." *Laval théologique et philosophique.* Février, Vol. 59 (1), (2003): 137-154.

Ziegler, Heide. *John Barth*. Methuen, 1987.

Katarina P. Držajić[1]

THE KEY TO THE TREASURE IS THE TREASURE: BARTH'S METAFICTION IN *CHIMERA*

Abstract: *John Barth, one of the most prominent postmodern authors, is famous for his creative literary games: while his favorite tool, metafiction, is at times hard to comprehend, he is almost always both the writer and a character of his stories. "Everyone is necessarily the hero of his own life story," he said, thus confirming the quite loose difference between reality and fiction in post-modernism. Bearing in mind that the story within a story is a common characteristic of his work, in this paper we shall analyze the most interesting points at which we encounter this phenomenon and discover what actually represents the treasure in one of his most perplexing, yet incredibly captivating novels, Chimera.*

Keywords: metafiction, myth, story, storytelling

Introduction

Though the term *postmodernism* might be difficult to define, John Gardner claims that "It a world which values progress, 'post-modern' in fact means *New! Improved!*", while, according to Christine Brooke-Rose, "it merely means moderner modern (most-modernism?)" (Mc Hale 1989). On the other hand, for the American author John Barth postmodernism is "essentially a continuation but modification of cultural modernism, a way of 'telling stories' " (Rice & Waugh 2001). Well-known for using metafiction as one of the strongest tools associated with postmodern literature, we might as well say that Barth is one of the most significant figures of postmodernism today.

---

[1] Student of doctoral studies at the Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade.

"Once upon a time modernist literature reached the point of exhaustion; then came the postmodernist breakthrough, and literature replenished itself," says Brian McHale in *Constructing Postmodernism* (1992). According to Barth, exhausted literature can be replenished by "reviving the traditional (*premodernist*) values of fiction" (McHale 1992). The strongest examples of this tendency are his most prominent works *Lost in the Funhouse* (1968) and *Chimera* (1972).

The simplest way to define metafiction is to say that it is a type of fiction which constantly reminds the reader of its *true* status as a work of art. Indeed, Barth is widely known for his tendency to brilliantly play with the text, have a *dialogue* with the reader at times and make himself *a part of the story*. He openly says that it is a great pleasure for him to release his imagination through writing: "One of the pleasures (of writing) is doing difficult things well... One of the delights of virtuosity, in other words, whether we are the audience or the virtuoso, is doing quite difficult things with some grace, and getting it done" (Lindsay 1995).

"The whole of literature, from Flaubert to the present day, became the problematics of language," says Roland Barthes in *Writing Degree Zero* (1967). Although it is sometimes not easy to comprehend Barth's playful language, in this paper we shall try to explore the use of metafiction as a meaningful tool of postmodernism on the example of *Chimera*, a collection of three novellas with mythical background. We shall, furthermore, touch upon the subject of *modernization of a myth*, which is a perfect metaphor for literature in need of being replenished by *recycling the old*. After all, the author himself claims that postmodernist fiction must always keep "one foot in the narrative past ... and one foot in, one might say, the Parisian structuralist present" (Barth 1984).

Chimera

Chimera is a novel which consists of three loosely connected novellas, *Dunyazadiad*, *Perseid* and *Bellerophoniad.*

They tell us the stories of three mythical characters named Dunyazad, Perseus and Bellerophon. An interesting notion is that the three parts of this novel can be compared to the creature *Chimera* (killed by Bellerophon) which is part lion, part goat and part serpent (according to Walkiewicz (1986), "part heroism, part satire and part deception and convulsion").

Chimera, for Barth, is another *game* in which he demonstrates his ability to use the *old* and make it *postmodern*. In *The Literature of Replenishment* (1984) he quotes the controversial Russian author Evgeny Zamyatin who claims that "Euclid's world is very simple, and Einstein's world is very difficult; nevertheless, it is now impossible to return to Euclid's." The *ancient*, however, should not be fogotten, as it may serve as a valuable tool to *uplift* the 20th century literature.

The novel *Chimera* is full of elements of metafiction expressed in different ways that are often quite comical when put into the *ancient* context, while Barth himself explains his intentions regarding this:

"Of course, when you consciously use an old myth, a received myth, like the myth of Perseus or the myth of Helen, Paris, and Menelaus, then whatever there is of the originally mythpoetic in your own imagination is either going to come in somewhere else in that text – with new characters, or language, or new twists to the old myth – or else will simply flow in to fill in those mythic receptacles which go by the names of Paris, Menelaus, Helen. I believe firmly, in other words, that some of the serious affect that we experience in the face of genuine myth can be experienced in the face of contemporary 'comic' fiction using mythical materials" (Walkiewicz 1986).

This being said, it is no wonder why Polizzotti (Clavier 2007) compares Barth with Kurt Vonnegut, Monty Python's Flying Circus, and the films of David Lynch and the Cohen brothers. Indeed, each of his works rolls in front of the reader's eyes like some kind of avant-garde movie which never fails to surprise, or even shock.

Dunyazadiad

The first novela revolves around the most famous storyteller ever, Scheherezade, and her younger sister Dunyazad. Just like John Fowles did it in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, Barth is here making himself a part of the story by assuming the role of the Genie who helps the young woman continue the story and make her *telling* actually a *retelling*.

"The real magic is to understand which words work, and when, and for what; the trick is to learn the trick'' (15). It is no wonder why Barthes (1967) claimed that literature was "a language having body and hidden depths, existing both as dream and menace". As we already know, poor Scheherezade has to tell stories to Shahryar in order to save both her life and lives of many other girls he could kill, thus she has to choose her language carefully, to create literature which shall both satisfy the ruthless King, and bear a life-saving character.

In the beginning, Barth lets us know that this story is about her finding a way "to change King's mind about women and turning him into a gentle, loving husband'' (16) and suggests that "the key to the treasure is the treasure'' (19), or the story itself. The Genie, or Barth himself, informs Scheherezade that they are both storytellers and that he can help her think of the stories by retelling her book, which has never been off his worktable since he started writing (21). All these stories the girl is not even aware of yet, while they include the ancient ones such as *Sinbad the Sailor*, *Aladdin's Lamp*, *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves...*

Meanwhile, Shahryar's brother Shah Zaman shares his brother's passion for deflowering and killing virgins and his next victim is none other than Sherry's sister Dunyazad. She has previously watched her sister having sex with the King which she describes as "not conjured illustrations from those texts, but things truly taking place'' (29, 30). She says to Barth: "Don't desert us, friend; give Sherry the story you're working on now, and you may do anything you like with me. I'll raise your children if you have any; I'll wash your Melissa's feet. Anything'' (37). The stories for the King have been exhausted, as is literature in

Barth's eyes, but we can actually *save* it (1984): "By "exhaustion" I don't mean anything so tired as the subject of physical, moral, or intellectual decadence, only the used-upness of certain forms or the fest exhaustion of certain possibilities – by no means necessarily a cause of despair." This might lead us to conclusion that all those young women, including our female protagonists, can be saved as well.

According to Barth, Shahryar represents the male-chauvinist extreme of the American academic "publish or perish" principle (Ziegler 1987), which makes him not ideal audience, but Sherry is, on the other hand, an ideal storyteller. Ziegler further suggests that Dunyazade is the one representing the ideal listener. Using metafiction, Barth presents us Doony's monologue: "Turning then to me, to my great surprise he announced that the title of the story was *Dunyazadiad*; that its central character was not my sister but myself, the image of whose circumstances, on my 'wedding-night-to-come', he found as arresting for tale-tellers of his particular place and time as was my sister's for the estate of narrative artists in general'' (40).

Unfortunately, our main character is likely to suffer tragic destiny when handed to Shah Zaman, an alleged woman hater. Scheherezade still has trouble believing the Genie (Barth) and says that he "is either a liar or a fool when he says that any man and woman can treasure each other until death – unless their lifetimes are as brief as our murdered sisters' '' (45). She further suggests that Doony should cut Shah Zaman's throat, as she will do to Shahryar, and then they should commit suicide to spare their sex further suffering. Nevertheless, she is prevented from doing so by Shah Zaman telling her the story that hides behind his cruelty – a whole new society consisting only of women. "All I craved was someone with whom to get on with the story of my life, which was to say, of our life together: a loving friend; a loving wife; a treasurable wife; a wife, a wife,'' says he (60).

It is later suggested that "he learned through life and impotence something that the responsive reader may already have suspected: the true magic words are "as if'', words "which,

to a person satisfied with seeming, are more potent than all the genii in the tales'' (57) (Walkiewicz 1986). Shah Zaman wants them to "end the dark night'' and "take the truly tragic view of love'' – "maybe it *is* a fiction, but it's the profoundest and best of all'' (61). This is an excellent example of life replacing fiction and fiction replacing life – what is *true* does not matter anymore, so this novella does not have any definite *resolution*.

"Treasure me, Dunyazade!'' (63), says Shah Zaman just as the morning is approaching (and bear it in mind that this should have been the time of her death). Since the story shall live, Doony shall live too – if "we can accept the 'as if' he offers, then this 'denouement' may indeed become a moment of 'untying' in which the tangled loops of story are opened up, a joyous climax that occurs concurrently in all the frames of the tale'' (Walkiewicz 1986). In the last part of the novella, Barth informs us that this has not been the story of Scheherezade, but "the story of the story of her stories'' (63). Finally, the author himself explains to the reader that in order "to be joyous in the full acceptance of this denouement is surely to possess a treasure, the key to which is the understanding that Key and Treasure are the same'' (64). Thus we can conclude that the true treasure is storytelling itself.

Perseid

The protagonist of this novella is Perseus, the demi-god and the killer of Gorgon Medusa, who desperately struggles to obtain immortality. "Writing is... the negative where all identity is lost, starting with the very identity of the body of writing," says Barthes (1968). In a similar manner, Barth now takes the role of Perseus and tells us the story of *his* life.
"Good evening.

Stories last longer than men, stones than stories, stars than stones. But even our stars` nights are numbered, and with them will pass this patterned tale to a long/deceased earth." (67)

He then continues informing us of his *history*, from a middle-aged man's point of view, while we witness a series of dialogues which are quite comical at times (they mostly talk

about sex in a, so to say, *postmodern* manner). When Perseus says to Calyxa that he is a hero, only capable of "virtuoso performance" (78), she advises him not to think of sex as a performance, or else he will suffer "stage fright" (79). After all, just like sex is a form of pleasure which should be spontaneous, for Barth the pleasure is writing, while, for us readers, it is reading and "coming to an understanding of such a complex work", in this case, *Chimera* (Lindsay 1995). As the author suggests, the reader and writer`s joint "enterprise is noble", "full of joy and life" (61, 62), just like sex is for two people.

Barth continues his game of metafiction further in Perseus and Calyxa`s dialogue: "You reminded me once that you're a mythic hero, but you keep forgetting it yourself. Were you always psychosexually weak, or is that Andromeda`s doing?" (95) But the middle-aged hero is determined to tell his "second tale" which should be "truly a second, not mere replication of my first" (121). His desire to rewrite his own past, according to Susan Pozner (Clavier 2007) "parralels Barth's shift from masterfully appropriating the literary past in the earlier manifesto to wooing and 'replenishing' it in the second, and emblematizes this new program of replenishment". (1990) He will subsequently manage to achieve his goal: "his potency at least partially restored by the nymph, he went on to slay not only his remaining enemies, but also 'unpleasant middle Perseus' (132) and to confront a New Medusa, who supposedly had been given back her erstwhile beauty and granted the new power to turn both herself and her true lover 'ageless as the stars' (115)" (Walkiewicz 1986).

"My fate is to be able only to imagine boundless beauty from my experience of boundless love – but I have a fair imagination to work with," says Perseus as we are approaching the end of the novella (142). He is content about reaching immortality as a constellation of stars, while, at the same time, crushed by not being able to be with the one he loves ("Why is it I look at empty space forever, a blank page, and not at the woman I love?" (139)). Hence Walkiewicz (1986) is right when he claims that this is not only a story about a rise, but a fall too.

"So with this issue, our net estate: to have become, like the noted music of our tongue, these silent, visible signs; to *be* the tale I tell to those with eyes to see and understanding to interpret; to raise you up forever and know that our story will never be cut off, but nightly rehearsed as long as men and women read the stars... I'm content. Till tomorrow evening, love." (142)

Bellerophoniad

Although Barth initially intended *Dunyazad* to be the final novella of *Chimera*, the story of Bellerophon, the slayer of the creature, took the final place in the novel. It is the most complex of the three novellas, since it is neither monologue nor dialogue, not "Bellerus's voice" (277) speaking to us or anyone's "mortal speech", but "written words" (Walkiewicz 1986). This novella is certainly the most unusual one, since it includes other elements beside the myth and its modernization (such as Graves's summary of the myth, letters to Todd Andrews and King George III, a pattern of the *monomyth* (Walkiewicz 1986), as well as Barth's own thoughts and explanations of the story).

Bellerophon is, apparently, frustrated, just like Perseus is: "Upset upset. My life's a failure. I'm not a mythic hero. I never will be" (146). However, in an unusual manner, Philonoe replies: "Your fame as Chimeromach seems secure, judging by your fan mail; even the *Perseid*, I gather from the excerpts you chose to read me, mentions you favorably a couple of times" (147). The presence of parody and the *story within a story* is evident, though it is sometimes a perplexing task to comprehend who is actually speaking in *Bellerophoniad*.

In his controversial essay *Literature of Exhaustion* Barth "retains some of the apocalyptic tone of that 'somewhat apocalyptic place and time' (Barth 1984)" (McHale 1992). This essay has been inevitably brought in connection with Barthes's *Death of the Author.* "To give a text an Author is to impose a limit on that text," says Barthes (1968). On the other hand, Lindsay claims that "Barth's reading of his own fiction suggests that he believes the death of the author may be something else the real

author may consciously employ against itself in order to assert the author's control of his material." This is what Barth says in *Chimera*: "I think I'm dead. I think I'm spooked. I'm full of voices, all mine, none me; I can't keep straight who's speaking, as I used to. It's not my wish to be obscure or difficult; I'd hoped at least to entertain, if not inspire" (154), thus giving his literature its *own* life, its *own* character (we might again recall Barthes's words pronouncing literature something that has *its own body* and many other dimensions).

While we witness the story of Bellerophon, it is constantly suggested through metaphor that literature *must* be replenished: "Deterioration of the Literary Unit: yes, well, thing are deteriorating; everything is deteriorated; deterioration every-where. God knows *I'm not* what I used to be; no help for that. But never for want of words!" (165). The poor hero who "achieved potency only through rape" (Walkiewicz 1986) refuses Anteia's begging to conceive a child with her which would satisfy her need to have at least a small percent of *god* in herself ("Let the kid be a semigoddamndemigod; who cares? Even a one-eight god's better than nothing!" (190)) by drawing a bizzare diagram, which is one of the many Barth's *games* in this novel. This calculation is humorously *modern* considering that we're talking about *ancient* heroes. The protagonist is, however, only interested in following the *Pattern* and wishing "to become transformed in an immortal *Bellerophoniad*" (Walkiewicz 1986). Ziegler (1987) suggests that his story "can serve as a 'perfect model of a text-within-the-text', for the story of Bellerophon is 'framed' by the story of his cousin Perseus". We might as well consider this also a metaphor for an artist who wishes to be immortalized through his work, such as, for instance, Joyce's Stephen Dedalus (having in mind that *Lost in the Funhouse* was actually Barth's parody of *The Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man*).

"It was a true rape, in any case, of a true Amazon, which even this *Bellerophoniad* will sog its way to soooner or later," says Barth (2000). According to Walkiewicz (1986), both *Perseid* and *Bellerophoniad* "constitute the construction by metaphoric

means of a historical portrait of the artist that seems to reconfirm many of the worst fears about exhaustion and ultimacy", so "Bellerophon dies 'to immortality' (145), becomes a story that is less lasting, because his invention is not original, because he is aware that all he can do is repeat a pattern, parody a model, that in his time neither he nor the populace can believe in his heroism". He further suggests that this novella is an "intentional failure which reveals that, for the artist as well as the hero, self-knowledge is bad news, that too much understanding of what one is up to can leave one mired, too great an awareness of historicity can stifle spontaneity and lead one to settle for and into leaden parody, and that the writer, like Bellerophon, can achieve only limited flight by arriving at a tragic view of his own situation and turning ultimacy against itself".

The hero eventually comes to a sad ending (unlike Perseus whose *art* shall apparently live longer thanks to the fact that he *dared* not to repeat the *pattern*) realizing that his story is not in fact reality: "It's not *my* story; never was. *I* never killed Chimarrhus or Chimera, or rode the winged horse, or slept with Philonoe, or laid my head between Melanippe's thighs: the voice that spoke to them all those nights was Bellerus's voice. And the story it tells isn't a lie, but something larger than fact ... In a word, a myth" (318). There is, however, a glimpse of consolation that Polyeidus, assuming the role of the *author*, offers to the hero: "What I *might* manage – not because I owe you any favors, but for reasons of my own – is to turn *myself* from this interview into you-in-*Bellerophoniad*-form: a certain number of printed pages in a language not untouched by Greek, to be read by a limited number of 'Americans'. Not all of whom will finish or enjoy them" (319). Even though this story might be "a beastly fiction, ill-proportioned, full of longueurs, lumps, lacunae, a kind of monstrous mixed metaphor" (319, 320), the ending remains open (typical of postmodernism), by Bellerophon delivering his last words: "It's no Bellerophoniad. It's a   " (320).

So, the final question after we read *Chimera* might be: Is there any difference between fiction and *real* life? Does Barth

clarify postmodernism to a reader, or does he leave us utterly confused? "Today, when the real and the imaginary are confused in the same operational totality, the esthetic fascination is everywhere," says Baudrillard (Rice & Waugh 2001), confirming our confusion in desperate attempts to define postmodernism. After all, Barth believes that a critic analyzing his work might have said that he created "novels which imitate the form of the novel, by an author who imitates the role of the Author" (Lindsay 1995). Thus we may conclude this chapter by saying that, even though we have analyzed some of the examples of metafiction, which is, in this author's case, a pure *play* with the text, there shall never be enough room to discuss *Chimera*, a novel so complex and brilliant which might be considered one of the most inventive representatives of postmodern literature.

Conclusion

"For me John Barth's fiction has the enormous power it does partly because it is always positing nothingness, because it is so 'created' that it also insists on that which is vacant. To me this is frightening. I think of Barth's work as an enormous poetic celebration," says LeClaire (Lindsay 1995). Indeed, although we sometimes may think that his work tells us nothing, Barth insists that the reader should also be an active participant in literature, feeling the same pleasure as he does as an author -"What could be better than to find a message that is indecipherable, whose ink has run so that you must reconstruct it or imagine it yourself?" (Lampkin[2])

Dunyazade's relationship with Shah Zaman can be compared with the author's relationship with the reader, which can, on the other hand, be brought in connection with a sexual relationship: "The teller's role, he felt, regardless of his actual gender, was essentially masculine, the listener's or reader's feminine, and the tale was the medium of their intercourse" (34).

---

[2] Taken from: Lindsay 1995.

By suggesting that Doony and the King are possibly threatened with exhaustion, Barth wants to say that literature too must be replenished. "Treasure me ... as I'll treasure you," says Shah Zaman to his lover (61). "What is gropingly now called postmodernist fiction; what I hope may also be thought of one day as a literature of replenishment," said Barth (1984), and we might as well conclude that, by creating the magnificent pieces of literature such as *Chimera* and *Lost in the Funhouse*, he did manage to *replenish* the literature in his own way.

According to Walkiewicz (1986), "the writer's reward is not immortality but the pleasure of writing, the reader's reward not truth but the pleasure of reading". Bearing this in mind, Barth's imagination has no limits while his games of metafiction are endless. So, no matter how hard it is for us to *decipher* his novels, we should always remember that postmodernism is deprived of limitations and approach the literature freely, without prejudice.

"In art as in lovemaking, heartfelt ineptitude has its appeal and so does heartless skill, but what you want is passionate virtuosity."

John Barth[3]

References

Barth, John. *Chimera*. Random House, 1972.

Barth, John. *The Literature of Exhaustion. The Friday Book: Essays and Other Non-Fiction*. The John Hopkins University Press, 1984.

Barth, John. *The Literature of Repenishment. The Friday Book: Essays and Other Non-Fiction*. The John Hopkins University Press, 1984.

Barthes, Roland. From work to text. 1971.

Barthes, Roland. The death of the author, 1968. Accessed on April 15, 2014 at: http://evans-experientialism.freewebspace.com/barthes06.htm

Clavier, Berndt. *John Barth and postmodernism: Spatiality, travel, montage.* Vol. 83. Peter Lang, 2007.

---

[3] Taken from: Harris 1983.

Charles B. Harris. *Passionate Virtuosity: The Fiction of John Barth*. University of Illinois Press, 1983.

Lindsay, Alan. *Death in the FUNhouse: John Barth and poststructuralist aesthetics*. P. Lang, 1995.

McHale, Brian. *Postmodernist Fiction*. Routledge, 1989.

McHale, Brian. *Constructing Postmodernism*. Routledge, 1992.

Rice, Philip, and Patricia Waugh, eds. *Modern literary theory: A reader.* Oxford University Press, 2001.

Walkiewicz, Edward P. *John Barth*. Twayne Publishers, 1986.

Ziegler, Heide. *John Barth*. New York: Methuen, 1987.

Ifeta Čirić-Fazlija[1]

DEMYTHOLOGIZING THE BARD:
APPROPRIATION OF SHAKESPEARE IN TOM STOPPARD'S
DOGG'S HAMLET, CAHOOT'S MACBETH

Abstract: One of the most entrenched myths that dramatic authors need to contest and adjust to is the Shakespeare myth, a long-lasting and all-pervasive influence that Shakespeare's name and texts have exerted since the late 16th century, being perceived as "represent[ing] truths that transcend particular circumstances" (Sinfield, 1998: 129). In order to be actively involved in the "making of culture" (Sinfield, 1998: 128) and for the purpose of establishing and (re)defining one's own position within and against the canonical (trans)national texts, many British dramatists, including Tom Stoppard, have alluded to, quoted, or incorporated portions of Shakespeare's plays within their own, or even reconstituted them completely. This paper discusses the manner in which Stoppard appropriates Shakespeare's Hamlet *and* Macbeth – *probably his best known and most frequently staged and adapted tragedies – in order to question the importance of both the author and his work within the context of contemporary culture and society.*

Key words: British drama, William Shakespeare, Hamlet*,* Macbeth*, Tom Stoppard,* Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth*, pastiche, parody*

Introduction

The author whose work is subjected to the inspection and analyses of this paper does not need much introduction. Best known for his most frequently performed play that was also his debut, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (1966), Tom Stoppard has come a long way from that young dramatist who was first disparaged by critics, among them Robert Brustein, who considered his work to be plagiarism and referred to him as "a

---

[1] Assistant Professor at the Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo.

theatrical parasite" (Abbotson, 1998: 171; Draudt, 2002: 348)*.* In the 1960s, when Stoppard was struggling to make a significant break and launch his career as a creative author either in the dramatic or narrative genre, British theatres were saturated with new and old dramatists and impresarios. These individuals worked within established traditions and canon, yet to take them a step further, make something new and inventively go beyond the drama and literature typical of the canon. Thus, Stoppard was working alongside and against such authors as Noel Coward, Samuel Beckett, John Osborne, John Arden, Joe Orton, Harold Pinter and Edward Bond, to mention just a few.

The sixties were also the time of an increased number of attempts to re-examine Shakespeare's plays, from those in line with William Poel[2]'s efforts to get the Bard's work back to its original dramaturgy, to those endeavouring to "modernise" Shakespeare for a twentieth century audience[3], to those striving to debunk the myth and notion of Shakespeare as "a man for all time" (Scott, 1993: 10), and finally to directors and playwrights wanting to deconstruct Shakespeare and re-align his work within Artaudian and postcolonial and postmodernist theories[4]. To that purpose, many of these attempts, including Stoppard's, have fed

---

[2] William Poel, an actor, theatre director and a dramatist, spent his lifetime attempting to find the best way to stage Shakespeare, and in 1895 he established the Elizabethan Stage Society which brought productions of Shakespeare, Marlowe, Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher's dramas closer to their original dramatic composition and theatric representation. Granville-Barker, Nigel Playfair and Peter Hall are among the modern stage directors who followed this lead (Styan, 1977: 47-121).

[3] Such attempts are obvious in the work of Barry Jackson and many other twentieth century stage and screen directors of Shakespeare's plays (Styan, 1977: 122-159).

[4] One of the more prominent impresarios approaching Shakespeare with such an agenda was Charles Marowitz, whose series of Shakespearean reconsiderations dealt with political and social issues, re-reading Shakespeare from a postmodernist perspective so as to untangle the knots of latent and obvious chauvinism. Marowitz's work emerged over a number of years from 1962 to 1976/7: in 1962 he co-staged the play *King Lear* for RSC with Peter Brook, and then offered his own version of *Macbeth*, in order to present *Collage Hamlet* in 1969, *An Othello* in 1972 and *Variations on the Merchant of Venice* in 1976/7 (Scott, 1993: 103-120).

off Shakespeare, re-writing the original texts, quoting, alluding to, paraphrasing and commenting on the Swan of Avon's plays, and assuming the form and strategies of a pastiche, parody or travesty. *Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth* are two such plays in which Stoppard appropriates the tragedies of *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* in order to question the relevance of Shakespeare and his work within the context of (post)modern culture and society.

Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth

These two one-act plays which are the core texts of this paper were first composed and performed independently, as is evident from the comma in the title. However, as the author explains, even though the plays were composed singly and at different times[5], they should be read and assessed jointly because the comma unites rather than separates them (Stoppard, 1993: 141-143). Additionally, the first of the two title plays is a conflation of two earlier pieces, written for Ed Berman's Inter-Action Trust and Dogg's Troupe: *Dogg's Hamlet* is a blend of *Dogg's Our Pet* and *The Dogg's Troupe 15-Minute Hamlet* (Stoppard, 1993: 141; Croft and Higgs, 2010: n. pag.) Moreover, the dramatic situation of *Dogg's Hamlet* draws its concept as much from Wittgenstein's and Derrida's philosophical treatises on language games as from the lines of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

Cahoot's Macbeth was inspired by a series of events arising from state control and the 1977 political prosecution of signees of Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia. The signees, many of whom were actors and dramatists, had fallen out with the authorities, and were subsequently banned from any form of public work and/or organised assemblies. This deprived them of some of their human rights, such as the right to work and/or freedom of speech. Finding a loophole, Pavel Kohout, a dissident novelist, playwright and poet, formed "Living-Room Theatre", in a

---

[5] *Dogg's Hamlet* was first performed in 1971, whereas *Cahoot's Macbeth* dates from 1978/9.

joint effort with actress Vlasta Chramostova, actor Pavel Landovsky, singer and actor Vlastimil Treshnjak and his own daughter Tereza Bouchkova. The Living Room Theatre presented an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in the flats and living rooms of their Prague audience (Stoppard, 1993: 142-143; Holland in Shaughnessy, 2007: 40-41). Stoppard's *Cahoot's Macbeth* is thus a mixture of both the appropriation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* as well as an imaginative recreation of Kohout's adaptation of the play.

The two one-act plays (later made diptych) are a bridge between Stoppard's early playfulness and his calmer and sombre dramas of the 1980s and 1990s. While they continue pursuing and exhibiting the carnivalesque extravaganza of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, *The Real Inspector Hound*, *After Magritte*, *Jumpers* and *Travesties*[6], they simultaneously point towards the more serious themes and satirical tone of *The Real Thing*, *Hapgood*, *Arcadia*, and *Indian Ink*[7]. More importantly, both of them approach, examine and transform their source text from a profoundly expressed critical position. This is in contrast to Stoppard's debut play, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, in which *Hamlet* is not parodied but rather pastiched. Stoppard's selection of the dramas *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, as is shown in the analysis, is not random. *Hamlet* is, alongside *Romeo and Juliet*, Shakespeare's most staged and adapted tragedy, and holds a privileged, canonized, position within (trans)national curricula, while *Macbeth* is generally considered the best example of a dramatic text with political implications. Thus, this selection could imply that Shakespeare is timeless, and that his reputation as the preeminent Bard of the English drama is unsurpassable.

Dogg's Hamlet and 15-Minute Hamlet

---

[6] The plays listed were composed/performed as follows: *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (1966), *The Real Inspector Hound* (1968), *After Magritte* (1970), *Jumpers* (1972), and *Travesties* (1974).

[7] The given dramas were first performed in the following order: *The Real Thing* in 1982, *Hapgood* in 1988, *Arcadia* 1993, and *Indian Ink* in 1995.

Dogg's Hamlet opens with a group of schoolboys headed by their Principal Dogg, speaking in a made-up version of English in which the lexical and semantic units of the standard are inverted, or used without obvious logic or traditional meaning. At times, Abel, Baker and Charlie[8] are, with a perceptible disinterest and clear incomprehension, mechanically uttering lines from the opening scene of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Their dislocated and strenuous memorisation is interrupted by the arrival of Easy, who is there to build a stage for the school pageant, and needs assistance to unload the building materials from a lorry. Easy speaks a variant of standard English and therefore any verbal communication between him and the boys is impossible. Much of the comedy and physical humour arise from the confusion and frustration of the characters failing to establish meaningful communication. At one point, Baker goes so far as to quote a poorly understood and executed line from Shakespeare: "*By heaven I charge thee speak*!" (Stoppard, 1993: 152), but Easy fails to grasp the intention and responds by questioning the authority of the boy using Elizabethan English. Finally, Principle Dogg intervenes and through the use of gestures and props (non-verbal language), a fragile communication is achieved and order seemingly restored. In the process of unloading the material from the lorry and the consequent building and rebuilding of the stage, Easy, along with Stoppard's audience, begins to understand more and more of the schoolboys' English and by the end of the scene he has "picked up" the idiom to be able to introduce the pageant in Dogg's English. Easy's "Hamlet bedsocks Denmark. Yeti William Shakespeare"[9] announce the "Doggs Ham Let" (Stoppard, 1993: 163), in which the fragmented name of the title character,

---

[8] Curiously enough if the names of the characters are lined up and then made into an acronym, one ends up with: A(bel)B(aker)C(harlie)D(ogg)E(asy), hence it appears as if Stoppard is playing a practical joke on his audience, offering them "ABCs" of both Wittgenstein and Shakespeare.

[9] Hamlet, the prince of Denmark. By William Shakespeare' (Stoppard, 1993: 163).

previously jumbled and anagrammed[10], signals the ensuing travesty of Shakespeare's original. What follows is the significantly abridged and frenetically paced *15-Minute Hamlet*, introduced by a dramatic representation of the Bard himself who declaims a collage of lines snatched from *Hamlet*'s soliloquies, dialogues, and asides which are pasted together. In this hilarious travesty of *Hamlet*, a 5-hour performance of Shakespeare's most frequently read, staged and adapted mature tragedy is cut to fit the drastically shortened frame, yet is successfully summarised: all the scenes and dialogues relevant to the understanding of the plot are reworked, and their gist presented. Most of the protagonist's soliloquies are cut, and the mousetrap of *Hamlet* is alluded to with the projection of puppets and puppeteers "left screen" (Stoppard, 1993: 167). As if this were not frantic enough, Stoppard introduces an encore, within which *15-Minute Hamlet* is further condensed into a recitation by the main characters of one or two notable lines from certain speeches (thus echoing and repeating the original *Hamlet*'s story and plot).

The Prologue of *15-Minute Hamlet* begins when a dramatic representation of author William Shakespeare takes the stage and declaims a monologue, presented here in full and contrasted to the authentic lines (in the Appendix):

> For this relief, much thanks.
> Though I am native here, and to the manner born
> It is a custom more honored in the breach
> Than in the observance
> Well.
> Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.
> To be or not to be, that is the question.
> There are more things in heaven and earth
> Than are dreamt of in your philosophy—
> There's a divinity that shapes our ends,

---

[10] From "Math's Old Egg", to "Meg Shot Glad", to "God Slag Them" the motto finally turns into "Doggs Ham Let" (Stoppard, 1993: 158, 159, 161, 163).

Rough hew them how we will
Though this be madness, yet there is method in it.
I must be cruel only to be kind;
Hold, as t'were, the mirror up to nature.
A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.
(LADY in audience shouts 'Marmalade'.)
The lady doth protest too much.
Cat will mew, and Dogg will have his day!

<div align="right">(Stoppard, 1993: 163-164)</div>

The cited speech is a pastiche of near-verbatim and overt quotations from the original text; lines are appropriated from various characters of the authentic *Hamlet*, re-arranged and given new meaning, and re-uttered later in *15-Minute Hamlet*. The Prologue's Bard appears to be addressing a much wider audience suggesting, among other things, that – due to the postmodernist lack of a strong centre, which can no longer provide a singular and homogenous interpretation, as well as to the absence of presence and the metaphoric and literal death of the author – it is possible to appropriate a text from its expected and familiar context and reposition it, thus making it fresh. In such a manner, new interpretations are fostered, and new meaning(s) attached to the original. Simultaneously, an implication that crops up from Stoppard's play, the implication that is particularly accentuated by *15-Minute Hamlet*, is that this monologue is to provoke the audience into reassessing "the universality" and relevance of Shakespeare (and canon in general) from the perspective and context of the contemporary audience. Since they are far removed from the cultural milieu of both Renaissance England and its drama, this audience cannot understand Shakespeare with clarity or ease. Simply put, Shakespeare to the contemporary audience makes as much sense as Dogg's English does to Easy; or, as Jill L. Levenson declares, "Shakespeare has become a cliché in British culture, virtually meaningless (that is, a foreign language)" (2001: 165).

Cahoot's Macbeth

The second part of the diptych begins with a performance of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* within a *mise-en-scene* made quite strange: the well-known yet reduced action of the source text, along with the famous lines "fair is foul, and foul is fair" (cf. Stoppard 1993: 179), is performed in a private living room. The production is further de-familiarised by the sounds of voices, sirens, the knocking of police officers Boris and Maurice backstage, and the arrival of the Inspector, who interrupts the enactment. The ensuing exchanges between the Inspector, the hostess and the actors reveal that, having been found subversive by the state, the latter are now forced to make a living as floor-cleaners, paper-boys, messengers, waitresses and the like. The performance continues at the Inspector's command and he assumes the position of an observer, a member of audience, yet – unlike the rest of the fictional audience – he never ceases with his obtrusive remarks and repressive interaction with the actors. Hence the staging of *Macbeth* is hindered and halted once more. Suddenly, a performer cast as Banquo impersonating the writer Cahoot, howls in the manner of a dog, and when asked to make a statement delivers lines from Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. The Inspector's attempts to intimidate Cahoot-cum-Banquo do not yield success as the latter responds to the Inspector's bullying either by growling and howling, or muttering lines from Shakespeare. As is explained by a "Macbeth", the years of oppression and prosecution have made Cahoot a "non-person" (Stoppard, 1993: 194) – a man who is still a human being, yet is denied freedom of speech and work, and can express himself only by citing other author's words.

When the Inspector leaves, the staging continues for a short time, only to be disrupted again by the arrival of Easy from *Dogg's Hamlet*. The character addresses the actors in Dogg's English, having by now forgotten standard English, and eventually begins mechanically parroting their sentences in an attempt to establish meaningful communication. The confusion is amplified with the return of the Inspector, who has previously

shown a complete lack of knowledge not only of the cultural text but also of Elizabethan English (revealed through his inappropriate yet hilarious reactions to the lines from *Macbeth*), and fails to understand Easy's jargon. Moreover, the translation offered by the hostess is ineffective, as it bears the signs of linguistic interference of the jargon. The jargon cannot be learnt; as Cahoot explains to the Inspector, one merely "catch[es] it" (Stoppard, 1993: 206). The audience listens to a medley of Elizabethan English, contemporary English and Dogg's English as the actors transform/translate Shakespeare's lines into Easy's jargon for the final act of *Macbeth,* thus surpassing and successfully vanquishing the tyranny of the Inspector. Meanwhile, in an evocation of the characters and action of the first part of the diptych, the actors begin unloading the building materials. This time, however, Maurice and Boris take over and build a wall that encloses the actors. Finally, Easy is given the honour of the words that should close both the one-act and the diptych but surprisingly, breaking character, he first rephrases Macbeth's witches' lines: "Double, double, toil and trouble" (Stoppard, 1993: 211). He then proclaims "Shakespeare" (Stoppard, 1993: 211), and at last, speaking in standard English, admits that it was "a funny sort of week" and promises to "be back by Tuesday" (Stoppard, 1993: 211).

The comedy that in *Dogg's Hamlet* flows from the schoolboys' responses to both Elizabethan and modern English, as well as Easy's reaction to Dogg's and Shakespeare's English, is similar to the scenes that induce most laughter in *Cahoot's Macbeth*, albeit with a tinge of bitterness. These scenes revolve around the character of the Inspector, and his inappropriate reactions to Shakespearean text. When by coincidence the Inspector utters a cue for an actor cast as Macduff, who comes onstage quoting "Oh horror, horror, horror/Confusion now hath made his masterpiece" – which seems less part of the Shakespearean original and more a mirror to and a comment on the circumstances – the Inspector asks "What's *your* problem, sunshine?" (Stoppard, 1993: 187). Likewise, when Cahoot in the

role of Banquo quotes: "Thou hast it now: King, Cawdor, Glamis, all/ as the weird sisters promised...", the Inspector responds with: "Kindly leave my wife's family out of this" (Stoppard, 1993: 193). These instances, along with his claim that "You've only got one *Macbeth*" (Stoppard, 1993: 188) and that *Macbeth* is "a play with a happy ending" (Stoppard, 1993: 190), much in the vein of *15-Minute Hamlet* and the collaged monologue of its Bard, prompt a reassessment of the "universality" of Shakespeare. Moreover, because the last act of Macbeth, which highlights the fall of a tyrant, can only be performed in fragments and in coded language not understood by the perpetuators of state control, *Cahoot's Macbeth* suggests that Shakespeare's texts can only achieve their latent subversiveness if fragmented, rearranged, appropriated and updated. Realigning Shakespeare within contemporary geopolitics and history exemplifies the fact that the myth of Shakespeare as a "man for all time" (Scott, 1993: 10) no longer holds water. It also implies that postmodernist re-readings of Shakespeare suggest

Shakespearean text is no longer sacrosanct: instead it is invaded by heteroglossia, or multiplicity of styles and forms in the Bakhtinian sense, that disrupt the cultural authority of the official English Shakespeare (Singh in Stegh Camati, 2005: 339).

Conclusion

Tom Stoppard is nowadays recognised as a dramatist whose defining stylistic feature is the appropriation and critical re-evaluation of literary and cultural texts of the past. However, this has not always been the case. As can be observed from the first reviews of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* in the 1960s, Stoppard first had to respond to the charge of plagiarism, yet in due time his plays became closely associated with the concept of intertextuality. Stoppard has never denied or hidden his appreciation of many of his predecessors, such as John

Osborne[11] or Samuel Beckett[12], and therefore his researchers have frequently endeavoured to establish the cultural pool from which Stoppard has drawn. Osborne, Beckett, T. S. Eliot, Joyce, O'Neill, Albee, Xenon, Wittgenstein, Derrida and Kipling are only a few of the authors whom Stoppard's researchers and audience have revisited. Nevertheless, Oscar Wilde and William Shakespeare have been his enduring inspiration, as theirs are the texts and figures Stoppard has repeatedly returned to[13]. Moreover, by incorporating smaller or larger portions of dramatic, non-dramatic and para-literary texts by different authors into his own works, Stoppard has joined a long list of modern dramatists who have had to contest many other canonical figures as well as Shakespeare, and who have worked against the myth of the "universality" and "all-pervasiveness" of the Bard's influence.

The diptych *Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth* (1979) is a specimen of Stoppard's dramatic text that engages in a dialogue with Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*. It snatches the canonical tragedies from their original contexts, taking their stories, characters, lines and plot elements to the purpose of re-aligning them with contemporary (post)modern history and culture. Through the use of overt quotations, allusions, and parodic reworking or humorous collage of the "authentic" Shakespearean texts, Stoppard makes his audience question whether *Hamlet* is universally understood in this day and age,

---

[11] In an interview with Mel Gussow, Stoppard openly stated that after Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* all aspiring authors expressed a desire to become dramatists (1996: 20).

[12] "Wham, bam, thank you Sam," reads a line from Stoppard's play *Jumpers* (Stoppard, 1972: 87).

[13] Stoppard seems to have been overwhelmingly fascinated with *The Importance of Being Earnest*, whose dialogues he has cited and alluded to repeatedly in many of his dramas. In 1974 he finally reached the point of composing a travesty of *The Importance of Being Earnest* in his *Travesties*. On the other hand, numerous of Shakespeare's dramatic and poetic texts have been "plundered" and then inserted into Stoppard's oeuvre. Additionally, *Dogg's Hamlet* includes a dramatization of Shakespeare, much like Stoppard's *The Invention of Love* (1997), which presents its audience with a dramatic recreation of Wilde.

and whether *Macbeth* can still reach its full potential as a political and subversive text. The ultimate impression gained from such an appropriation of Shakespeare as executed by Stoppard's *Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth* is an awareness that Shakespeare's reputation as "a man of all time" may not indeed be unsurpassable.

References

Abbotson, Susan C. W. "Stoppard's Revision of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern: A Lesson in Moral Responsibility". *English Studies* 72.2 (1998): 171-183.

Draudt, Manfred. "Two Sides of the Same Coin, or The Same Side of Two Coins-An analysis of Stoppard's Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead". *English Studies* 62.4 (1981): 348-357.

Croft, Susan and Jessica Higgs. Unfinished Histories: Recording the History of Alternative Theatre. "ED Berman". 2010. *Unfinished Histories*. Web, 9 July 2014 <http://www.unfinishedhistories.com/history/individuals-2/ed-berman.

Gussow, Mel. *Conversations with Stoppard*. New York: Grove Press, 1996.

Holland, Peter. „Shakespeare abbreviated". *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare and Popular Culture.* Ed. Robert Shaughnessy. Cambridge/London/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007. 26-46.

Kott, Jan. *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*. New York/London: W. W. Norton and Company Inc., 1966.

Levenson, Jill L. "Stoppard's Shakespeare: textual re-visions". *The Cambridge Companion to Tom Stoppard*. Ed. Katherine E. Kelly. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001. 154-170.

Scott, Micheal. *Shakespeare and the Modern Dramatist*. Hampshire/London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1993.

Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet.* New York: The Folger Shakespeare Library, 1976.

--. *Macbeth*. Middlesex/Baltimore/Ringwood: Penguin Books, 1967.

Sinfield, Alan. "Making space: appropriation and confrontation in recent British plays". *The Shakespeare Myth*. Ed. Graham Holderness. Manchester/New York: Manchester University Press, 1998. 128-145.

Stegh Camati, Anna. „Textual Appropriation: Totalitarian Violence in Shakespeare's Macbeth and Tom Stoppard's Cahoot's Macbeth". *Ilha do Desterro* 49 (2005): 339-367.

Stoppard, Tom. *The Real Inspector Hound and Other Entertainments.* London/Boston: Faber and Faber, 1993.

--. *Jumpers.* New York: Grove Press, 1972.

Styan, J. L. *The Shakespeare Revolution: Criticism and Performance in the Twentieth Century.* Cambridge/London/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977.

Appendix

Line(s) of the Prologue spoken by character „William Shakespeare" (Stoppard, 1993: 163-164)	Character(s), occassion, position in *Hamlet* (Shakespeare, 1976: 1-147; Wright, Louis and LaMar, Virginia, eds.)
For this relief, much thanks.	Francisco to Bernardo, Act 1, Scene 1
Though I am native here, and to the manner born/It is a custom more honored in the breach /Than in the observance	Hamlet to Horatio, Act 1, Scene 4 (On marriage customs and Gertrude remarrying Claudius soon after Hamlet's father's death)
Well.	-new element-
Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.	Marcellus to Horatio, Act 1, Scene 4 (prior to the Apparition)
To be or not to be, that is the question.	Hamlet, Act 3, Scene 1
There are more things in heaven and earth/ Than are dreamt of in your philosophy—	Hamlet to Horatio, Act 1, Scene 5 (commenting on Horatio's amazement with the Ghost)
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,/Rough hew them how we will	Hamlet to Horatio, Act 5, Scene 2 (on his „miraculous" return to Denmark)
Though this be madness, yet there is method in it.	Polonius (an aside on Hamlet), Act 2, Scene 2
I must be cruel only to be kind;	Hamlet to Gertrude, Act 3, Scene 4 (having killed Polonius)
Hold, as t'were, the mirror up to nature.	Hamlet to the Players, Act 3, Scene 2 (instructing them on how to perform the Mousetrap)
A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.	Horatio to Hamlet, Act 1, Scene 2 (describing Ghost's 'facial' expression)
(LADY in audience shouts 'Marmalade'.)	-new element-; In the made up language connotes approval and satisfaction (cf. Stoppard, 1993: 156).
The lady doth protest too much.	Gertrude to Hamlet, Act 3, Scene 2 (when asked what she thought about the Mousetrap)
Cat will mew, and Dogg will have his day!	Hamlet to Leartes, Act V, Scene 1 (after the funeral of Ophelia and before the final duel)

Olivera Mišnić[1]

TRANSGRESSION OU « ÉLOGE DE LA FOLIE »
DANS LES ROMANS DE MICHEL TOURNIER

Résumé : *A propos des romans de Michel Tournier, le mot « trans-gression » s'impose comme inévitable mais insuffisant, sinon problématique ou discutable, impliquant toute une série d'autres notions « problématiques » lui servant de repère. Ce qui nous invite à nous interroger sur les raisons d'être de ce terme au sujet des romans de Michel Tournier et à trouver sa juste place dans la mythologie, la philosophie, la psychologie et l'anthropologie dans lesquelles Tournier a trouvé son inspiration et a puisé abondamment pour créer et fonder ses personnages exceptionnels. Dans ses romans, Michel Tournier tourne en dérision les formes conventionnelles de la vie et de la conduite humaine nous donnant des exemples de ses personnages « marginaux » qui ont tous en commun la quête de leur moi authentique et l'essor vers leur accomplissement. Dans ce texte, nous tâcherons de présenter ces idées dans leurs formes diverses qu'elles revêtent dans les romans de Michel Tournier. Aussi, tacherons-nous de nous éclairer, par l'analyse critique et l'interprétation, sur les conceptions mythologiques et métaphysiques de l'écrivain lui-même qui sont à la base de l'œuvre en question.*

Mots clés : *la transgression, le mythe, la quête, l'autre, l'amour, l'être, l'accomplissement*

1 Introduction

Un des auteurs français contemporains les plus importants et les plus appréciés, Michel Tournier, est membre de la prestigieuse Académie Goncourt et lauréat de son Prix pour le roman *Le Roi des Aulnes* ainsi que du Grand Prix du roman de l'Académie française pour son roman *Vendredi ou les limbes du Pacifique.* L'œuvre de cet écrivain est très riche et variée,

---

[1] PhD student and teaching assistant at the University of Montenegro.

comprenant plusieurs romans, livres d'essais, notes de lecture, pensées, traités, récits de voyage etc.

A défaut d'avoir réussi l'agrégation de philosophie, ses aspirations philosophiques ont trouvé leur essor dans son œuvre littéraire. L'œuvre de Michel Tournier, de son propre aveu, est fait de la métaphysique et de la philosophie déguisées : « J'ai dit que mes romans étaient autant de tentatives pour transcrire en images et en histoires un certain fonds métaphysique. Et bien, c'est un fait… » (Tournier, 1994 : 265).

Ses romans représentent des aventures cérébrales noyées dans un contexte romanesque classique et c'est pourquoi chaque roman représente aussi un véritable défi intellectuel pour le lecteur. Tournier lui-même avoue qu'il écrit pour être relu ce dont nous nous rendons compte, en effet, en le lisant. La complexité, la profondeur, le mystère de sa pensée réflexive conduisant même vers une mystique personnelle n'y sont jamais épuisés par les mots. Ils se donnent comme des promesses au lecteur qui est invité à devenir le complice de l'écrivain dans la tâche de donner son sens au texte et à le comprendre à sa propre manière.

L'idée principale que nous allons aborder dans ce travail est celle du rôle de la transgression dans la quête de son *moi* dans la vie des personnages principaux de Tournier. Il touche au passage, limité par l'espace, plusieurs autres questions relevant de la principale – les motifs et les possibles issues de la quête, les voies de sa réalisation, l'influence des mythes sur la nature de la quête, la liberté comme la condition *sine qua non* de la quête…

2 « L'enfer, ce sont les autres »

Les personnages tournieriens sont souvent caractérisés, de la part des critiques et des interviewers de Michel Tournier, à l'aide des termes comme « scatologie, monstruosité, perversion et perversion polymorphe, marginalité. Le dernier résume sans doute le mieux les précédents. Tous les protagonistes de Michel Tournier – Robinson, Abel Tiffauges, Paul, Jean, Alexandre, Taor, Gilles de Rais, Idriss, Eléazar, portent en effet le sceau de la

marginalité: membres de la communauté des hommes, ils évoluent en marge, se situant souvent **en dehors** de la société et parfois se posant **contre** elle. La marginalité peut se concrétiser sous l'aspect géographique (Robinson, Taor), social (Abel, Idriss), religieux (Eléazar), mais dans la plupart des cas elle découle d'une déviation psychique, psycho-sociale ou assimilée comme telle: homosexualité, pédophilie, coprophilie, sadisme, etc. » (Kloušek, 2004 : 112).

La question qui se pose dès qu'on commence à traiter le thème de la transgression chez Michel Tournier et à y réfléchir est donc, celle de l'autre et d'autrui. Elle est en effet inévitable pour être capable de définir le terme même de transgression – transgresser par rapport à quoi, à qui ? Sans envisager la présence de l'autre la transgression ou la marginalité perd son sens, elle n'existe même pas. Toutes les connaissances, transformations et vérités que les personnages de Tournier subissent et révèlent lors de leur quête ainsi que la recherche de l'amour, sont causées par la médiation d'autrui et acquises grâce à lui.

D'un autre côté, les héros de Tournier ne s'accomplissent qu'en devenant élémentaires, donc en retrouvant leur véritable être. Mais ce retour vers soi n'était pas possible sans autrui, ou du moins Tournier n'envisage pas cette possibilité dans ses romans. Pourtant, les personnages finissent par se débarrasser de leur nécessité des autres.

Tournier, somme toute, a un rapport ambivalent par rapport à la transgression – la quête du double l'exige mais la fin élémentaire est le seul susceptible d'apporter le bonheur à un individu. Ce qui nous mène à conclure que la transgression terrestre doit être dépassée pour mériter d'avoir existé.

2.1 Autrui et le mythe du double

Nous avons déjà constaté que Tournier philosophe et métaphysicien trouve, pour ses personnages marginaux et pervers et leurs histoires extraordinaires, des origines dans le mythe. Mais on se demande si ce n'est pas un détournement du

mythe et l'emploi du mythe pour des raisons de fondation de la transgression, lui servant d'« appui » ? Cela veut dire se « servir » du mythe et, par là, d'en abuser, tout en l'interprétant à sa propre manière ou plutôt en lui redonnant un sens de plus. « L'écrivain tente, semble-t-il, le pari de garder présentes en permanence, les deux possibilités, pervers et personnages mythologiques, Robinson, le Nain Rouge, les Jumeaux, Abel… » (Guichard, 1989 : 119).

Chez Tournier, les limites entre les pôles s'affaiblissent jusqu'à s'effacer, les catégories du Bien et du Mal perdent leur sens, ainsi que la différence entre les deux sexes, entre les valeurs et les vices, le terrestre et le cosmique, le païen et le judéo-chrétien... L'homme devient un être ambivalent, échappant à une définition, un être qui cherche à trouver le sens de sa mission sur la Terre. Donc, l'accomplissement et le processus d'exécution se confondent et correspondent.

Tous les personnages de Tournier parcourent leur chemin parsemé d'initiations successives, d'épreuves et d'expériences qui s'avèrent constructives, menant tous au même but – l'accomplissement de soi. „Les extases mystiques constituent soit une des étapes soit l'achèvement du parcours initiatique qui forme l'axe le long duquel se déroule l'histoire individuelle de tous les protagonistes tournieriens, sans exception (Kyloušek, 2004 : 83). Dans cette voie, la transgression s'établit comme inévitable et même indispensable pour les personnages de Tournier qui en trouvent la confirmation dans divers mythes évoquant la nuit des temps, la création du premier homme unissant tous les contraires.

Parmi les mythes évoqués à propos de la transgression on trouve ceux qui renouent avec le mythe du double, et ce sont, avant tout, le mythe de Narcisse, celui de la gémellité, de l'androgyne, mais aussi le mythe de Robinson, de Don Juan, comme des mythes de l'homme contemporain occidental.

Toute forme d'amour chez Tournier est le reflet de l'amour-propre. Le mythe du double est alors le plus adapté à appuyer cette conception, et, parmi les mythes servant d'origine à

diverses formes que l'amour revêt dans ses romans, sont ceux de Narcisse, de gémellité, de l'androgynie. Selon Tournier, dans la racine de l'amour, de toute forme d'amour, réside la nécessité de chaque individu d'avoir son double, son propre reflet dans l'autre, et de partir en sa quête. Et c'est aussi dans cette racine même que débutent l'échec et l'impossibilité d'accomplissement de l'amour dans le couple. L'Amour dans le couple, comme la cause et le résultat de la quête du double, s'avère impossible.

2.2 Les mythes « troublants »

Les mythes, selon Tournier, aident à l'inadaptation de l'individu. Car le mythe est précisément pour Michel Tournier « rappel au désordre ». Tous ces mythes, notamment ceux de Narcisse, des jumeaux et de l'androgyne, sont aussi très proches dans le rêve de fusion avec l'autre, avec l'anéantissement des limites traditionnelles de la nature humaine et le rêve de l'homme pour retrouver sa nature divine, sa gémellité originelle avec Dieu.

 « On remarquera à ce propos qu'au moment de la Création, le mythe gémellaire et le mythe de l'androgyne se retrouvent indifféremment dans la plupart des cosmogonies qui expliquent l'origine du monde par la fragmentation d'une unité primordiale. Le Tout se divise en deux parties semblables ou deux contraires opposées et complémentaires » (Guichard, 1989 : 238).

La transgression de Robinson on la voit d'abord dans son retour vers le stade animal pour finir par la retrouver dans la déviation de son désir charnel vers l'élémentaire. Mais il est très discutable de parler ici de la transgression, les critiques ont souvent ainsi caractérisé cette déviation, alors qu'il s'agit plutôt de dépasser le désir charnel et terrestre et de diriger son énergie sexuelle vers le spirituel dans la tentative d'atteindre la conscience suprême. Donc, la transgression de Robinson consisterait dans sa rupture avec les valeurs et pratiques de la civilisation et de la culture européennes.

Quant à Abel, un personnage débordant de traits et d'actes transgressifs, il est difficile, du point de vue humain, de ne pas le caractériser de « transgressif » par excellence. Son goût du sang, de coprologie, ses appétits d'ogre dans le sens réel et transposé, son abus des enfants notamment des garçons et toute une série de penchants et de pratiques obscures, obscènes et terrifiantes, contribuent à ce qu'on peut difficilement l'imaginer appartenir à l'espèce humaine. « Ainsi, l'histoire d'Abel peut signifier non seulement la recherche mystique du sens de l'existence, mais on peut y voir aussi le cas d'un perverti sexuel mythomane qui, au milieu de la grande folie collective qu'est la guerre, peut donner libre cours à sa pédophilie » (Kyloušek, 2004 : 90).

Là aussi, Tournier nous renvoie aux mythes pour tenter de déchiffrer les motifs et l'image de la vision du monde de son personnage. Abel se voit proche du mythe de Don Juan. Pour l'écrivain le mythe de Don Juan est universel car il exprime une des révoltes les plus fondamentales de l'homme, « la révolte du sexe contre Dieu et la société, l'utilisation du sexe contre l'ordre, contre tous les ordres ». (Tournier, 1977 : 190). «Plus que Casanova, il est un mythe d'homme, la revendication de la liberté dans tous les domaines et pas seulement celui du sexe. Il symbolise le plus violent des rappels au désordre car en lui s'incarne la révolte absolue contre l'ordre conjugal, social, politique, religieux » (Guichard, 1989 : 154).

En quoi Abel peut-il se reconnaître en Don Juan ? D'abord, ils possèdent tous les deux la même volonté de conquête jamais assouvie, ce qu'Abel définit comme volonté « d'exhaustion » : Don Juan, c'est moi... (Tournier, 1970 : 150) il dit... Abel, comme son homologue Don Juan, se livre au destin qui l'attend et qui sera conduit à cette mort qu'il a pressentie depuis toujours.

Le personnage de Paul des *Météores* trouve sa raison d'être dans le mythe de la gémellité. Sa quête de son frère jumeau coïncide avec et correspond à sa quête intérieure, comme c'est le cas d'ailleurs, dans tous les romans de Tournier. Le voyage dans l'espace, dans l'extérieur, correspond au voyage intérieur. Il finit

sa quête atteignant la liberté spirituelle devenant cosmique, élémentaire, météorologique mais dans un corps mutilé.

Le personnage d'Alexandre, l'homosexuel flamboyant, est la transposition du mythe de Narcisse, ainsi qu'Idris, le jeune oasien issu du village saharien de Tabelbala qui, pour se rendre à Paris à la recherche de son image perdue, trouve son origine dans le mythe de la quête spirituelle de son âme volée et capturée par l'image. «Le rêve gémellaire traduit la nostalgie de la symbiose initiale avec la mère. Cela provoque l'impossibilité de percevoir l'autre dans sa différence et la liberté, ce qui à son tour résulte de l'échec de toute forme d'amour chez Tournier » (Guichard, 1989 : 185).

Quant au mythe de l'androgyne, il traduit de sa part aussi le rêve de fusion avec l'autre dans une unité primordiale. « Cette figure qui surgit à l'origine des temps conduit les héros de Tournier à chercher dans la quête du double cette unité restaurée réconciliant les contraires jusqu'à établir la parenté du Bien et du Mal. Cela veut dire aussi transgresser les limites des sexes menant à leur indistinction et de la condition humaine s'égalant à un Dieu qui unifie les contraires » (Guichard, 1989 : 261).

L'écrivain déclarait d'ailleurs dans un entretien : « La femme et l'homme étant des constructions artificielles de la société, plus l'écrivain est fort plus la distinction tend à s'effacer. Au contraire, elle éclate dans la mesure où il écrit sous l'influence de la comédie sociale » (Guichard, 1989 : 253).

Il se fait là aussi l'écho de toute une tradition pour qui la perfection spirituelle passe par l'effacement des sexes.

Alexandre a conscience de vivre dans un univers qu'il a crée de toutes pièces, mais il ne peut y échapper, car c'est le seul qui lui convienne : « ...je me suis construit un univers, fou peut-être, mais cohérent et surtout qui me ressemble, tout comme certains mollusques secrètent autour de leur corps une coquille biscornue mais sur mesure » (Tournier, 1975 : 34).

La quête d'autrui, rêvée comme un double, échoue donc sous toutes ses formes dans l'œuvre de Michel Tournier. Le modèle indépassable de tout amour reste l'amour maternel,

symbiose première qui hante, comme une nostalgie, la plupart des héros. L'archétype de toute relation amoureuse est le couple gémellaire, les couples homosexuels et hétérosexuels tentent plus ou moins, à des degrés moindres, de s'en approcher. Pourtant il se brise, la cellule fraternelle devient prison, les rites se transgressent et le temps condamne les rêves d'éternité des couples pris dans les différences individuelles irréductibles. La quête du double est un échec dans les amours humaines.

2.3 Amour impossible / Equilibre possible ?

L'œuvre de Michel Tournier, outre d'être appréciée, a suscité aussi une réaction peu favorable de la critique qui dénonce sa perversité, la scatologie, les obsessions et inclinaisons transgressives et inhumaines, toute la part obscure de l'œuvre, quand elle découvre, notamment dans *Le roi des Aulnes,* le fascisme latent et les complaisances à l'égard du pouvoir quel qu'íl soit.

Pourtant, Michel Tournier est un philosophe de formation et pour lui, comme pour Jean –Paul Sartre chez qui le concept d'autrui occupe une place essentielle et que Tournier considère comme son maître, les pervers et transgressifs sont une nécessité, des « abcès de fixation ». Ils sont là pour apaiser et pacifier nos consciences car ils représentent les tentations obscures du mal en nous, celles contre lesquelles il faut lutter d'autant plus impitoyablement qu'elles nous sont le plus proches : « Quant au méchant, chacun a le sien : c'est un homme que sa situation met à même de nous présenter, en plein jour et sous une forme objective, les tentations obscures de notre liberté. Si vous voulez connaître un honnête homme, cherchez quels vices il hait le plus chez les autres : vous aurez les lignes de force de ses vertiges et de ses terreurs, vous respirerez l'odeur qui empeste sa belle âme » (Guichard, 1989 : 53).

Mais, s'il existe une déviation, il existe aussi une norme. Or, tout ce qui se réfère à celle-ci est extrêmement suspect aux yeux de l'écrivain. Il a publié un petit lexique dans lequel « normal » figure parmi les mots rendus inutilisables par l'usage

qui en a été fait. Il en donne deux définitions pour le moins ambiguës : Normal, au premier sens signifie – conforme à la norme. Idéal; Au deuxième sens : conforme à la moyenne; Habituel. Il s'agit du concept pourri qu'une bonne hygiène mentale se doit d'éliminer du vocabulaire. Car « ces deux sens sont contradictoires, et le glissement plus ou moins conscient du premier au second conduit à ériger la bêtise, l'ignorance, la lâcheté et la laideur - qui sont choses « habituelles » – en idéaux vers lesquels il convient de tendre » (Tournier, 1994 : 136).

« La marginalité représente un trait essentiel des protagonistes: allant jusqu'à une sorte de révolte intérieure, elle est une forme de singularisation et d'héroïsme liée à la quête mystique. Il semblerait même qu'un rapport de proportionnalité illogique existe entre la marginalité, la crédibilité du personnage et l'effet mystique du message. Les romans dont les protagonistes évoluent à la limite de la folie (V, RA, M) paraissent, curieusement, les plus crédibles et leur *catharsis* finale n'en est que plus authentique » (Kyloušek, 2004 : 113).

Ce qui nous invite à nous demander finalement s'il est possible de trouver un équilibre dans la transgression ? Telle est la question qui reste ouverte aussi par la conclusion heureuse de *Vendredi ou les limbes du Pacifique*, et même des *Météores*. Michel Tournier, avec son humour teinté de cynisme, suggère une réponse.

3 Conclusion

Les romans de Michel Tournier s'achèvent sur le rêve mythique d'un équilibre de vie sans autrui, et son œuvre s'inscrit dans cette perspective précise d'un refus hautain d'autrui quel qu'il soit. Mais la société n'admet pas le rejet des lois qui la gouvernent, et ceux qui la nient par leur existence même sont voués à la destruction. Tous les personnages de Tournier ont besoin de s'aliéner pour rechercher leur identité, de faire l'expérience d'autrui pour se retrouver et renouer avec leur moi. Ils ont besoin d'un autre, d'une évasion, pour revenir à eux-mêmes, et parvenir ainsi au bout de l'accomplissement. C'est

pourquoi on peut dire qu'autant les évènements et les personnes cherchent ces personnages, autant ce sont eux aussi qui les attirent à soi, tissant ainsi des liens de correspondances mystérieuses entre le monde extérieur, historique, et le monde intérieur, intemporel.

Le but de certaines expériences mystiques est de regagner cet état d'âme d'enfant qu'on perd en devenant adulte. A ce propos on trouve chez Tournier, dans son livre d'essais, une explication plutôt théorique : « L'homme adulte et raisonnable peut se fixer comme idéal un état qui est celui de sa petite enfance prolongée et préservée. L'innocence est l'amour spontané de l'être, oui à la vie, à l'acceptation souriante des nourritures célestes et terrestres, à l'ignorance de l'alternative infernale pureté-impureté. Certains saints, comme François d'Assise, paraissent vivre dans cet état où la simplicité animale rejoint la transparence divine » (Tournier, 1994 : 127).

Les aventures de ses personnages nous amènent à conclure que la quête, qui n'est pas préméditée et dont on n'attend pas d'avoir des résultats immédiats, pas plus qu'on y songe d'ailleurs, finit par récompenser celui qui la poursuit par des résultats qui sont d'autant plus surprenants et édifiants qu'il sont plus inattendus et moins recherchés. « Ainsi se constitue un des traits caractéristiques des romans mythologiques de Michel Tournier – leur bi-aspectualité cognitive : d'un coté le «plaisir cognitif » du déchiffrage, de l'autre coté la passion, voire l'obsession qui pousse à sonder les raisons ultimes du désir archétypal de l'éternité et de l'harmonie cosmique. La *catharsis* des romans tourniériens est celle de la connaissance. Ce n'est donc ni l'action, ni la poétisation qui dominent, mais l'esthétique de la noèse et l'émotion esthétique qui s'y attache » (Kyloušek, 2004 : 89).

Chez Tournier, à la différence de Sartre affirmant que l'existence précède l'essence, on dirait plutôt que c'est l'essence elle-même qui ne se trouve que dans l'existence, et que la vie est destinée à nous rendre capable de saisir les essences dans les apparences immédiates. « Ainsi Robinson atteint l'intemporel,

l'éternité, l'immortalité et la plénitude du moment présent en se fondant dans l'ordre de l'univers. C'est à cette métamorphose finale qu'aspirent et aboutissent les protagonistes des romans de Michel Tournier » (Kyloušek, 2004 : 86).

On perçoit les personnages de Tournier – Vendredi et Robinson, Abel, Paul, Idriss, à la fin du roman, se réduire par une évolution apparemment inverse, à la nature élémentaire, aux particules élémentaires qui ne font rien d'autre qu'exister. Et c'est justement dans l'existence que les personnages de Tournier finissent par retrouver le sens, à travers l'affranchissement progressif des apports superflus de la civilisation, ce qui comporte, souvent, le fait de transgresser les lois de cette civilisation pour atteindre la simplicité sublime dans la joie d'exister.

Littérature

Tournier, Michel. *Le Roi des Aulnes***.** Editions Gallimard, 1970.

Tournier, Michel. *Vendredi ou les limbes du Pacifique.* Editions Gallimard, 1972.

Tournier, Michel. *Les Météores*. Editions Gallimard, 1975.

Tournier, Michel. *Le vent Paraclet*. Editions Gallimard, 1977.

Tournier, Michel. *Le miroir des idées.* Mercure de France, 1994, 1996.

Tournier, Michel. *Le pied de la lettre*. Mercure de France, 1994.

Guichard, Nicole. *Autrui et la quête du double*. Didier érudition, 1989.

Kyloušek, Petr. *Le roman mythologique de Michel Tournier*. Masarykova univerzita, 2004.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Huis clos*. Gallimard, folio classique, 1972.

Sonja Špadijer[1]

EXPRESSIONS IDIOMATIQUES (IMAGES LIEES AU CORPS HUMAIN) ET LEUR FIGEMENT

Résumé : *L'objectif de cet article est de présenter des outils d'analyse susceptibles de définir la portée et le degré de figement des actants et des prédicats et, à base de ces résultats, de valider les modèles préalablement formulés. Ce travail porte sur les expressions idiomatiques (E.I.) formées à l'aide de lexèmes se référant au corps humain comme par exemple : « Se faire les dents » = fig. « s'entraîner, s'aguerrir », « Couper/fendre les cheveux en quatre » = « raffiner à l'excès, s'arrêter à des détails ». Elles se caractérisent par le figement, la polylexicalité et le sens figuré. Pour décrire ce type d'expression il serait indispensable d'alterner les concepts issus d'une part de la sémantique structurale française (les concepts de la syntaxe sémantique) et, d'autre part, des procédés d'analyse visant le figement. Nous considérons les E.I. comme messages fonctionnels ou qualificatifs selon la nature de leurs prédicats et à partir de là nous allons formuler les modèles actantiels représentant la structure syntaxique et sémantique des E.I.*

Mots clés : les expressions idiomatiques, la portée et le degré de figement, les modèles sémantiques.

Introduction

En matière du lexique français, les expressions idiomatiques (E.I.) constituent un segment qui a inspiré beaucoup de chercheurs à examiner leurs valeurs morphosyntaxique et sémantique. D'après nous, pour décrire ce type d'expression il est nécessaire de recourir à des concepts et à des procédures d'analyse provenant de théories linguistiques parfois très éloignées. Notre recherche s'appuie d'une part à des concepts théoriques de la sémantique structurale et à des recherches récentes sur la portée et le degré de figement des expressions figées, et d'autre part elle repose sur l'observation d'un grand nombre d'E.I. constituant ce corpus. Le corpus de travail comprend approximativement cinq

---

[1] PhD student and teaching assistant at the University of Montenegro.

cents expressions issues des ouvrages de référence cités à la fin de cet article, dans la section **Sources**.

L'objet de notre recherche vise le figement des E.I. formées à l'aide de lexèmes se référant au corps humain : *la dent, le visage (la gueule, la mine, la barbe, la face, la tête), les yeux (l'œil), la tête (la crâne, le cerveau/la cervelle, esprit), la bouche (les lèvres, la gueule, le bec), la langue, le nez, l'oreille, la main, le bras (le coude, la coudée), le pied (les jambes, le talon, les genoux), le ventre (l'estomac, les entrailles, la bile, la foie, la rate), le dos (la bosse, l'échine), le doigt (le pouce, l'ongle), le cœur, le cheveu (le poil), l'épaule, les reins.* Voici quelques exemples d'E.I. : « *Avoir la dent* » – « avoir faim », « *Se faire les dents* » – fig. « s'entraîner, s'aguerrir », « *Donner un coup de dent* » – métaphoriquement : « attaque, critique acerbe *», « Avoir des yeux d'Argus* » – « être lucide et vigilant », « *Couper/fendre les cheveux en quatre* » – « raffiner à l'excès, s'arrêter à des détails ». Les expressions observées se caractérisent par : *le figement*, *la polylexicalité*, *le sens figuré* et l'*opacité totale* du sens.

Nous avons l'intention de décrire ces E.I. à l'aide de modèles actantiels et d'établir le degré et la portée de leur figement.

Vers la formulation de la structure d'une expression idiomatique

Après avoir effectué le triage systématique et l'observation des expressions idiomatiques à sens non-transparent, et après avoir éliminé les exemples ne répondant pas à ce critère, nous n'avons retenu qu'environ 300 exemples.

Nous avons ensuite procédé par l'analyse du corpus afin de formuler la structure des E.I. et d'aboutir à des modèles censés représenter cette *structure*[2] (Greimas, 1986 : 28). Les modèles syntaxiques serviront de source d'informations sur la structure sémémique du contenu des expressions, en premier lieu

---

[2] « [...] la structure est le mode d'existence de la signification, caractérisé par la présence de la relation articulée entre deux sèmes. [...] ».

témoignant des rapports entre deux classes principales de sémèmes[3] : les prédicats et les actants (Greimas, 1986 : 45-54 ; Rastier, 2009 : 70-74). Ici, il ne s'agit pas de la conception de l'actant et du prédicat correspondant à la syntaxe structurale mais il est question plutôt d'une conception du domaine de la syntaxe sémantique dont la préoccupation est la suivante : Au lieu de donner la forme du développement syntaxique aux contenus sémantiques, il faut par conséquent, comme le suggère A.-J. Greimas (1986 : 131), trouver un moyen de réduire la syntaxe à la sémantique, et les événements aux structures.

Le modèle syntaxique que nous avons l'intention d'appliquer comprend la division de sémèmes de la phrase en deux classes : *actants vs. prédicats* (Greimas, 1986 : 155-157).[4] La classe de prédicats est divisée en deux sous-classes : *Fonction* (représentant le *Procès*) et Q*ualification* (représentant l'*État*). La classe des actants est divisée en : A1 sujet vs. objet A2 ; A3 destinateur *vs.* destinataire A4 ; A5 adjuvant *vs.* opposant A6.

Pour cerner bien la description sémantique de ce corpus, nous partons de l'idée que le contenu sémantique de l'ensemble des E.I. analysées se manifeste syntaxiquement en forme de messages considérés comme : « [...] la projection de la structure élémentaire de la signification sur les contenus déjà organisés en

---

[3] (i) « [...] considérer l'effet de sens comme un sémème et de le définir comme la combinaison de Ns et de CS : sémème SM = Ns + Cs ». Ns – le noyau sémique (figure nucléaire simple) [...] est l'invariant et minimum sémique permanent ; [...] des Cs – les sèmes contextuels – sont des variables sémique provenant du contexte et rendent compte des changements d'effets de sens. Le sème contextuel est le dénominateur commun à toute une classe de contextes. A.-J. Greimas emprunte à B. Pottier le terme de *sème et de classème* en distinguant : *les classèmes* et *les sèmes nucléaires.*

(ii) F. Rastier distingue : « [...] *le sémème en contexte (occurrences sémantiques) et le sémème en système (emploi, acception et sens)* ».

[4] La classe des actants ne correspond pas à des personnages mais à des fonctions ou *sphères d'action*. Un seul actant peut être représenté par plusieurs acteurs et qu'un seul personnage peut lui-même englober plusieurs actants. L'actant est une entité qui se réalise par une classe d'acteurs dont chacun est pourvu de rôles précis. La seconde partie de sémèmes constitutifs d'un message sémantique est représentée par la classe des prédicats c'est-à-dire le verbe.

classes d'actants et de prédicats, c'est-à-dire d'une structure qui est hiérarchiquement supérieure aux classes de sémèmes » (Greimas, 1986 : 132). Par conséquent, les messages, étant manifestation organisée du contenu, peuvent être messages fonctionnels ou qualificatifs. En observant notre corpus en tant qu'un ensemble d'éléments ayant au moins une caractéristique en commun, nous avons tout d'abord noté une structure élémentaire[5] (Greimas, 1986 : 22) qui s'applique à chaque particulière E.I. du corpus. Cela veut dire que toutes les E.I. sont considérées comme des messages soit fonctionnels ou qualificatifs. Notre objectif est de décrire la structure des messages en question ce qui nous permettra de définir leur contenu syntaxico-sémantique au niveau des actants et des prédicats ainsi qu'au niveau des relations qui s'y établissent.

Outre l'inspiration provenant d'idées des structuralistes français, nous sommes d'avis que les modèles que nous allons proposer peuvent s'insérer dans la théorie de la grammaire générative et la thèse d'invariants (ou universaux) linguistiques et plus précisémént dans l'idée avancée par R. S. Kayne dans les années 1990 sur la structure invariante propre à toutes les langues et comprenant Sujet – Verbe – Objet.[6] Cette même structure invariante émerge dans les expressions idiomatiques françaises que nous analysons dans cet article.

Présentation des modèles actantiels représentant la structure syntaxique et sémantique des E.I.

Nous formulerons les modèles actantiels à partir de l'idée suivante : « [...] tout message sémantique appartient nécessairement à l'une des deux classes de messages possibles : '[...] F / A ou Q / A [...]' » (Greimas, 1986 : 155).

---

[5] « [...] une structure élémentaire peut être saisie et décrite soit sous forme d'axe sémantique, soit sous celle d'articulation sémique ».

[6] Wikipedia. *Noam Chomsky, Grammaire générative et études empiriques*. Site visité le 2 juillet 2014, URL : http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noam_Chomsky

À ce point, nous introduisons les modèles représentant les E.I. de ce corpus. Ils sont conçus d'après le modèle acantiel décrit ci-dessus en terme d'actants (A1 - sujet, A2 - objet, ...) et de prédicats (F – fonction qui se réfère au procès, Q – qualification qui se réfère à l'état). Ces modèles engloberaient tous les exemples des E.I. analysées.

Nos formulations expriment leur structure syntaxico-sémantique organisée en classe de sémèmes. La formulation F/Q [A1 ; A2 ; ...] décrit les exemples suivants :

Couper/fendre les cheveux en quatre ;	F [A1 ; A2 ; ...]
Rouler sa bosse ;	F [A1 ; A2 ; ...]
Avoir la dent.	Q [A1 ; A2 ; ...]

Elle décrit une E.I. constituée obligatoirement d'un prédicat qui peut désigner soit la fonction soit la qualification et qui, avec un seul ou plusieurs actants, seraient capables de représenter le sémantisme d'une E.I. D'autre part, la formulation [A1 ; A2 ; ...] F/Q/ 0 traduit les exemples ci-dessous :

Faire grise mine ; Grise mine ;	[A1 ; A2 ; ...] F/0
Être la tête d'affiche ; La tête d'affiche ;	[A1 ; A2 ; ...] Q/0
La gueule de bois ;	[A1 ; A2 ; ...] 0/Q

La dernière formulation décrit le sémantisme d'une E.I. constituée obligatoirement d'un seul ou de plusieurs actants qui peuvent être accompagnés ou non d'un prédicat désignant la fonction ou la qualification. Nous remarquons que la présence du prédicat F ou Q n'est pas indispensable pour la figure dans l'E.I. ce qui est représenté dans la formulation par le *prédicat zéro* : 0.

Nous avons donc noté que la structure syntaxico-sémantique des E.I. de ce corpus pourrait être traduite par les modèles suivants :

Modèle 1. :

F/Q   [A1 ; A2 ; ...] (dont 174 exemples)

correspondent aux formules :

 F   [A1 ; A2 ;] :

Casser les pieds à quelqu'un .

Q   [A1 ; A2 ;] :

Avoir la dent.

Modèle 2. :

[A1 ; A2 ; ...]   F/Q/ 0 dont 138 exemples

correspondent aux formules :

[A1 ; A2 ; ...]   F/0 :

(se fourrer/ se mettre) le doigt dans l'oeil.

[A1 ; A2 ; ...]   Q/0 :

(avoir) l'estomac dans les talons.

[A1 ; A2 ; ...]   0/Q :

(avoir) les coudées franches.

Les modèles ci-dessus ont été conçus à partir d'une première observation et l'analyse des exemples. Cela nous a permis de noter que le sémantisme de chaque expression idiomatique se forme, au niveau lexical, autour d'un type spécifique de lexèmes, la tête et le corps humains et leurs parties que nous appellerons *lexème central.*[7]

Au niveau sémantique, nous avons présenté cet élément central par une classe de sémèmes, les actants. Pour désigner cet élément nous introduirons le terme de *sémème central* en tant que noeud sémantique de chaque expression.

Nous remarquons que ce sémème central est le plus souvent un actant appartenant au type A2 – l'objet tandis que A1 – le sujet reste discret et en dehors du syntagme ou phrase figés. Nous l'avons tout de même introduit dans nos modèles puisque la signification d'une E.I. porte également sur cet élément.

---

[7] Nous utiliserons l'abréviation LC pour le lexème central.

Par la suite, ces modèles feront l'objet d'une vérification à travers les analyses approfondies afin d'aboutir à des modèles plus détaillés représentant la structure syntaxico-sémantique des E.I. constituant ce corpus.

Hypothèses et idées de départ

Pour bien cerner cette étude, nous partons de deux hypothèses qui évoluent paralèllement.

La première hypothèse admet le suivant : Si le sémème central (A2) est manifesté par un seul lexème (appartenant au champ lexical la tête et le corps humain et leurs parties), la présence du prédicat est stable et indispensable pour la création de la figure et pour la signification de cette expression idiomatique.

Exemples de Modèle 1. :
Rouler sa bosse et*, Casser les pieds (à quelqu'un)*, *Avoir la dent*.

Nous avons tout d'abord essayé de confirmer la première hypothèse sur un exemple ce qui nous a emmenés à préciser que le Modèle 1. reflèterait une structure syntaxique et sémantique cohérente dont la caractéristique principale serait la cohésion entre le prédicat (F/Q) et les actants (A1 ; A2 ;). L'expression perdrait sa signification si le prédicat changeait ou était supprimé. Nous supposons que le prédicat observerait le haut degré de figement et qu'il ne se prêterait pas facilement à des variations.

Exemples de Modèle1. : *Casser les pieds à quelqu'un Avoir la dent,* correspondent aux formules :

F   [A1 ;   A2 ;]
et   Q   [A1 ;   A2 ;]

Si dans le cas de ces deux expressions (*Casser les pieds à quelqu'un* ; *Avoir la dent*) les prédicats étaient supprimés ou subissaient des changement (F – *casser* ; Q – *avoir*), elles

perdraient la signification et leur structure syntaxique changerait comme dans les exemples ci-dessous. Ci-dessous nous pouvons observer les modifications réalisées par omission en a. et ensuite par remplacement en b. Les modifications sont désignées par le symbole (*) :

a. *(......) les pieds = (0)   [A2]
*(......) la dent = (0)   [A2]

Ici, le sens figuré disparaît et le modèle syntaxique change.

b. *rompre/briser/heurter* les pieds = F   [A1 ; A2 ;]
 * *posséder/rester* la dent = Q   [A1 ; A2 ;]

Dans le cas ci-dessus, le sens figuré disparaît, pourtant le modèle syntaxique reste le même. Nous remarquons donc que dans les expressions idiomatiques relevant de la structure syntaxique et semantique définies en tant que Modèle 1. :

a. le sémème central est manifesté par un seul lexème qui n'est pas accompagné d'autres lexèmes compléments,
b. ces expressions idiomatiques ne peuvent pas garder la figure et la signification sans un prédicat (F/Q),
c. les prédicats (F/Q) ne se prêtent pas facilement aux remplacements par d'autres lexèmes prédicats puisque cela altèrerait la figure et la signification de l'expression.

La seconde hypothèse part de l'idée suivante : Si dans une expression idiomatique le sémème central (A2) (appartenant au champ lexical la tête et le corps humain et leurs parties) est manifesté par un lexème accompagné d'autres lexèmes compléments, la présence du prédicat ne serait pas indispensable pour le maintien de la signification de cette expression et pour la figure. Dans ce cas, la position du prédicat ne serait pas stable c'est-à-dire il n'observerait pas un haut degré de figement. Il

pourrait être omis dans une construction elliptique et il se prêterait plus facilement à des remplacements.

Exemples du Modèle 2. :
Faire grise mine - mais aussi G*rise mine*, Ê*tre la tête d'affiche - la tête d'affiche,* (avoir) *l'estomac dans les talons,* (se fourrer / se mettre) *le doigt dans l'oeil, (avoir)les coudées franches,*

correspondent à la formule du Modèle 2. : [A1 ; A2 ; ...] F/Q/ 0, ce qui peut être présenté comme suit :

Faire grise mine ou *Grise mine*   [A1 ; A2 ; ...] F/ 0,
Ê*tre la tête d'affiche* ou *la tête d'affiche* [A1 ; A2 ; ...] Q/ 0,
(*Avoir*) *l'estomac dans les talons*   [A1 ; A2 ; ...] Q/ 0.

Il reflète la prédominance et la constance syntaxique et sémantique de l'actant (A2) ainsi qu'un lien beaucoup moins stable avec le prédicat. Ce modèle observe la capacité du prédicat de varier plus facilement.

Voici quelques exemples pour le démontrer. Partons de l'exemple d'une E.I. en *a.* :

a. avoir l'estomac dans les talons = [A1 ; A2 ; ...] Q
se fourrer le doigt dans l'oeil = [A1 ; A2 ; ...]   F
avoir les coudées franches = [A1 ; A2 ; ...]   Q

et observons ces mêmes E.I. modifiées :

b. sentir l'estomac dans les talons = [A1 ; A2 ; ...] F
 se mettre le doigt dans l'oeil = [A1 ; A2 ; ...] F
se croire/ s'autoriser les coudées franches = [A1 ; A2 ; ...] F

Nous observons également que les variations opérées dans les exemples cités en *b*. n'altèrent pas la signification de l'E.I. originale.

Il semble que dans les cas d'absence du prédicat (F/Q), l'actant (A2) soit porteur de la même signification comme si le prédicat y était.

Les exemples suivants montrent que le prédicat (F/Q) peut être omis.

Les exemples :

(...) *l'estomac dans les talons*	[A1 ; A2 ; ...] 0
*(...) Le doigt dans l'oeil	[A1 ; A2 ; ...] 0/F
*(...) les coudées franches	[A1 ; A2 ; ...] 0/Q

correspondent tous à la formule suivante :

[A1 ; A2 ; ...] 0/F/Q.

Nous observons que dans ce modèle-ci, l'actant [A1 ; A2 ; ...], indépendamment du prédicat, constitue et porte presque la totalité de la signification et de la figure.

Il est évident que dans le discours, la réalisation se ferait le plus souvent avec le prédicat, mais si nous imaginons certains cas d'ellipse et d'absence du prédicat, nous constaterons que l'actant [A1 ; A2 ; ...] garde la cohérence de l'expression.

À ce niveau de la recherche, nous remarquons donc que dans les expressions idiomatiques relevant de la structure syntaxico-semantique définies en tant que Modèle 2. :

a. le sémème central (le plus souvent l'actant objet – A2) est manifesté par un lexème accompagné d'autres lexèmes compléments.

b. ces expressions idiomatiques ont des prédicats (F/Q) qui se prêtent aux remplacements par d'autres lexèmes prédicats et ils peuvent être omis. Cela n'altère ni la figure ni la signification de l'expression.

c. les actants de ces expressions idiomatiques [A1 ; A2 ; ...] gardent la figure et la signification même dans les cas où ils ne sont pas immédiatement accompagnés des prédicats.

Procédés de vérification des relations à l'intérieur des modèles et la validation des modèles en question

Pour confirmer ces modèles, nous allons concevoir des procédures de vérification de la portée et du degré de figement du prédicat et des actants, et cette partie de l'analyse s'appuie à des recherches visant le figement et réalisées par Gaston Gross. Il trouve que la description linguistique des séquences figées devrait avoir pour l'objectif d'établir quelle partie de la séquence est figée et métaphorique. D'après lui, arriver à le déterminer serait très important pour le traitement automatique du lexique.

Figement selon Gaston Gross

Le figement est l'une des principales caractéristiques des expressions idiomatiques, celle qui les oppose directement à la séquence libre. Gaston Gross[8] essaie de présenter un système de termes et des critères constants. Il reconnaît deux critères majeurs de leur distribution, syntaxique et sémantique. À partir de là, il distingue : les groupes (nominaux, verbaux, adjectivaux) libres des unités polylexicales, celles dont la structure interne fait l'objet de restrictions de nature diverse. Parmi les unités polylexicales, certaines sont sémantiquement opaques et d'autres ne le sont pas. Il distingue la séquence libre de la séquence figée et il le fait à l'aide des classes des mots (Ex. aliments, boissons, médicaments, moyen de transport en communs, chaussures, professions, vêtements, etc.) ce qui détermine quelles classes font partie de séquences libres.

Le figement est caractérisé par :

- la polylexicalité (séquence de plusieurs mots dont chacun a son existence autonome),

- l'opacité sémantique qui s'oppose à la notion traditionnelle de grammaire qui repose sur le concept de la compositionnalité. Exemple : *La moutarde lui monte au nez = La*

---

[8] G. Gross. : *Les expressions figées en français. Noms composés et autres locutions.* Paris, OPHRYS, 1996.

personne qui se fâche, ne peut pas avoir la lecture compositionnelle,

    - le blocage de propriétés transformationnelles à différences des structures libres. La cause en serait l'emploi métaphorique,

    - la non-actualisation des éléments constitutifs (la locution est tout groupe dont les éléments ne sont pas actualisés individuellement,

    - la portée de figement peut concerner différentes parties de la locution,

    - le degré de figement total ou partiel,

    - le blocage de paradygmes synonymiques,

    - la non-insertion des éléments dans les suites figées (contrairement aux suites libres),

    - le défigement est stylistiquement marqué et peut provoquer un effet comique ou de surprise,

    - l'étymologie est un paramètre qui se réfère à l'origine du figement (historique, religieuse, littéraire, sociologique ou bien à l'histoire linguistique interne en gardant sa syntaxe d'origine comme par exemple la fréquente absence de l'article propre à l'ancien français) (Gross, 1996 : 9-22).

Degré de figement dans les recherches de G. Gross

    Gross essaie d'établir *les paramètres de figement*. Il a constaté que le figement de différentes expressions idiomatiques n'observe pas toujours la même stabilité. Donc, elles n'ont pas le même *degré de figement*.

    Une suite ordinaire (ex. : *un fait évident*) est celle créée directement par le locuteur tandis qu'une suite figée (Ex. : *un fait divers*) ne l'est pas puisqu'elle existe déjà dans le stock lexical, elle est préconstruite et réfère à un objet ou une idée abstraite. Par exemple, à partir des suites figées telles : *faits divers, livre d'or* ou *le coup du lapin* (ici : déterminant générique), il constate qu'elles sont préconstruites, elles se réfèrent à un objet ou à une idée abstraite, il y a non-prédication, non-actualisation et l'absence de déterminant libre.

Au niveau de la syntaxe, G. Gross considère qu'il y a *un continuum* entre la séquence libre et la séquence figée : « [...] Il existe donc des degrés de figement dans les langues, un continuum entre les séquences libres et celles qui sont entièrement contraintes » (1996 : 17). Il a développé des critères pour établir le degré de figement des expressions figées. Sa méthodologie de la vérification du degré de figement comprend l'analyse des classes de mots, des déterminants et de la présence de différents types de restrictions. Elle est basée sur plusieurs procédés de transformations au niveau syntaxique : passivation, pronominalisation, détachement, extraction, relativation, interrogation. Les séquences libres ont la plus grande performance et la capacité de transformation :

> « A partir d'une phrase : *L'enfant a lu le livre.* On peut obtenir les transformations suivantes, notamment par :
> - la passivation : *Ce livre a été lu par l'enfant*
> - la pronominalisation : *L'enfant l'a lu*
> - le détachement : *Ce livre, l'enfant l'a lu*
> - l'extraction : *C'est ce livre que l'enfant a lu*
> - la relativation : *Le livre que l'enfant a lu.*
> Toutes ces modifications ne s'appliquent pas de façon systématique à l'ensemble des relations verbe – compléments » (Gross, 1996 : 12).

C'est par rapport aux séquences libres que Gross met en évidence différentes capacités de transformations dans les séquences figées. Cela dépend aussi du fait sur quelle partie de l'expression idiomatique porte le figement : sur l'ensemble de la séquence ou bien, uniquement sur une partie de la séquence. Il a noté l'existence de séquences totalement figées (Ex. A*voir les yeux plus grands que le ventre)* et les séquences partiellement figées qui sont plus fréquentes (Ex. *Vous lui avez tiré les vers du nez ; Vous* et *lui* étant libres, peuvent être substitués).

Le figement total ne présente pas de variantes tandis que le figement partiel s'y prête plus facilement. Cette dernière situation est plus fréquente et là, il est possible de remplacer une

partie de l'expression tout en gardant son opacité : « On trouve souvent dans une position donnée, une possibilité de paradigme. Ainsi, dans la suite *rater le coche,* on peut remplacer le verbe *rater* par *louper* ou *manquer : louper le coche, manquer le coche »* (Gross, 1996 : 16)*.* Il y constate une certaine liberté lexicale, même si le sens reste opaque dans les trois cas.

« Les variantes sont plus fréquentes que le figement total, comme on peut le constater d'après les recensements systématiques qui ont été opérés sur le nom (M. Mathieu-Colas, P.-A. Buvet) » (cités par Gross, 1996 : 16).

Il remarque que la métaphore bloque les possibilités de reformulation et les opérations syntaxiques habituelles dans les constructions libres. « [...] une construction est d'autant plus figée qu'elle a moins de propriétés transformationnelles » (Gross, 1996 : 83).

Portée de figement

G. Gross parle de *la portée de figement* en tant que nombre de mots dans une suite figée affectée par le figement (1996 : 38).

En observant les groupes nominaux il remarque le figement périphérique portant sur le déterminant (Ex. U*n tapis de feuilles*) ou l'extension (Ex. *Une fièvre de cheval*) et, le figement complet chez les mots composés (Ex. F*rappe-devant = marteau pour aplatir le métal*) ainsi que chez des suites exocentriques opaques (Ex. F*aux-cul =* personne non fiable *; blanc-bec =* jeune homme sans expérience). Les composés peuvent être endocentriques (Ex. P*orte d'entrée ; panier à pain*) et exo-centriques (Ex. Luc est *un panier percé = dépensier*). Les expressions évoquées par G. Gross, sont figées au niveau sémantique et syntaxique : « *Ce sont des suites « gelées » qui ne diffèrent d'un mot simple que par leur polylexicalité et les marques morphologiques spécifiques aux composés »* (Gross, 1996 : 36).

Outils de l'analyse

Nous avons conçu des outils de l'analyse à l'égard des travaux réalisés par G. Gross qui, afin d'analyser des capacités

transformationnelles de suites figées s'est servi d'un certain nombre de modifications (1996 : 12) : *la passivation*, *la pronominalisation, le détachement*, *l'extraction* et *la relativation*. Ce sont les paramètres de figement à l'aide desquels il a exploré le degré de stabilité c'est-à-dire le degré de figement dans les expressions figées.

Dans la présente analyse, nous avons prévu deux types de modifications : la modification par le remplacement et la modification par la suppression (l'omission) d'éléments constitutifs du Modèle 1. a. et b. et du Modèle 2. a. et b. mentionnés plus haut.

Ces éléments présentant la structure syntaxique et sémantique des expressions idiomatiques sont les actants et les prédicats. Ces deux types de modifications porteront respectivement sur l'actant A2 et le prédicat F ou Q. Un tel procédé nous aidera à déterminer quelle partie de l'E.I. est figée et de valider la portée de figement dans les Modèles actantiels préalablement établis.

Cette analyse nous permettra d'établir le degré de figement de l'actant A2 et du prédicat F ou Q au sein des E.I. Nous avons conçu des critères dans le questionnaire afin de déterminer le degré de figement dans les E.I. Ainsi, suite à des modifications qui toucheront respectivement l'A2 et le prédicat F/Q, si les E.I. :

a.) « *ne changent pas du tout* », elles auront « *faible degré de figement* »,
b.) « *sont légèrement modifiées, la figure reste* » elles auront « *degré moyen de figement* »,
c.) « *changent complètement* » elles auront « *haut degré de figement* » c'est-à-dire « *le figement complet* ».

Ces critères toucheront respectivement l'actant A2 et le prédicat F ou Q.

Nous redéfinirons donc des modèles actantiels à la base de l'analyse visant la portée et le degré de figement des actants et du prédicat.

De cette manière la portée et le degré de figement de l'actant A2 et du prédicat F ou Q seront les critères de la validation des modèles actantiels (Modèle 1. a. et b. et Modèle 2. a. et b.) représentant la structure syntaxique et sémantique des E.I.

Nous avons conçu un questionnaire qui prévoit des réponses à choix multiple. Il a été destiné aux locuteurs natifs du français. Dans le cas de cette étude, c'étaient des enseignants de FLE, ce qui a assuré la crédibilité des réponses.

Le questionnaire porte donc sur deux modèles repérés : le Modèle 1. a. et b. et Modèle 2. a. et b.

Dans le questionnaire, nous présenterons d'abord l'expression idiomatique intégrale qui sera par la suite soumise à des modifications, d'abord au niveau du prédicat et ensuite, au niveau de l'actant. Ces modifications seront de nature différente : la modification par remplacement d'un élément de l'expression, et ensuite la modification par suppression de l'élément en question. Le remplacement se fera par un synonyme ou un autre élément proche du lexème remplacé.

Un tel procédé de travail nous permettra de tirer des conclusions plus générales sur la structure syntaxico-sémantique des expressions idiomatiques, d'analyser et de définir la portée et le degré de figement du prédicat et de l'actant dans ce type d'expressions. À titre d'exemple, nous présentons une partie de la grille du questionnaire dans les Tableaux ci-dessous, destinés à examiner si la signification d'une expression idiomatique change suite aux modifications mentionnées plus haut. Si la réponse est positive, nous vérifierons dans quelle mesure ce changement est présent.

1.	E.I. intégrale : *corner les oreilles de qqn*		Dans les exemples cités dans la colonne ci-dessous, la signification et (la figure de l'E.I. de départ :
	E.I. modifiée par remplacement au niveau <u>du prédicat :</u>	*tourner les oreilles de qqn*	a) ne changent pas du tout ; b) sont légèrement modifiées, la figure reste ; c) changent complètement.
	E.I. modifiée par suppression au niveau <u>du prédicat :</u>	*__ les oreilles de qqn*	a) ne changent pas du tout ; b) sont légèrement modifiées, la figure reste ; c) changent complètement.
	E.I. modifiée par remplacement au niveau <u>de l'actant :</u>	*corner le nez de qqn*	a) ne changent pas du tout ; b) sont légèrement modifiées, la figure reste ; c) changent complètement.
	E.I. modifiée par suppression au niveau <u>de l'actant :</u>	*corner __ de qqn*	a) ne changent pas du tout ; b) sont légèrement modifiées, la figure reste ; c) changent complètement.

Questionnaire visant le Modèle 1

2.	E.I. intégrale : *donner un coup de dent*		Dans les exemples cités dans la colonne ci-dessous, la signification et la figure de l'E.I. de départ :
	E.I. modifiée par remplacement au niveau <u>du prédicat :</u>	Faire un coup de dent	a) ne changent pas du tout ; b) sont légèrement modifiées, la figure reste ; c) changent complètement.
	E.I. modifiée par suppression au niveau <u>du prédicat :</u>	__ un coup de dent	a) ne changent pas du tout ; b) sont légèrement modifiées, la figure reste ; c) changent complètement.
	E.I. modifiée par remplacement au niveau <u>de l'actant :</u>	Donner un coup d'œil	a) ne changent pas du tout ; b) sont légèrement modifiées, la figure reste ; c) changent complètement ;
	E.I. modifiée par suppression au niveau <u>de l'actant :</u>	Donner de dent	a) ne changent pas du tout ; b) sont légèrement modifiées, la figure reste ; c) changent complètement.

Questionnaire visant le Modèle 2

Analyse des questionnaires

Nous présenterons ci-dessous les résultats des analyses en forme de tableaux suivis de graphiques. Le Modèle 1. observe un équilibre relationnel entre l'Actant (A2) – simple et le prédicat (F ou Q) ce qui rend leur relation plus figée.

Nous avons exprimé cette caractéristique en plaçant les actants et les prédicats entre crochets : Modèle 1. - [F/Q A1 ; A2-simple] - *Rouler sa bosse, Casser les pieds (à quelqu'un)*, *Avoir la dent*. Nous présenterons les données décrites en forme de Tableau 1. et de Graphique 1.

Portée du changement	Faible degré de figement	Degré moyen de figement	Haut degré de figement
	ne changent pas du tout	sont légèrement modifiées, la figure reste	changent complètement
E.I. modifiée par remplacement au niveau de l'actant (A2) :	14,3 %	0 %	74,3 %
E.I. modifiée par suppression au niveau de l'actant (A2) :	8,6 %	5,7 %	71,4 %
E.I. modifiée par remplacement au niveau du prédicat F/Q :	2,8 %	2,8 %	74,3 %
E.I. modifiée par suppression au niveau du prédicat F/Q :	0 %	5,7 %	80 %

Tableau 1 - Les résultats de l'analyse visant les questionnaires en pourcentages
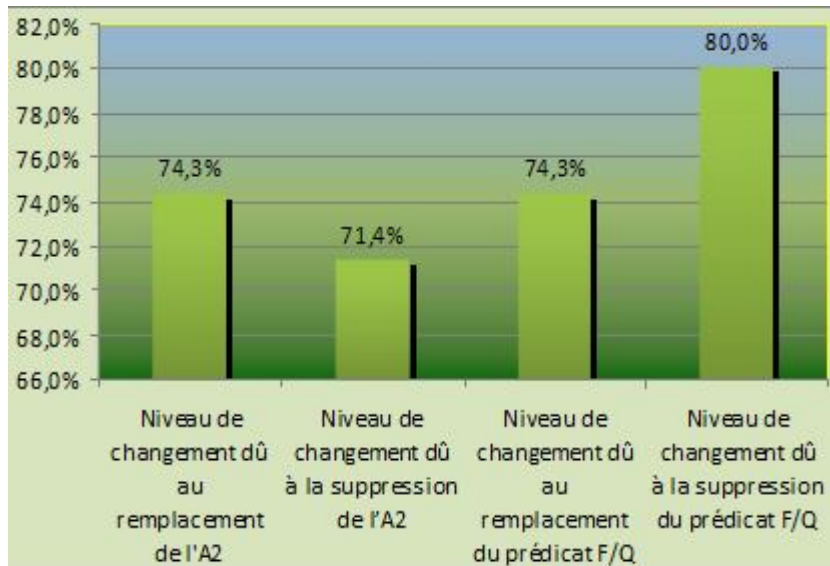
Graphique 1 - Modèle 1. [F/Q A1 ; A2-simple] - *Rouler sa bosse, Casser les pieds (à quelqu'un), Avoir la dent*

Le Modèle 2. observe une relation entre les actants et le prédicat moins soudée que dans le Modèle 1. Nous avons exprimé cette caractéristique en séparant les actants et les prédicats en en les plaçant entre crochets séparés. Nous proposons donc la formule suivante pour le souligner : Modèle 2. - [A1 ; A2] / [F/Q].

Modèle 2. Ci-dessous, nous présenterons les données décrites en forme de Tableau 2. et de Graphique 2.

Portée du changement	Faible degré de figement	Degré moyen de figement	Haut degré de figement
	ne changent pas du tout	sont légèrement modifiées, la figure reste	changent complètement
E.I. modifiée par remplacement au niveau de l'actant (A2) :	2,9 %	20 %	77,1 %
E.I. modifiée par suppression au niveau de l'actant (A2) :	0 %	14,3 %	85,7 %
E.I. modifiée par remplacement au niveau du prédicat F/Q :	34,3 %	31,4 %	34,3 %
E.I. modifiée par suppression au niveau du prédicat F/Q :	28,6 %	48,6 %	22,9 %

Tableau 2 - Les résultats de l'analyse en pourcentages
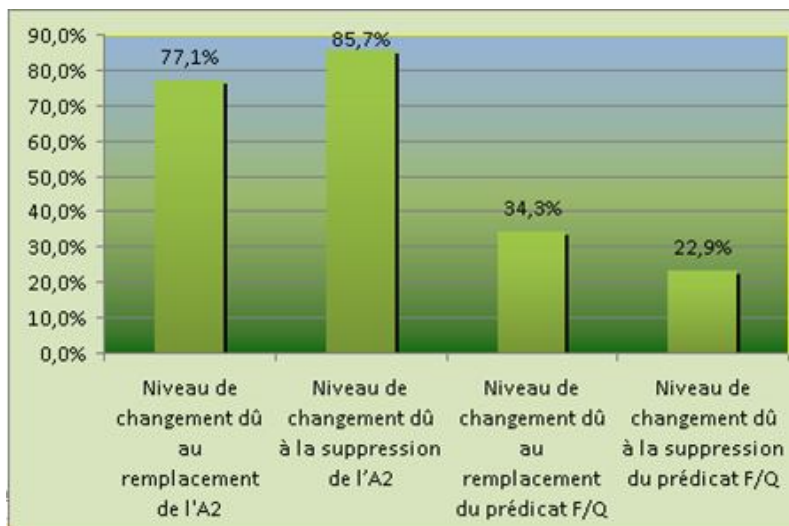
Graphique 2 - Modèle 2. [A1 ; A2-complexe] / [F/Q] :

Faire grise mine ou *Grise mine*, Être *la tête d'affiche ou la tête d'affiche,*
(A*voir*) l'*estomac dans les talons.*

Conclusion : Modèles actantiels définitifs

Nous avons exploré la portée et le degré de figement dans les E.I. afin de pouvoir vérifier les modèles actantiels représentant leur structure sémantique dominante. Nous avons établi le degré de figement de l'actant A2 et du prédicat F ou Q au sein des E.I. à l'aide des critères présentés dans le questionnaire. Le degré de figement dans les E.I. a été défini suite à des modifications qui ont touché respectivement l'A2 et le prédicat F ou Q. Ainsi nous avons considéré trois degrés de figement des E.I. analysées : les expressions idiomatiques à « *faible degré de figement* », à « *degré moyen de figement* » et à « *haut degré de figement* » c'est-à-dire le « *figement complet* ».

Nous considérons que ces résultats confirment la pertinence de la formulation des deux Modèles décrivant la structure syntaxico-sémantique des E.I. du corpus et justifient leur répartition en deux types dominants : Modèle 1. et Modèle 2.

Le premier type d'E.I. est défini par les formules suivantes décrivant sa structure syntaxico-sémantique :

Modèle 1. a. - [F ; A1 ; A2-simple] : *Se faire les dents,*
Modèle 1. b. - [Q ; A1 ; A2-simple] : *Avoir la dent*.

Les analyses de la portée de figement effectuées sur le Modèle 1. ont révélé que le figement porte sur l'ensemble des sémèmes, actant A2 simple et le prédicat. Le sémème central c'est-à-dire l'actant A2 est simple ce qui veut dire qu'il est constitué d'un seul sémème c'est-à-dire d'un seul lexème au niveau lexical comme dans les exemples suivants : *Rouler <u>sa bosse</u>, Casser <u>les pieds</u> (à quelqu'un), Avoir <u>la dent</u>.*

Concernant le degré de figement des sémèmes constituant le Modèle 1. nous avons constaté que les prédicats (F ou Q) ont presque le même degré de figement au sein d'une E.I. que l'actant (A2) simple. Les modifications par remplacement ou la suppression effectuées sur les prédicats F ou Q et sur l'actant A2, ainsi que les pourcentages respectifs, font ressortir le fait que la signification d'une E.I. change complètement en raison des

modifications effectuées sur ces deux classes de sémèmes. Cependant, les valeurs indiquent que le prédicat est un peu plus stable que l'actant et par conséquent, son degré de figement est légèrement plus haut que celui de l'actant A2. Un grand nombre d'expressions appartenant au Modèle 1. observent un haut degré de figement au niveau de l'actant et du prédicat, mais ce nombre est un peu plus élevé dans le cas de figement du prédicat.

Le second type d'E.I. est défini par les formules suivantes décrivant sa structure syntaxico-sémantique :

Modèle 2. a. - [A1 ; A2-complexe] / [F] : *Donner un coup de dent,*
Modèle 2. b. - [A1 ; A2-complexe] / [Q] : *Avoir l'estomac dans les talons.*

Le même procédé de l'analyse de la portée de figement effectué sur le Modèle 2. a démontré que le figement porte surtout sur l'actant A2 complexe. Tout de même, le figement touche le prédicat mais dans moins de cas que l'A2. Le sémème central c'est-à-dire l'actant A2 est toujours complexe ce qui veut dire qu'il est polysémémique et constitué de plusieurs lexèmes au niveau lexical. Cela indique qu'au niveau morphosyntaxique le nom est accompagné d'un complément de nom, d'un épithète ou d'un circonstanciel comme dans les exemples suivants :

Faire grise mine ou *Grise mine*, (*avoir*) *l'estomac dans les talons*.

Concernant le degré de figement, les prédicats (F ou Q) n'ont pas la même stabilité que l'actant (A2) complexe au sein d'une E.I. de ce type. Cela signifie que leurs degrés de figement ne coïncident pas. Les pourcentages démontrent que les modifications apportées sur les actants entraînent le plus souvent le changement de sens d'une E.I. tandis que ces valeurs sont beaucoup moins importantes lorsque les modifications touchent le prédicat. Cependant, nous avons noté que le prédicat peut aussi observer un haut degré de figement dans un certain

nombre de cas. La plupart des expressions idiomatiques appartenant au Modèle 2. observent le haut degré de figement de l'actant A2 complexe et le degré moyen de figement du prédicat F ou Q.

Outre cela, nous avons comparé les données respectives concernant le degré de figement de l'actant A2 entre le Modèle 1. et le Modèle 2. Il en résulte que les valeurs concernant le Modèle 2. sont beaucoup plus considérables :

- Modèle 2. - 77,1 % contre Modèle 1. – 74,3 % suite au remplacement de l'actant A2,
- Modèle 2. - 85,7 % contre Modèle 1. – 71,4 % suite à la suppression de l'actant A2.

Par contre, si nous comparons le degré de figement du prédicat dans les deux Modèles, il est évident que le prédicat du Modèle 1. observe une stabilité plus grande au sein d'une E.I. par rapport au prédicat du Modèle 2. :

- Modèle 1. – 74,3 % contre le Modèle 2. – 34,3 % suite au remplacement du prédicat,
- Modèle 1. – 80 % contre le Modèle 2. – 22,9 % suite à la suppression du prédicat.

D'une part, le Modèle 2. observe une grande indépendance de l'actant A2 complexe, par rapport au prédicat (F ou Q) ce qui rend leur relation moins soudée, autrement dit moins figée. Cela se reflète dans la possibilité de l'ellipse du prédicat.

D'autre part, le Modèle 1. observe un équilibre relationnel entre l'actant A2 simple et le prédicat (F ou Q) ce qui rend leur relation plus soudée et par conséquent plus figée. Voici donc les deux Modèles invariants présentés selon le type du prédicat et selon la portée et le degré de figement en forme de formules et puis en forme d'un tableau avec les exemples respectifs de chaque type d'expression :

	Modèle 1. – *[F/Q ; A1 ; A2- simple]*	*le Modèle 2. –* [A1 ; A2-complexe] / [F/Q]
Message fonctionnel	*Modèle 1. a. : [F ; A1 ; A2-simple]* *Ex. Se faire les dents*	*Modèle 2. a. : [A1 ; A2-complexe]* */[F]* *Ex. Donner un coup de dent*
Message qualificatif	*Modèle 1. b. : [Q ; A1 ; A2-simple]* *Ex. Avoir la dent*	*Modèle 2. b. : [A1 ; A2-complexe]* */[(Q]* *Ex. avoir l'estomac dans les talons*

Tableau 3

Modèle 1. a. - [F ; A1 ; A2-simple], Modèle 1. b. - [Q ; A1 ; A2-simple]
et,
Modèle 2. a. - [A1 ; A2-complexe] / [F], Modèle 2. b. - [A1 ; A2-complexe] / [Q].

Références bibliographiques

Baggione, Valter et Lorenzo Masobrio. *Dizionario dei proverbi. I proverbi italiani organizzati per temi.* UTET Coll. La Nostra Lingua, 2004.

Gak, Vladimir G. *Новый Болъшой Француско-русский Фразеологический Словаръ.* Русский язык, Медиа, 2005.

Grande Dizionario di Francese. Lingua Francese-Italiano, Italiano-Francese. Garzanti Linguistica, Nuova Edizione, 2006.

Greimas, Algirdas-Julien. *Sémantique structurale.* Larousse, 1966.

Greimas, Algirdas-Julien. *Sémantique structurale.* 3ième éd. : 2002, 2ième tirage : 2007. PUF, 1986.

Gross, Gaston. *Les expressions figées en français. Noms composés et autres locutions.* OPHRYS, 1996.

Kayne, Richard S. *The Antisymmetry of Syntax.* MIT Press, Cambridge Mass, 1994.

Kayne, Richard S. *Parameters and Universals.* Oxford University Press, 2000.

Kayne, Richard S. (en collaboration avec Gugliemo Cinque*). Comparative Syntax.* Oxford University Press, 2005.

Maloux, Maurice. *Dictionnaire des proverbes, sentences et maximes.* Librairie Larousse – Paris-VI, 1960.

Matešić, Josip. *Frazeološki rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskog jezika.* IRO Školska knjiga, 1982.

Milosavljević, Boško. *Srpsko-francuski rečnik idioma i izraza.* Zavod za udžbenike, 2008.

Milosavljević, Boško, i Margot Vilijams-Milosavljević. *Srpsko-engleski rečnik idioma.* Zavod za udžbenike, 2007.

Montreynard, Florence, Agnès Pierron, et François Suzzoni. *Dictionnaire de proverbes et dictons.* Ed. Dictionnaires Le Robert. Les Usuels du Robert, 2006.

Rastier, François. *Sémantique interprétative.* PUF, 2009.

Rastier, François. *Idéologie et théories des signes.* Mouton, 1972.

Rat, Maurice. *Dictionnaire des locutions françaises.* Librairie Larousse, 1957.

Rey, Alain, et Sophie Chantreau. *Dictionnaire d'expressions et locutions.* Ed. Dictionnaires Le Robert. Collection les Usuels, 1985.

Rey, Alain, et Sophie Chantreau. *Dictionnaire d'expressions et locutions.* Ed. Dictionnaires Le Robert. Collection les Usuels, 2007.

Pottier, Bernard. *Sémantique et logique. Préface.* J.-P. Delarge éditeur, 1976.

Pottier, Bernard. *Sémantique générale.* PUF, coll. 'Formes sémiotiques', 1992.

Wikipedia. *Noam Chomsky, Grammaire générative et études empiriques*. Site visité le 2 juillet 2014. URL:
http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noam_Chomsky;
http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noam_Chomsky#Grammaire_g.C3.A9n.C3.A9rative_et_.C3.A9tudes_empiriques.

Miodarka Tepavčević[1]

POLITICAL DISCOURSE –
A SYNTACTIC AND SEMANTIC ANALYSIS

Abstract: The language of politics is commonly studied within discourse analysis, whereby its linguistic features relating to vocabulary, grammar structures, textual and intertextual aspects are investigated using various methodologies. This paper presents an analysis of political discourse from a syntactic-semantic point of view. The corpus studied has been extracted from five. Montenegrin dailies and the analysis attempts to describe the genre as effectuated in the Montenegrin political discourse. As a result, the functions of political language are extrapolated and illustrated and its style is described in terms of intertextuality and other linguistic strategies commonly employed in political discourse. The paper aims to give a contribution to the understanding and linguistic profiling of political language.

Key words: discourse, language of politics, syntactic-semantic analysis

1 Introduction

In this paper, we shall present a syntactic-semantic analysis of political discourse, an area which has challenged researchers for a long time and produced a series of dilemmas. It covers an ever growing field of activity. Although in the past it was believed that political discourse was simple and straightforward, several decades of its studies have produced an array of papers dealing with its lexical peculiarities, genre varieties, influence on other discourses, characteristics of syntactic structures, as well as the interplay of politics with socio-cultural and economic spheres.[2]

---

[1] Assistant professor at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Montenegro.

[2] "Political language has ceased to represent a stronghold of bureaucratic language, it has become somewhat simpler and more comprehensible; in its milder forms it intertwines with economy, remaining all the while in the mass media and other domains of the use of language" (Klikovac 2001: 87).

The language of politics is marked by the use of specific words, phrases and hidden linguistic messages. Political words are never randomly selected – they are never "summoned" in communication for no particular reason, i.e. without a specific aim pursued by a politician – they always strive to verbalise an underlying political message or an idea.

A number of linguistic features of a political text are typically dealt with within discourse analysis, involving investigations into its vocabulary (lexeme value, particularly its expressive value), grammar (active or passive voice, use of personal pronouns *we – you – they*, nominalisation, coordination – subordination), textual structure (use of connectors, speech acts) and intertextual relations (the relation of the text to other texts, propensity to being quoted) (Katnić-Bakaršić, 2012: 12–13).

2 Theoretical background

The research of political discourse is as old as politics itself. The role language plays in politics is a significant one, which accounts for the fact that political rhetoric itself dates back to ancient Greece. The discourse in question is used in the speeches of political leaders, political groups, management of various kinds and levels, as well as in the language used by the media, which is closely related to it and frequently influenced by it. Political discourse is characterised by considerable metaphoricity, whereby the choice of register (either standard or vernacular), vocabulary associated with certain social groups and choice of address forms (signalling either distance or solidarity) reveal political positioning (Katnić-Bakaršić, 2012: 53).

Some linguists distinguish between political language in a broader sense (texts which contain any political elements) and political language in a narrower sense (state, diplomatic, party, pre-electoral, parliamentary, propaganda language) (Milić, 2006: 168).

Moreover, political language can be exclusive, totalitarian, democratic, but it may also be emotional, expressive, iterative,

extensive and coherent. Exclusive political language refers to its professional usage within political circles. Totalitarian language is associated with the ruling elites, whereby it is employed as a means of rule and manipulation which is imposed on all spheres of life. On the other hand, democratic language is the language of dialogue and tolerance, whereas emotional and expressive political language affects listeners through their specific vocabulary. Iterative political language imposes itself by repetition of certain phrases and words, while at the same time it also serves to check the reaction of the audience. Finally, extensive language is characterised by numerous digressions, interpolations and considerable length, unlike coherent language which is typical of good orators who are able to pitch their talk into harmonised and logical units. (Ana Knežević-Hesky, 2014: 5).

When the relationship between politics and language is in question, we can note that they permeate and influence each other, whereby language represents a significant factor in constructing political messages. Language is not a static element of politics, but, on the contrary, it acts very dynamically. People interpret and construct politics (as part of social content) through language, hence the continuous connection between language and politics accomplished at various levels. Some linguists see political language as an administrative-functional style, while others see it as an oratory style, which, in turn, is a subclass of the rhetorical style (Tošović, 2002: 287; Katnić-Bakaršić, 1999: 75).

Language always manifests various aspects of power which characterise relations among people; as a matter of fact, politics may be understood as a play to gain power or, simply put, a power play, which is why language is inextricably linked with both politics and power. Language and politics reflect the society out of which they stem and in which they are employed, as well as the relationships which exist in the society; however, they do not only reflect those relationships but they also create them (Katnić-Bakaršić, 2012: 92).

Another division of political discourse suggests that it includes communicative, administrative and diplomatic language. Communicative language abounds in figures of speech and motivational phrases; it is the language of power that verbalises empathy. On the other hand, administrative language is the language of public affairs, which can be said to be lexically poor and procedurally molded. Lastly, diplomatic language is the language of foreign and interior politics, the language of signs and symbols, lacking in clear formulations but rich in all linguistic elements and hidden messages.

3 Corpus and methodology

The corpus studied in this paper consists of excerpts taken from five print Montenegrin dailies: *Pobjeda, Vijesti, Dan, Dnevne novine* and *Blic*. These involve statements issued by politicians, as reported by the media, as well as excrepts from their speeches, campaigns etc. quoted in the articles.

The whole corpus had first been read thoroughly to extrapolate the syntactic and semantic features of the political discourse at hand; the strategies were then identified and classified.

The extracts from the dailies are used throughout the paper to illustrate and explain the linguistic mechanisms underlying political discourse as effectuated in Montenegro.
Our analysis follows in the next section of the paper.

4 Syntactic-semantic analysis of political discourse

In our analysis of the corpus we have covered various syntactic and semantic aspects, i.e. linguistic structures and devices that have been found common and typical of the texts analysed. These include: functions and style of political language, positioning, pairing and grouping, reduplication, common verb forms, nominalisation, common conjunctions, embedding, rhetorical questions, exclamations, intermediation, depersonalisation, condensing, key words and phrases, common logical relationships and foregrounding via discourse markers.

The paper does not aim to provide an exhaustive list and analysis of all semantic-syntactic aspects that characterise political discourse, but solely to single out those most common ones found in this particular corpus which we find representative of the Montenegrin political language.

Functions of political language

By analysing the corpus, we have determined the most common functions of political language and linguistic devices used to accomplish them. These involve persuasive, manipulative, referential, phatic, metalinguistic and symbolic functions, among other roles political discourse may assume.

Politics is generally marked by underlying ideologies, whose basic function is pragmatic – they encourage the change not only of people's consciousness, but also of their behaviour. This is achieved through linguistic **persuasion**, i.e. by "seducing the masses". In order to be persuasive, political communication employs linguistic units containing elements of emphasis, such as emphatic adverbs (*naravno* (*of course), svakako (certainly), očigledno (obviously), očekivano (expectedly)*), emphatic adjectives (*nesporna* činjenica *(undeniable* fact), *nesumljiva* činjenica *(indubitable* fact), *ubjedljiva* ilustracija (*convincing* illustration)), depersonalized constructions with emphatic adverbs (*očigledno je (it is obvious), it is evident (evidentno je), it is clear (jasno je)*) and the corresponding adverbial phrases (*bez sumnje (without doubt)*), among other linguistic devices.

The linguistic means through which persuasiveness is achieved in political discourse depend on the political genre. Thus, persuasiveness of a political speech delivered by a certain individual will differ from a political statement issued by a political party, government or management. The choice of verb phrases such as: *smatram* bitnim *(I consider* it important)*, smatram* nespornim *(I consider* it unquestionable)*, da *podsjetimo* birače (*let us *remind* the voters)), points to open persuasion and imposing of one's own attitude. Such constructions are frequently found sentence-initially, with the aim of intensifying the

subsequent content. Politicians use them to explain their own stances, evaluate and deny the statements of others and convince the public of the righteousness of their own opinions. In political discourse, their function is directed towards achieving political goals and forming political opinions.

Language can also be seen as a form of social interaction, therefore, besides its communicative role, it also assumes many other additional roles, including even the ***manipulative*** one. The most frequently used mechanisms of linguistic manipulation are: macro-speech acts which imply our good acts as opposed to their bad ones; semantic macro-structures or the choice of topics that emphasises either positive or negative facts; the vocabulary, i.e. choice of positive or negative lexemes; and syntax – the active voice versus passive voice, nominalisation etc. (Podboj, 2011: 126–127).

Apart from the above-mentioned, other important functions of political language include ***referentiality***, i.e. providing new information and evoking connotations (convincing), and the so-called ***phatic function*** achieved through phatic expressions, i.e. common connectors, phrases and expressions whose only function is to point to political discourse, as opposed to conveying information (*U prethodnom periodu smo govorili... (In the previous period we spoke about...); Predmet našeg političkog programa jesu... (The subject of our political programme is...); Zadatak je da posvećeno radimo na... (The task is to stay committed to the cause...); Zadatak Vlade je obezbijediti mladima obrazovanje i posao... (The task of the Government is to provide young people with education and jobs...); Cilj je borba protiv korupcije... (The aim is to fight the corruption...); da zaključimo...; (let us conclude...); smatramo potrebnim napomenuti* (*We find it important to point out that...*)).

The ***meta-linguistic function*** is also very present in political statements – it consists of definitions, explanations, quotes, speech within a speech etc., as illustrated in the following examples:

– Predsjednik je rekao: „Besperspektivnost mladih, visoka nezaposlenost i drugi socijalni problemi, uvozna zavisnost i siva ekonomija, korupcija i kriminal – sve su to problemi od kojih danas nije imuna gotovo nijedna država" (The President said: "The lack of perspective for the young, high rate of unemployment and other social problems, dependence on import and grey economy, corruption and crime – all these are the problems that not a single country today is immune to");

– BBC je citirao i izjavu predsjednika koji je poručio da je razočaran, ali ne i iznenađen rezultatima, kao i da referendum ne smije biti razlog novih podjela u tom (The BBC quoted the President's statement in which he said that he was disappointed but not surprised with the results, as well as that the referendum could not be the cause of new divisions in the society).

The discourse of politicians is also abundant with the **symbolic function** or, more precisely, language becomes a symbol of unity for all the speakers who use it:

– Crna Gora može da bude kao Švajcarska. Svi treba da budu svjesni svoje uloge, mjesta i odgovornosti. (Montenegro can be like Switzerland. Everybody should be aware of their role, position and responsibility they hold).

Style

The language of politics is characterised by **stylistic dualism**, i.e. intertwining and mutual influence of **administrative** and **journalistic styles**. The connectedness of political and administrative styles may be seen in some of its common phrases (*institucionalno prilagođavanje (institutional adaptation), financial means (novčana sredstva), financial support (finansijska podrška), negotiating position (pregovaračko mjesto)*); administrative and legal terms (*legitimnost (legitimacy), legalnost (legality)*), names of legal documents (*odluka o sufinasiranju (decision on co-funding), ugovor o nastavku saradnje (contract on the continuation of cooperation)*), precise stating of titles and positions (*državni sekretar (state secretary), union president (predsjednik Sindikata)*)) etc.

Other <u>frequently used</u> <u>terms</u> are those typical of the **legislative and legal style** (*na osnovu (pursuant to), u roku od (within the deadline), zasniva se (it is based upon), uređuje se (it is defined), razmatra se (it is being considered), odlučuju (they make decision)*), <u>verbal nouns</u> (*učlanjenje* u NATO *(integrating in* the NATO), *djelovanje (acting), povezivanje (connecting), pristupanje (accessing), brisanje (erasing), isključenje (excluding)*); as well as <u>listing numerous verbs</u> at the beginning of certain textual segments, for example, political programmes of socio-political organisations, parties or associations (*zastupa (represents), čuva (protects), unapređuje (enhances), ispunjava (fulfills), utvrđuje (establishes), odlučuje (decides), razmatra (considers), usvaja (adopts), saziva (convenes), verifikuje (verifies), osniva (establishes)*) or in political statements (*transformisali (transformed), oduzeli (subtracted), ukinuli (abolished), zabranili (banned)*).

Positioning

Political discourse contains a variety of linguistic mechanisms which either implicitly or explicitly convey political content, shape public policies, prescribe roles to their actors and target groups, carry identity messages, gather political support and define goals. Through political language certain concepts are subconsciously or strategically highlighted, concealed, distorted or valued, which is why it may be said to be a discourse tool of public policies with the function of persuading and legitimising politics.

In political language, personal pronouns play an important role (as index symbols – Katnić-Bakaršić, 2012: 54), bearing in mind that they reveal which agents are dominant and which are subordinate. As very relevant rhetorical means, pronouns carry a strong symbolic function. What we have in mind here is the opposition *us* vs. *them*, where *us* implies positive and *them* negative content, as well as *us* vs. *you*, which, on the other hand, points to different relationships (*mi smo naš dio posla završili (we have completed our part of the deal); ponosimo se i mi time (we*

also take pride in that); *oni sve teže izmiruju obaveze (they find it ever harder to pay their dues); Vašu misiju doživljavam kao snažnu diplomatsku misiju (I find your mission to be a very strong diplomatic mission); da vas podsjećamo na neslavni dio vaše istorije (let us remind you of the unfortunate part of your history)*).

Katnić-Bakaršić suggests that there are two types of the pronoun *us* – the inclusive and the exclusive one. In political discourse, the former carries the meaning *me + you* and has the function of a strong emotional means of familiarising with the recipients of the message, while the latter implies power and strength of the number (Katnić-Bakaršić, 2012: 55). The inclusive *us* can be found in other discourses as well – for example, in the academic discourse, where lecturers address students in this way in order to establish closeness with them. Such form is characteristic of genres with the appealative function or, more precisely, the function which acts upon addressees who need to be turned into active participants in decision-making (Katnić-Bakaršić 1999: 77).

Verb forms

Among dominant verb forms of political discourse we find future constructions implying finality and strong orders, as illustrated in the following examples:

– do sjutra *ćete dobiti* program rada (you *will get* the agenda by tomorrow);

– *postaće* država sivog političkog tržišta (the country *will become* a grey political market);

– na neistine *odgovorićemo* istom mjerom (to lies we *will respond* in the same way);

– kao ozbiljna i odgovorna partija *bavićemo se* uzrocima i posljedicama ovakvog rezultata (as a serious and responsible party *we will be dealing* with the causes and consequences of such results).

These are commonly used with the dative of the personal pronoun *I*, indicating the person for whom an action is intended (donijećete *mi* sjutra dopis (you will bring *me* the statement tomorrow); javićete *mi* rezultate izbornog procesa (you will let *me* know the results of the electoral process)).

Sentences with verbs in the <u>imperative form</u> (*vratimo se* glavnoj temi *(let us go back* to the main topic), *podsjetimo se* prošlogodišnjih izbora (*let* us *remind* ourselves of the last year's elections) and <u>impersonal constructions</u> (*važno je istaći* i to (*it is important to point out* this as well); *nesporno je* (*it cannot be doubted*)) are characteristic of political discourse and perform the role of modifiers which legitimise the authority of the addressees to deliberate on the topic at hand.

Frequently used are also present and future forms of the modal verbs *should, can, must*, taking into account that modal verbs may be used to express orders and prohibitions (*ne treba* da presuđuje... (*he should not* judge...); *ne možemo* odustati od svojih ciljeva... (*we cannot* give up our aims...); *moraće* svi učestvovati u tom procesu... (everybody *will have to* take part in that process...); t*reba* da više radimo na stvaranju konkurentnog ambijenta u privlačenju investicija (we *should* work more on the creation of competitive environment for attracting investments)).

Political discourse is also rich in decomposed predicates (such as *donositi odluku (pass a decision)*, *podnijeti izvještaj (submit a report*), *izraziti protest (express disagreement*), *uzeti učešće* (*take part in))*.

Pairing and grouping

In political language, verbs are commonly used in pairs (*razmatra i usvaja (considers and adopts); bira i razrješava (elects and dismisses), donosi i utvrđuje (passes and establishes), raspušta i imenuje (dismisses and appoints), predlaže i stara se (proposes and takes care of), zastupa i brani (advocates and defends)*). The same may be said of noun pairs (*kandidovanje i izbor (candidature and election), organizacija i organi (organisation and*

organs)), as well as adjective pairs (*politički* i *disciplinski (political and disciplining)*).

In some cases multiple lexemes are grouped together (*prati, analizira, usklađuje (follows, analyzed, aligns); uspostavljanje, razvoj, promovisanje* (*establishment, development, promotion), postanku, razvoju i trajanju etnosa i nacije (origin, development and duration of an ethnicity and nation)*).

Nominalisation

One of the forms of nominalisation is the use of adverbial constructions instead of adjectives and adverbs (*od izuzetnog značaja* da se promoviše *(of outstanding importance* to promote), koja su *od izuzetnog značaja* za Crnu Goru (that are *of outstanding significance* for Montenegro), *na visokom stepenu bezbjednosti (at a high level of safety)*, *na nivou prošlogodišnjeg* ostaju *(*remain *at last year's level*), *sa mnogo više odlučnosti (with much more decisiveness)*).

A striking feature of political discourse refers to the phrases that are combined with verbal/de-adjectival nouns, such as *with the aim of (u cilju), come to (doći do), traje do (lasts until), prisutno je* (*it is present),* as used in the following examples:

> – *u cilju pobjede* na izborima *(with the aim of winning* at the elections);

> – *u cilju oporavka* crnogorske privrede *(with the aim of recovering* Montenegrin economy);

> – we could *come to a cessation* (moglo bi *doći do prestanka)*;

> – vanredno stanje *traje do prestanka okolnosti* zbog kojih je proglašeno (state of emergency *lasts until the end of the circumstances* due to which it has been declared);

> – vjeruju da će *doći do kompromisa* (they believe that *a compromise will be arrived at)*;

> – *prisutno je uvjerenje* da treba raditi sve u cilju pobjede *(there is a belief* that everything should be done in order to secure victory).

Profligate use of genitive constructions in political discourse emerges as a consequence of excessive nominalisation (Klikovac, 2001: 88), as in the examples:

– nadoknađivanja dijela troškova koji se odnose na troškove *puta*, izdavanja *sanitarnih knjižica*, *smještaja* (reimbursement of part of the costs that refer to the cost *of travel, issuing sanitary records*, *lodging)*;

– MUP bi trebao da bude nadležan za postupke *ispravki*, *dopuna*, *promjena* u biračkom spisku, kao i za sprovođenje *postupka brisanja lica* iz *biračkog spiska*, upis *napomena* u birački spisak, i druge poslove u skladu sa Zakonom o biračkom spisku (The Ministry of the Interior should be competent for the procedure of *correction*, *supplement*, *changes* in the electoral roll, as well as for implementing the *procedure of erasing persons from the electoral roll*, entering of *notes* in the electoral roll, and other activities in accordance with the Law on Electoral Roll);

– MUP bi trebao da ima nadležnosti u pogledu *obrade podataka* iz *biračkog spiska*, analizu *podataka*, njihovo ažuriranje i preduzimanje *adekvatnih mjera* u cilju *usklađivanja* i *potpune tačnosti podataka* (The Ministry of the Interior should be responsible for the processing *of data* from *the electoral roll*, the analysis of *data*, their updating and taking *adequate measures* in order to to obtain *harmonised* and *completely correct data*).

The use of nominal expressions has to do with the fact that abstract and impersonal information are exchanged, while the activities and those who perform them are less relevant in this context. This is why some political speeches are overly generalised (Katnić-Bakaršić, 2007: 252).

Conjunctions

In complex sentences, conjuctions are often repeated, as the case in the following examples:

– Na pitanje kako zajedno te dvije partije ako je koliko juče rukovodstvo SDP-a o Pozitivnoj Crnoj Gori govorilo kao stranci *koja* je došla iz miksera gdje se cijedi pomorandža, *a* iz „kuhinje medijskih

tajkuna", *a* sada da su to dvije partije kao dvije grane istog stabla *koje* su se samo u jednom trenutku razdvojile, *a* sada se spojile i idu dalje (To the question of how come that those two parties are together if only recently the leadership of the SDP has spoken about the Positive Montenegro as of a party *that* emerged from an orange squeezing mixer, *and* from the "kitchen of media tycoons", *but* now it reversed its discourse and states that these two parties are like two branches of the same tree *which* were apart only for a while, *and* are now joined back together and go on together);

– Preporučujem svima koji se nijesu odlučili koga će da izaberu za gradonačelnika 25. maja da biraju kandidata *koji* će njihove probleme staviti u prvi plan, *kojem* će građani biti na prvom mjestu, *koji će… (*I recommend to all those who have not decided yet whom to vote for at the elections for the mayor on May 25 to choose a candidate *who will* put their problems in the forefront, *to whom* the citizens will be the most important thing, *who will…);*

– Iskazala je zadovoljstvo *što* su usvojene izmjene četiri „izborna zakona", ali i nezadovoljstvo *što* nijesu prošle promjene sistemskog zakona o izboru odbornika i poslanika; sve to praćeno zahtjevom *da* se nastavi, *da* se ulože dodatni napori i *da* se posao završi (She expressed her satisfaction *because* four changes of the "electoral law" have been adopted, but also her dissatisfaction *because* the changes of the systemic law on election of board members and deputies have not been passed; all of this was accompanied with a request *to* continue, *to* put in additional efforts and *to* finish the job).

One of the characteristics of the syntax of political language is the use of the so-called *and-group* conjunctions, often found in synonyms or clichés, as in:

– obezbijediti *bezbjednost i sigurnost* (provide *security and safety)*;

– *popravka i rekonstukcija* puta *(repair and reconstruction* of the road);

– završila čitav niz *mjera i aktivnosti* od značaja za prijestonicu (has performed a large number of *measures and activities* significant for the capital);

– *bezbjednost i zaštita imovine* prva je stvar koju građani očekuju od države, a danas to je *dodatno i sloboda kritičkog izražavanja i*

izvještavanja (security and protection of property is the highest priority that citizens expect of their state, and today there is also the *additional freedom of critical speech and reporting)*;

– Mnogo toga nam se događalo u XX vijeku – *svjetski i građanski ratovi*, promjene *državnih tvorevina i društvenih uređenja* (A lot of things happened to us in the 20th century – *world and civil wars*, the change *of state borders and state organisation models*).

Some linguists call them two-part speech forms, which represent rhythmical units and leave an impression of completeness and roundedness (Klikovac, 2011: 104). These groups can also consist of three elements, which draws attention to and implies a greater importance of the content at hand (the state has to provide *development, modernisation and greater productive forces*; now we are resuming with *development, modernisation and reconstruction* of the remaining local roads).

Embedding
This type of discourse contains a lot of embedded constructions which clarify the content or redirect the attention to parts of the content, as in the following examples:

– U običnom životu to se zove licemjerje u politici postoje adekvatnije riječi ali kojih se treba ovoga puta, *makar koliko bila otvorena politička perverzija ovih dana u državi,* suzdržati (In real life that is called hypocrisy, but in politics there are more suitable words which should, however, be refrained from, at least this time, *regardless of how open the political perversion in the state has been these days)*;

– Toga dana grupa od ne više od 200 ljudi većinom mladih, podijeljenih, da li dogovorom među njima ili ne, *sasvim svejedno*, na one sa fantomkama i džepovima punih kamenja i ostalih „demokratskih argumenata" i onih drugih koji su odlučili da se malo odmore (On that day, a group of not more than 200 people, mostly young, divided, whether upon agreement or not, *it is quite irrelevant*, into those with balaclavas, pockets full of stones and other "democratic arguments", and into those who decided to take some rest);

– *Pa znate*, izbori su, kao procedura, *sami po sebi*, nikad dovršena priča *(Well, you know*, the elections are a procedure that is, *in itself*, a never-ending story*)*.

Reduplication

At the syntactic level there is another frequent form used in political texts called reduplication, i.e. a process of intensification of syntactic units. Thus, besides the repetition of phonemes, there is also the repetition of phrases and constructions (*u roku od 5 dana... u roku od 6 mjeseci* (*within five days ... within six months); Isti* ljudi, *ista* pamet, *iste* namjere, *isti* mentori, *ista* sredstva (*The same* people, *the same* mind, *the same* intentions, *the same* mentors, *the same* means); faktički *vanredno* stanje, *vanredna* situacija (practically a state of *emergency*, a situation of *emergency*). Often, all these elements are combined into a single sentence:

> – Crnogorci, koji *istorijski* i *savremeno* imaju kolektivno vlastito ime – *što je jedan od ključnih elemenata iskaza nacionalne posebnosti – posjeduju i manifestuju, istorijski i danas, povezanost i pripadnost* svojoj domovini – Crnoj Gori (The Montenegrins, who *historically and currently* have a collective name – *which is one of the main elements of the expression of national identity – have and manifest, both historically and today, a connection and belonging* to their homeland – Montenegro).

Rhetorical questions and exclamations

Frequently, the choice of certain persuasive devices – such as exclamations, rhetorical questions, imperatives – is conditioned by the connotative function. The message of political texts is first of all aimed to convince and persuade, which is why its rhetorical component is strongly directed at its recipients. Thus, asking questions usually results in providing the expected answers in the second part of the message. These rhetorical questions are commonly self-answered, but often they leave us in a dilemma. Imperative utterances aim at moving the recipients to action and offer them guidelines as to what they are supposed to do. Moreover, exclamatory utterances, as a type of speech act,

achieve pragmatic aims and evoke certain reactions from the audience. Owing to the context and the use of various exclamatory linguistic devices (verbs with specific semantic meaning, exclamations, vocatives, imperatives, intonation etc.), these propositions express specific emotional-expressive meanings. The expressive and emotional function of exclamatory sentences can at times signal the speaker's attitude towards a phenomenon or the subject of the exclamation:

> – Šta se moglo očekivati u situaciji kada su jednak udio imali osnivač, država i njemački ulagač, a uređivanje novina i izbor glavnog urednika za sebe je obezbijedila država. Zašto je to postala uobičajena praksa? Zar se ne zna šta je čiji posao i u takvim osjetljivim događanjima? I posebno: zašto može rješenje da se nađe pritiskom i na ulici, a ne može „redovnim" putem, blagovremenom angažovanošću (ne)odgovornih ljudi u za to nadležnim institucijama? Građani, *ne vjerujete* takozvanim političkim analitičarima; (What could have been expected in a situation in which the founder, the state, and the German investor had equal participation, but in which the state secured newspaper editing and the election of editor-in-chief exclusively for itself? Why has that become the way it is usually done? Are the individual roles in such sensitive dealings not well known? And this above all: why can a solution be found under pressure, even via the streets, but not through the "regular" procedure, by timely involvement of the (ir)responsibe people in competent institutions?);

> – *Pogledajte* koliko ljudi danas više radi. Samo činjenicama! *Rješavajte* uzrok – *riješićete* posljedicu! A to je ogromna razlika! Koji da hoće bi mogli sve! Cetinje su ljudi! Samozvani bankari, samozvani direktori, ali isključivo experti! Dear citizens, *do not believe* the so-called political analysts (*Take a look* at how many more people are employed today. Believe only the hard facts! If you *solve* the cause – you *will solve* the consequence! Which makes an enormous difference! If they only wanted to, they could do anything! Cetinje is its people! The self-appointed bankers, the self-appointed directors, but exclusively experts!).

The exclamatory mark sometimes operates as a specially emphasised linguistic device, whereas the marked lexemes are carriers of emotional attitudes. In the examples below, the

selected chunks serve as means of attracting attention and emphasising the content. Whether a word as a lexeme with full meaning, a phrase or a clause, they are dependent on the context and are purposefully embedded in a certain position in the sentence, whereby they perform certain syntactic functions. The application of this stylistic method is motivated by the function of emphasising the significance of the designated sentence element, thus enhancing the emotional tone of the text. The exclamatory expression is highlighted intonation-wise:

> – „žive" i po nekoliko godina!!! evo kako... ("they live on" even for several years!!! this is how…);

> – Opravdava žrtve pripadnika naroda za koje je mislio da ne slijede vođu kome je lično služio; da?! i tako dalje i tako redom… (He justifies the victims of the people who he thought did not follow the leader whom he personally had served; yes?! and so on and so forth…);

> – Kružili su automobili; trubilo se; zasviravalo; prijetilo; provociralo; a, bogami – i direktno napadalo!!! I niko od njih, na čelu sa njima nije ni pokušao da progovori ni jednu – jedinu „odbrambenu riječ"! (The cars were circling; the horns sounded; the music resounded; threats were heard; provocations flung; and, truth be told – there were also direct assaults!!! None of them, with themselves in the leading positions, attempted to utter even a single "word of defense"!).

The inability of differentiating between exclamatory and interrogative intonation is confirmed by the existence of exclamatory-interrogative sentences, which are marked in the written text with a combination of two punctuation signs – the question mark and the exclamation mark, or vice versa. The combination of the question and exclamation gives the sentence various semantic nuances: doubt, wonder mixed with questioning when uttering the question in a high-pitched voice etc. (Simeon, 1969: 697). The *Writing and Punctuation Rules* state that these two marks are put at the end of interrogatory-exclamatory sentences which pose questions about the things which provoke wonder, disbelief, disagreement, amazement, and

in such cases the order of these two symbols is flexible (Writing Rules, 2011: 138). Such examples in political discourse have an interrogatory-exclamatory character and politicians use them consciously to make stylistic interventions, which results in the intensification of the events and phenomena in the minds of the message recipients. Exclamatory-interrogative sentences are significant from the communicative-syntactic (pragmatic) point of view. The use of these sentences intensifies the meaning of the text addressed at the receiver of the message in order to affect their feelings and create certain kinds of reactions. These sentences express specific emotional reactions (wonder, joy, suspicion, doubt, exhilaration). The exclamatory-interrogative sentences modify the basic meaning of the text, introducing an additional systemic meaning whether as an explanation, clarification, emotional attitude, drawing attention, emphasis, cognitive attitude etc:

> – Pa gdje to može?! Povodom ukrajinske krize, mada ni sami ne znaju baš tačno – što je čovjek, zapravo, rekao a da nije (bilo) u skladu sa zvaničnom državnom politikom?! Baš niko, međutim – s „druge strane"– nije ni reagovao?! Loša stvar u cijeloj priči, možda i nije u tome – što se dogodilo?! Za mene je ključni problem – nedostatak adekvatnih reakcija?! Zar niko od tih silnih lidera nije mogao da izađe pred te ljude i kaže im – dajte, nije to naša politika?! Mi ćemo da živimo u miru i skladu sa svima?! (Is this for real?! Regarding the Ukraine crisis, even though they are not quite sure what exactly – what exactly did this man say that was not in line with the official state policy?! Not a single person, however – from "the other side" – has reacted?! In fact, this might not even be the worst thing in this story – what exactly has happened?! For me, the main problem is – the absence of adequate reactions?! Could none of the great leaders have come out before those people and told them – come on, that is not our policy?! We want to live in peace and harmony with everybody?!).

Intermediation

One of the features of the political language from our corpus is also the use of lexical and grammatical devices with which the speaker avoids commenting on an action performed or

to be performed, in such a way that between the present moment and the completion of an action he/she introduces an intermediary action to which they are committed (Klikovac, 2011: 96). This may achieved through the use of the verb *doprinijeti* (*contribute):*

> – Auto-put *će doprinijeti* ekonomskom razvoju Crne Gore (The highway *will contribute* to the economic development of Montenegro);

> – Mislim da ćemo imati i očekivani rezultat, koji će *doprinijeti* daljoj izgradnji (I think that we will achieve the desired result, which will *contribute* to further construction projects);

> Additionally, this is accomplished with the phrases *stvoriti uslove (create conditions), uložiti napore (invest efforts), pokrenuti inicijativu* (*take the initiative):*

> – *...stvoriti uslove za pokretanje biznisa*, a potrebno je *stvaranja* dodatnih *uslova za održavanje demokratskih i fer izbora* (...*create conditions for stimulation of business*, and it is also necessary to *create* additional *conditions for holding democratic and fair elections*,

> – *...uložiti* dodatne *napore* da bi stigla pozivnica za članstvo u NATO, *pokrenuti* neku zajedničku *inicijativu* za stabilnost *(...invest* additional *efforts* in order to receive an invitation for the NATO membership, *take* some common *initiative* for stability).

Depersonalisation

The syntax of political texts is characterised by the use of linguistic devices that express objectivity, as well as depersonalisation in some cases (mainly in informative texts when the mention of the actor is to be avoided). On account of this, political discourse abounds in a frequent use of the passive voice, impersonal verbs, infinite verb forms and complex sentences. The use of passive voice foregrounds the action or the described process, not the actor. On the other hand, the actor is used when speaking about personal experience or individual choice. The choice between active and passive voice is conditioned by communicative and pragmatic factors relating to

the speaker and his/her choice of the informative focus (Alanović, 2008: 94). What follows are examples of such depersonalised sentences:

> – *Odlučeno je* da redovna sjednica Vlade *bude odložena*, a da hitna pitanja *budu riješena* na način predviđen Poslovnikom Vlade Crne Gore (*It has been decided* that the regular Government session *is to be postponed* and that urgent matters are to *be resolved* as defined by the Standing Orders of the Government of Montenegro);

> – O svemu tome – ili bar dijelu – *piše se* mjesecima (On all this – or at least part of it – *has been written* for months);

> – *Konstatovan je* visok stepen mobilnosti i agilnosti stranačke infrastrukture koja *je* već uveliko *anagžovana* za predstojeće lokalne izbore... (A high level of mobility and agility of the party infrastructure *has been noted.* This infrastructure *has* already been largely *engaged* for the upcoming local elections...);

> – ...sada *pokušava spasiti* što se *spasiti* može – *pokazati* da njegova stranka ima visoke standarde od kojih *ne želi odustati*, i time *pokazati...* (...now they are *trying to save whatever can be saved – to show* that his party has high standards it does *not want to give up*, and in this way *show...*);

> – *Pričalo se*, ranije, da *će se* taj problem *riješiti. Pominjana je* i pomoć Slovačke (*It was said*, earlier, that the problem *would be solved*. The support of Slovakia *has also been mentioned).*

Passive constructions emphasise orders and represent a means stylising political language. In many instances, passive voice condenses a passive sentence in order to achieve brevity, conciseness and economy of the language expression. On the other hand, active and passive voices differ with regards to the communicative intention of the speaker (Ham, 1990: 69). In passive sentences, information is given from the standpoint of the patient, while in active ones the information is given from the

standpoint of the agent. This relationship of empathy[3] or "standing by somebody" enables the speaker to establish a different attitude, i.e. enables them to stand closer by certain individuals than by others. The speakers achieve empathy through various orderings of the semantic, syntactic and lexical elements. Empathy represents a communicative intention, "an element from the standpoint of which the whole communication is observed" (Ham, 1990: 69). The speaker establishes an empathetic connection with "the person from whose perspective they follow what is said" (Ivić, 1987: 41). The relationships between sentences determine empathy. By selecting such an empathetic relationship, speakers choose from which perspective they would observe a certain event. Therefore, the active and the passive sentences have different communicative values and politicians consciously opt for the passive diathesis. Any change of the grammatical relationships entails a change in meaning, which means that the relationship between the active and the passive voice is considered semantically different (Belaj, 2004: 82).

Sometimes politicians consciously or intentionally leave out the agent, thus making the audience believe that the offered information is complete. In such cases, the agent is hidden or preserved.[4] On the other hand, if the agent is not explicated unconsciously, we either know who/what the agent is or this is an irrelevant piece of information, which is why there is no need for its explication. The frequency of all types of sentences without agents – *passive, impersonal constructions* (impersonalised) and sentences with *an inordinate subject,* give a particular tone to political texts. Even though the authors of the texts often address

---

[3] The notion of empathy was introduced into linguistics by Susumu Kuno and Etsuko Kaburaki. See: Ivić, Milka. *O nekim srpskohrvatskim gramatičkim fenomenima uslovljenim empatijom,* Južnoslovenski filolog, XLIII, 1987, p. 41–49.

[4] Some linguists call this passive the rhetoric passive. See: Bjelaković, Isidora. *Agens u neagentivnim participskim pasivnim konstrukcijama (u tekstovima 19. veka)*. Zbornik matice srpske za filologiju i lingvistiku, L, 1–2, 2007, p. 66.

---

the audience, either directly or indirectly, there is the above-mentioned sentence types are substantially used with the aim to achieve certain communicative and stylistic effects.

Condensing

The connotation of solidarity, i.e. of coming closer to or away from the addressee, may be effectuated through the use of infinitives, which represent a neutral or formal form that contributes to the condensing of the discourse as well as distancing and objectivitisation:

> – Treba *stimulisati* mlade ljude da ostanu na selu, *planirati* otvaranje pogona za preradu mlijeka i ljekobilja. Važno je *poboljšati* i otkup stoke... (We should *stimulate* young people to remain in the countryside, *plan* the opening of a plant for processing milk and medicinal herbs. It is important *to improve* the buying up of live stock...);

> – Treba *reformisati* lokalnu upravu, treba *obezbijediti* drugačiji poslovni ambijent, *vrednovati* tradicionalne, ali i savremene evropske duhovne i materijalne vrijednosti. Ne može ovaj kraj *oživjeti*... (We should *reform* the local government, we should *provide* a different business environment, *appreciate* traditional, but also contemporary European spiritual and material values. We cannot *revive* this region…);

> – Opština bi u narednom periodu morala maksimalno *koristiti* pretpristupne fondove EU, *crpiti* na taj način značajna sredstva. Treba *organizovati* novu lokalnu upravu, *dovesti* i *obučiti* nove ljude, *uvesti* ih u posao i sve zakonski *organizovati*. Ukoliko postoji nezadovoljstvo realizacijom vladine politike onda treba *izaći* sa konkretnim predlozima kako je to moguće bolje *raditi* i *unaprijediti* (In the future, the municipality would have to *use* the pre-accession EU funds to the maximum and *obtain* significant financial assets in that way. We should *organise* new local administration, *take on* and *train* new people, *introduce* them to the job and *organise* it all within legal regulations. If there is dissatisfaction with the implementation of the government policy, then we should *come up* with concrete proposals of how to *do* it better and how to *enhance* it).

Apart from the infinitives, the role of condensing is also played by verbal adverbs and deverbative nouns, as in the examples which follow:

– *Govoreći* o ekonomskom razvoju, premijer je istakao da je Vlada prošle godine, u uslovima krize, uspješno konsolidovala javne finansije... (*Speaking* of the economic development, the Prime Minister pointed out that last year the Government, amid the conditions of crisis, successfully consolidated public finances...);

– *...zaboravljajući* pritom da ih nikakve elite neće ostaviti u orbiti... (*forgetting* thereby that no elites whatsoever would keep them within the orbit...);

– Centar za preduzetništvo, kako se dodaje, biće namijenjen *podršci* i *osmišljavanju* biznis projekata... (The Centre for Entrepreneurship, as they added, would be intended for the *support* and *creation* of business projects...);

– organizovao sam sa rukovodstvom *obilazak*... (I organised a *guided tour* with the management...);

– Za *utvrđivanje* izbornih lista političkih partija iii grupa birača... (For *establishing* the electoral rolls of political parties or groups of voters...);

– Crnu Goru očekuje *intenziviranje* i *konkretizacija* pregovaračkog procesa kroz *sprovođenje* zakonskih rješenja, strategija i akcionih planova koje su donijete u prethodnom periodu u mnogim poglavljima (Montenegro is awaiting *intensification* and *concretisation* of the negotiating process through *implementation* of legal decisions, strategies, and action plans that were passed in the previous period in several chapters).

As it can be seen, the sentence condensers can be used with different syntactic functions – those of the subject, object, adverbials, etc. By the use of these devices (infinitive, verbal adverbs), politicians manage to distance themselves and be objective regarding the subject of explication.

Key words and phrases

Key words and syntactic constructions play an important role in conveying political messages. In the political texts, we have found conventional language that uses a certain number of verbal symbols or more precisely key words and phrases:

– ...kako bismo građanima kroz *konkretne aktivnosti* i *praktična rješenja* približili *evropske standarde i vrijednosti*, a kroz *efekte reformi* ih pripremili na promjene koje *pristupanje* EU i *buduće članstvo* donosi (...in order to familiarise the citizens with the *European standards and values*, through *concrete activities* and *practical solutions*, and through *reform* prepare them for the changes that the *accession* to the EU and *the future membership bring*).

– Može se reći da su mjerila rezultat zajedničkog rada Crne Gore i EK na *sagledavanju stanja* i *definisanju* onoga što je potrebno učiniti u predstojećem periodu kako bi se unaprijedili svi *segmenti vladavine prava*, kako u oblasti *temeljnih prava, reforme pravosuđa*, tako i u dijelu *borbe protiv korupcije i organizovanog kriminala* (It can be noted that the norms are the result of joint efforts of Montenegro and the EC to *map the situation* and *define* what needs to be done in the upcoming period in order to enhance all *segments of the rule of law*, in the area of *fundamental rights, reform of legislature*, as well as *the fight against corruption and organised crime*);

– On smatra da *treba precizno definisati zakonodavnu ulogu* parlamenta, *ulogu daljeg nastavka prilagođavanja nacionalnog zakonodavstva evropskoj pravnoj baštini*, zatim *političku ulogu* kroz određene vidove *političke komunikacije* i sa drugim institucijama (He finds it necessary to *precisely define the legislative role of the parliament, the role of further continuation of harmonising the national legislature with the European legal tradition,* then *the political role* through some forms of *political communication* with other institutions as well);

– Naime, vjerujem da je Balkanu potrebna neka *nova doza samopouzdanja, posvećenosti sebi, odlučnosti u preuzimanju odgovornosti za svoju evropsku budućnost* (Namely, I believe that the Balkans needs a *new dose of self-confidence, commitment to itself, decisiveness in taking responsibility for its European future*).

Foregrounding via discourse markers

When politicians wish to emphasise some aspects or events in the text, those elements can take up a prominent position in the first sentence and the text or the delivery itself, while the unfavourable perspectives are pushed back to the periphery of the text (Katnić-Bakaršić, 2012: 103). Thus, in the following example, the use of the adverbial *in the end* signals the part of the discourse which is the conclusion, thereby drawing the addressee's attention to what follows the discourse marker:

> – Na kraju, želim da naglasim da mi nije namjera da zanemarim druge oblasti. Odnosi između dvije zemlje i dva naroda razvijaju se i na horizontalnom nivou i trebalo bi po mogućnosti da obuhvate 360°, i pored zahtjevnog, neizbježnog i ponekad teškog odabira prioriteta (*In the end*, I want to stress that it is not my intention to neglect other domains. The relationships between two states and two peoples are developing on the horizontal level, too, and should, if possibly, reach 360°, despite the demanding, inevitable and at times difficult selection of priorities).

Common logical relationships

When presenting their arguments, politicians frequently use grammatical constructions which communicate various logical relationships:

a) the relationship of comparison:

> – Recesija u Grčkoj veća *nego što* se mislilo... (The recession in Greece is greater *than it was*...);

> – izjavio je da je Evropa snažnija *nego što* je pojedini prikazuju, kao i da bi mogućnost isključenja pojedinih država iz euro zone... (he stated that Europe is stronger *than* some individuals like to present it, as well as that the possibility of exclusion of some countries from the Euro zone...);

> – Uprkos ekonomskoj krizi, naše opredjeljenje je razvoj uz podršku partnera, *kao što je* Svjetska banka... (Despite the economic crisis, we

choose development supported by partners, *such as* the World Bank...);

b) the relationship of parallelism expressed by compound and other constructions and connectors:

– ...*kako* u svjetskoj politici, *tako* i u našoj zemlji... (...*just as* in world politics, *so* in our country...);

– ...potrebna je opsežna analiza kako malih tako i velikih preduzeća... (a wide analysis of *both* small *and* large companies is needed);

c) the relationship of opposition:

– ...u prvom periodu vjerovatno predstavljale težak izazov u smislu opterećenja državnog budžeta, *ali* bi na dugi rok imale višestruko pozitivan efekat... (in the first period they would probably represent a serious challenge for the state budget, *but* in the long term they could have multiple positive effects...);

– Jake institucije su brana svakom propadanju, *a* naše su u povoju, i tu je moguća erozija, zloupotreba, nepotizam... (Strong institutions represent a barrier to any kind of decay, *while* ours are only in their infancy, so there is the possibility of erosion, misuse, nepotism);

d) the explanatory relationship:

– Ustvari, centralno je pitanje koliko planovi i programi razvoja u pogledu korišćenja prirodnih resursa i dobara prate komponente socijalnog kapitala, *to jest* planovi socijalnog razvoja i zadovoljavanja socijalnih potreba, pogotovo sa stanovišta prevladavanja problema lokalnog i regionalnog razvoja Crne Gore i u tom kontekstu osiguranja perspektive porodice u pojedinim regionima. (In fact, the central question is how much the plans and programmes of development of the use of natural resources and goods follow the components of social capital, *that is* the plans of social development and meeting of social needs, particularly from the standpoint of overcoming the problem of local and regional development of Montenegro, and in this context the insurance of the family perspective in certain regions).

– Jedini segment potrošnje koji neće biti limitiran je segment penzione potrošnje, jer ovdje troškovi rastu – polazeći od namjere Vlade da

vršimo usklađivanje vrijednosti penzija, *odnosno* da od svih nepopularnih mjera tokom ove godine ukinemo onu o zamrzavanju vrijednosti penzija (The only segment of consumption that will not be limited is the segment of retirement consumption, because costs are rising in this area – starting from the intention of the Government to adjust the value of pensions, *that is* to abolish the decision on pension freeze, out of all the unpopular measures passed this year).

5 Conclusion

Just as language and society are interconnected and cannot function one without the other, language and politics are constantly permeating each other. Political discourse is characterised by its specific style, as well as constant changeability and recognisability. It acts as a means of articulation and popularisation of stances and opinions. What we have observed is that it commonly contains syntactic-semantic constructions that additionally strengthen the speaker's dominant position in the minds of the recipients.

Political discourse is persuasive and symbolic, hence it has strong influence on the opinion-forming of an individual. Its ideological function is thus its inseparable part. Apart from its informative function, the most important functions of political discourse include the conative and expressive functions, by which politicians strive to attract individuals and convince them to accept certain political standpoints and attitudes and assure them of their validity.

Our linguistic analysis has shown that the function of certain syntactic-semantic devices employed in political language aims to convey a message, inform, convince and persuade. The choice of functional-syntactic devices shapes the way various political content is conveyed and, bearing in mind the importance which politics plays in societies in general, merits more in-depth linguistic analysis.

References

Alanović, Milivoj. „Sintaksički i komunikativni aspekti konverzije". Zbornik Matice srpske za filologiju i lingvistiku, LI, 1–2 (2008): 87–99.

Belaj, Branimir. *Pasivna rečenica*. Filozofski fakultet, 2004.

Bjelaković, Isidora. „Agens u neagentivnim participskim pasivnim konstrukcijama (u tekstovima 19. veka)". Zbornik matice srpske za filologiju i lingvistiku, L, 1–2 (2007): 63–70.

Ivić, Milka. „O nekim srpskohrvatskim gramatičkim fenomenima uslovljenim empatijom". Južnoslovenski filolog, XLIII (1987): 41–49.

Katnić-Bakaršić. Marina. *Lingvistička stilistika*. Open Society Institute, Center for Publishing Development, Electronic Publishing Program, 1999.

Katnić-Bakaršić, Marina. *Stilistika*. Izdavačka kuća Tugra, 2007.

Katnić-Bakaršić, Marina. *Između diskursa moći i moći diskursa*. Naklada Zoro, 2012.

Klikovac, Duška. „O birokratizaciji srpskoga jezika". Naš jezik, XXXIV/1–2 (2001): 85–110.

Knežević-Hesky, Ana. *Politika i gospodarstvo za srednje strukovne škole*. Alfa, 2014.

Milić, Dejan A. „Politički govor u Srbiji na razmeđi između XX i XXI veka". Kulturna polisa, 4–5, III, (2006).

Pešikan, Mitar, Jovan Jerković, i Mato Pižurica. *Pravopis srpskoga jezika*. Matica srpska, 2011.

Podboj, Martina. „Manipulacija u političkom diskursu – kritički pristup". Hrvatistika, Vol 5, No 5, (2011): 123–133.

Simeon, Rikard. *Enciklopedijski rječnik lingvističkih naziva*, II P–Ž, Matica hrvatska. 1969.

Tošović, Branko. *Funkcionalni stilovi*. Graz: Institut füf Slawistik der Karl-Franzens-Universität 2002.

Ham, Sanda. *Pasiv i norma*, Jezik, 3 (1990): 65–76.

Milica Vuković[1]

WEAK EPISTEMIC MODALITY
IN THE UK PARLIAMENTARY DISCOURSE

Abstract. *Discourse strategies of boosting and downtoning seem to play a paramount role in political discourse – persuading the electorate and defending one own's position when 'attacked' liken the political battle to an actual war battle, whereby going on offensive and ducking into a trench, when the occasion demands it, may be linguistically effectuated through an array of linguistic means. Acting in defense in the context of political combat will be the focus of this paper, explored on a corpus taken from the 2010 UK parliamentary budget debate. Weak epistemic modality or hedging is studied through the use of weak epistemic adverbs, verbs, adjectives and nouns, its presence is measured through normalised frequencies and where possible compared to the BNC frequencies. The results point to a low presence of hedging in parliamentary discourse, both in comparison with strong epistemic modality in the same corpus and with the general everyday language.*

Key words: *weak epistemic modality, parliamentary language, hedging, discourse*

Introduction

Understatement represents a rhetorical strategy applied and accomplished at several discourse levels. In this study we take the term to mean decreasing, diminishing, softening or subtracting from the full strength of the utterance. In addition, we shall consider it different from the term *hedging* or *mitigation*, whereby we take understatement to refer to any decreasing or softening of the utterance meaning and hedging to refer to non-commitment of the speaker to the truth value of the utterance. The two strategies are very similar and all-pervasive in political discourse, however, only the latter belongs to the realm of

---

[1] Assistant professor at the Institute of Foreign Languages, University of Montenegro.

epistemic modality, i.e. modality conveying speaker's evaluation of degree of confidence in, or belief of the knowledge upon which the meaning of the utterance is based.

Theoretical background

In our theoretical review, we shall briefly outline weak epistemic modality and linguistic research on parliamentary discourse.

Weak epistemic modality

Systematic reviews of hedging, i.e. all devices and substrategies used to accomplish it are non-existent, which should not suprise given the fact that it is difficult to pin it down and that it is a productive category.

Epistemic modality is considered part of the modal system which also comprises *deontic modality*, expressing obligations, commands, permissions and grants, and *dynamic modality*, expressing ability.

Epistemicity may simply be defined as modification of the utterance to express confidence or lack thereof, truthfulness and probability. This may be accomplished prosodically (intonation suggesting certainty or uncertainty), semantically (by using words suggesting a degree of certainty or uncertainty, such as *definitely, undoubtedly, possibly, may,* etc.), syntactically (using a certain word order) or pragmatically and discoursally (through a paralinguistic component signalling the speaker's confidence or lack of confidence).

As epistemic modality refers to the degree of certainty in the truth of the speaker's utterance (de Haan, 2005: 29), in cases where the speaker is little sure of it, we frequently encounter hedging strategies, i.e. what we might refer to as *weak epistemic modality*, relating to a *low epistemic value* and *weak* or *tentative commitment,* as opposed to utterances with strong commitment (high value) and neutral utterances in which there is no commitment (median value) (Simon-Vandenbergen, 1997: 344). Or, as Cornillie puts it, "the result of the evaluation goes from

absolute certainty that a state of affairs is real to absolute certainty that it is not real. In between these two extremes there is a continuum including probability to possibility" (2009: 46). The focus of our paper would then pertain to the low possibility dimension, i.e. weak epistemic modality, in which the speaker's level of commitment to the truth is obviously low (de Haan, 2000: 203).

The paper does not aim to offer an exhaustive list of items used to accomplish weak epistemic modality in our corpus, but solely to focus on some of the most prominent and pervasive devices used to such purposes at the level of words and phrases.

Research on parliamentary discourse

Parliamentary debate is said to be a prototypical instance of *deliberative* genre, whose aim is to persuade the addressee to take action, although it is mixed with *forensic* genres (asserting guilt or innocence) and, to a somewhat lesser extent, *epideictic* genres (ceremonial discourse) (Ilie, 2004: 46). The genre is considered to be "an influential and authoritative genre" (van der Valk, 2003: 315) and its research is becoming ever more abundant (Gelabert-Desnoyer, 2008: 410) in the context of the increasingly significant role that politics plays in societies in general.

In the research conducted so far, most of the attention has been devoted to the UK House of Commons (Ilie, 2003b: 73); however, more national parliaments have received attention as of late (among others – Ensink, 1997; Frumuselu and Ilie, 2010; Sauer, 1997; Elspass, 2002; Bijeikiene and Utke, 2007), whereby various aspects have been analysed, such as use of key words (for example, Bayley, Bevitori and Zoni, 2004), various argumentation discourse strategies (for example, Van Dijk, 2000; van der Valk, 2003), and pragmatic aspects including politeness (for example, Ilie, 2004; 2005; David et al., 2009), interruptions (for example Bevitori, 2004; Carbo, 2004;), metadiscourse (Ilie, 2000; 2003) etc.

Epistemic modality has not been studied directly within the context of parliamentary discourse, which is why this paper aims to provide a modest contribution to the study of the topic.

Data and method

The corpus for this study comprises the transcripts of the first day of the budget debate conducted in the House of Commons in March 2010, edited on the basis of the video available on the website of the UK parliament. The details of this part of the corpus follow:

Parliamentary session	Session 2009-2010
Debate	Budget debate for2010
Corpus source	Hansard[2]
Date	24/03/2010
Duration	6h 30min
Word count	61,255
Page count	137
Number of exchanges	136
MP's who participated	33

Table 1. The UK corpus

---

[2] Taken from:
http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100324/debindx/100324-x.htm

The method we applied consisted of the following:
- identification of the words and phrases conveying weak epistemic modality in the corpus, through the categories stated above;
- determining the frequency of the tokens concerned, using the software *AntConc 3.2.1®* (Anthony, 2007);
- normalising the frequency, i.e. calculating the frequency per 1,000 words of the corpus;
- qualitative analysis of the most frequent tokens in the co-text they were used in.

Analysis and results

The use of weak epistemic modality was analysed through weak epistemic adverbials, weak epistemic verbs and verb phrases, weak epistemic nouns and weak epistemic adjectives.

Weak epistemic adverbs and their equivalents

In the literature surveyed, a broad array of weak epistemic adverbs was found to exist in the English language: *conceivably, maybe, possibly, potentially, hypothetically, presumptively, allegedly, reportedly, doubtfully, supposedly, indeterminately, ostensibly, questionably, suspiciously, seemingly, vaguely, obscurely, ambiguously, indefinitely, purportedly, perhaps, professedly, unclearly, speciously, outwardly, supposably, tentatively, hesitantly, uncertainly, imaginably, assumably, arguably, by allegation, to my knowledge, to all appearances, on the face of it* etc.). However, the search for these adverbs in our corpus yielded very few hits – only five of these adverbs were found and they featured very low frequencies. In table 2, we also included two clauses functioning as adverbials:

WEAK EPISTEMIC MODALITY

MODAL ADVERBS	Total	
	RF	NF
perhaps	17	0.28
Maybe	5	0.08
possibly	3	0.05
potentially	1	0.02
vaguely	1	0.02
CLAUSES EQUIVALENT TO MODAL ADVERBS		
as far as I know	1	0.02
as far as I am aware	1	0.02
Total	**29**	**0.48**

Table 2

The first conclusion is that the use of weak epistemic adverbs is more or less avoided in parliamentary discourse. However, the most frequently used items from this group merit a more in-depth analysis.

The most frequent weak epistemic adverbs in the UK parliament are two synonyms *perhaps* and *maybe.* The former is much more common than the latter, probably due to the fact that it belongs to a more formal register which is typical of parliament. They are primarily used for hedging:

(1) REDWOOD: … And he was absolutely right that the UK Government football club, under its current management, has slipped down several divisions and is facing further relegation. He is absolutely right that there are no star players who can win matches. He is also absolutely right that the wage bill is bloated and gross, and that the club is facing

bankruptcy. I think, the club has all the conditions, *which the hon. Gentleman **perhaps** did not have in mind*, for better and new management…

(2) TAYLOR: … Indeed, it is likely that we are going to be importing more than 60 per cent of our gas and oil requirements *within a very short time – **perhaps** by the end of the decade –* from unstable countries such as Russia…

(3) TYRIE: … Of course, the boom and bust rhetoric has been abandoned. So, incidentally, has the word "stability". This was mentioned on average 11 times in every Budget speech that the Prime Minister made when he was Chancellor. In the past two Budget speeches – I listened carefully to this one – I did not hear, I haven't heard the word mentioned once. Not once. Stability is out. ***Perhaps** it was in there somewhere*, but if so it passed me by…

In the examples 1-3, *perhaps* is used as a hedge. In example 1, direct threat to the face of the MP Redwood's collocutor is mitigated with *perhaps* as well as indirect addressing in the third person, typical of the UK parliament. Then, in example 2, MP Taylor uses *perhaps* to hedge from his doom and gloom estimate sending a message that the grounds that the estimate rests on may not be that solid after all. Further on (example 3), MP Tyrie gives an interesting metalinguistic analysis of the Prime Minister's Budget speech, noting that the Labour have eliminated their key word *stability*, however, as it was later hedged with *perhaps*, the hearer may conclude that Tyrie is not fully convinced of this and might be in error. By employing *perhaps*, the MP's reduce the possibility for their claims to be attacked and countered – their hedging makes too weak a target for such an offensive.

But how frequently are these weak epistemic adverbs used in the parliamentary language as opposed to everyday language? Let us compare the normalised frequencies from our corpus to our search results from the British National Corpus (table 3):

WEAK EPISTEMIC ADVERBS AND THEIR EQUIVALENTS	UK PARLIAMENT		BNC	
	RF	NF	RF	NF
perhaps	17	0.28	33576	0.34
maybe	5	0.08	10023	0.10
possibly	3	0.05	7046	0.07
potentially	1	0.02	2426	0.02
vaguely	1	0.02	935	0.01
as far as I know	1	0.02	216	0.00
as far as I am aware	1	0.02	70	0.00
Total	**29**	**0.48**	**54292**	**0.54**

Table 3

The results are surprisingly similar. However, we must note that in everyday language there would be more epistemic adverbs and their equivalents than the list made based on our corpus could offer, which would presumably ultimately raise the frequency of weak epistemic modality in everyday language as opposed to the parliament.

Weak epistemic verbs

A wider range of weak epistemic verbs was found in the UK parliament in comparison to the findings relating to the corresponding adverbs. The list features several modal verbs (*might, may, could*), a couple of semi-modals (*seem, appear* etc.), whereas the others are lexical verbs, mostly verbs of thinking (*suppose, assume, suspect* itd.), which assume a modal function (table 4):

WEAK EPISTEMIC VERBS AND VERB PHRASES	Total	
	SF	NF
might	32	0.52
may	22	0.36
seem	18	0.29
suggest	14	0.23
could	10	0.16
(I) would say	6	0.09
assume	5	0.08
suppose	5	0.08
look	3	0.05
(I) would argue	4	0.07
suspect	3	0.05
presume	2	0.03
appear	2	0.03
tend	1	0.02
Total	**127**	**2.07**

Table 4

Central epistemic modal verbs expressing weak force are *may*, *might* and *could*, whereas there are disagreements in the literature regarding the status of the verb *can* and whether it falls within this category or not. Examples from our corpus featuring the said verb did not convey weak epistemic modality, which is why in our overview we shall exclude it, thus agreeing with Varttala, who deems it incompatible with this type of modality

(1999: 185). On the other hand, *may* and *might* are widely considered prototypical hedges (Hyland, 1998: 116), *might* being the distant counter of *may* (Trbojević-Milošević, 2004), thus conveying even weaker epistemic modality, i.e. the most tentative among modal verbs (Brewer, 1987: 80).

In our corpus, *might*, *may* and *could* were found in obviously hedging contexts, most commonly in situations where an MP has to distance himself/herself from the truth of the estimate he/she has given, thus reducing the chances of being criticised and the estimate countered:

(4) MAIN: ... He was very business-unfriendly in the good times, and they are fearful for their businesses now that *there **may** be bad times ahead*...

(5) TYRIE: ... Today, the Chancellor announced his forecast for growth, above trend – 3 to 3.5 per cent. for 2011. *It **may** happen*, but it is well above the average of independent forecasts. I hope it happens, but I cannot help feeling uneasy about relying on it, as he has...

(6) LILLEY: ... The best way is to encourage growth. *Raising taxes **might** be unavoidable*, but if we are elected to government, we will do all we can to avoid raising taxes...

(7) DARLING: ... In the absence of Government action to support the economy, *the weakness in some of our overseas markets, particularly Europe, **could** result in a substantial downward revision of our growth prospects*, but because of the action we have taken through the recession, and the measures that I am announcing today, I believe that only a small reduction is needed...

As can be seen, these modal verbs are mostly used when giving forecasts for economic trends in the upcoming period. The use of weak epistemic adverbs is completely natural to such contexts, i.e. distancing is not employed to manipulative purposes, but as consequence of the natural unreliability of predicting future events. Still, we must bear in mind that MP's give only those estimates suiting their point and aims.

It is different with semi-modals *seem, appear* and *look*, verbs of perception which can be said to be near-synonyms in certain contexts. The MP definitely hedges from the content of the utterance, thus suggesting that the content is experienced from a possibly skewed perspective and is just an impression allowing for objective reality to be different:

(8) REDWOOD: … When I asked the Prime Minister about that recently in Prime Minister's questions, *he **seemed** to be completely unaware of that fact*. You would have thought that it was the dominant economic fact that might concern him and his colleagues…

(9) GARDINER: … We should be incentivising and rewarding companies for increasing their per capita output, for example, and *it **seems** to me a failure of this House* and the Treasury that we have not been able to do so…

(10) BELL: … I am making an important point, *but Conservative Members do not **seem** to get it*…

(11) TODD: Did not the right hon. Gentleman find surprising the comments of the right hon. Member for Wokingham (Mr. Redwood), *who **appeared** also to share the view of my hon. Friend* the Member for Elmet (Colin Burgon) that we should keep these banks for a considerable time longer, and actually be active in their direct management?

(12) TYRIE: … But of course each individual spending measure could have some merit, but *it **looks** as if this Budget, in any case, has just given us more of the same*: meddling in the economy with taxpayers' money…

What the MP's here do is amplifying and mitigating the utterance at the same time – thus, for example, they combine hedges and maximisers in the same utterance (e.g. maximiser *completely*, emphasiser *in any case* and semantically strong vocabulary: *failure, they do not get it*). In fact, in such cases we are dealing with disharmonious propositions, not due to the MP's not knowing what to say, but on account of the fact that the hedges

are there precisely because of the amplified propositions. Such examples with the verbs in question are not rare:

(13) TYRIE: … The extra money comes out of a slight improvement, which the Chancellor also announced today, in overall public finances since the pre-Budget report, but whatever the merits of the measures *it seems highly irresponsible* to use that small amount of extra room to start spending more…

(14) JACK: … the Chancellor of the day should be required at least to put on public record why he disagrees with advice *which would **seem** to be profound commonsense*: the advice that when the economy is expanding and there is no need to increase public expenditure, we should pay down debt…

(15) FABRICANT: Does he agree that *it always seemed very strange* when the previous Chancellor of the Exchequer, the present Prime Minister, used to talk of balancing the books in the course of a cycle – thus recognising that there was indeed a cycle – while, often in the same sentence, saying that he has done away with boom and bust?

Interestingly enough, other weak epistemic modal verbs may not be found in such contexts. However, *seem*, *appear* and *look* are basically here substitutes for the verb *to be*, which is why they are frequently listed as semi-copulative verbs.

The last group studied in this section relates to verbs and verb phrases expressing hypotheses and cognition (*assume, suppose, suspect, presume, (I) would say, (I) would argue*). They are similar to the verbs *think* and *believe*, but are in fact their distant pairs as they contain more hedging semantically. They are usually used in the first person singular in combination with other hedges:

(16) BELL: If I may say so, it is a bit offensive for the hon. Gentleman, in this House of Commons, to read from a Red Book – which ***I assume*** is the Red Book for this Budget – and expect me to have read it, given that I have been sitting here since 11 am and the document has only just been made public…
… And he was making this statement, which, ***I suppose***, after nine or so years in that post it is understandable if he has become a little

conventional in his thinking, he said that we have to satisfy the markets…

(17) TODD: I am intrigued by the right hon. Gentleman's analysis. I share some of his thoughts, but by extension ***I am assuming*** that he is suggesting that we should have a much more directive role in running RBS and Lloyds, and should seek to, perhaps, foster an underpricing of credit to the business sector. Is that, is that what he is really thinking?
… ***I would say*** that, as far as I know, he is a UK taxpayer, and that is excellent…

(18) JACK: … And therefore ***I would say*** that perhaps we need to look again at the Bank of England Act 1998, and at the Bank's remit…

The phrases function as modal frameworks signaling how the epistemic qualification of the utterance should be understood – the source of the information is the MP himself/herself, his cognitive stance is uttered, however, it is not proposed with confidence but carefulness. In relation to other earlier presented categories of weak epistemic verbs, they are used much less often – probably due to the fact that they convey more uncertainty and unreliability in the proposition, thus weakening the speaker's authority.

Comparison with the BNC results was not possible with many of the verbs presented in this section – namely, many of the verbs in question can be used to purposes other than just conveying weak epistemic modality, whereby, due to the sheer largeness of the BNC, manual extracting of such epistemic uses was not a viable option. Such was the case with *may,* for example, which can additionally convey deontic modality (giving permissions) or *could,* which additionally expresses dynamic modality (ability in the past).

We shall conclude our overview of weak epistemic modality with weak epistemic adjectives and nouns.

Weak epistemic adjectives and nouns

The number of weak epistemic adjectives is very limited and so were their normalised frequencies in our corpus (table 5):

WEAK EPISTEMIC ADJECTIVES	Total	
	SF	NF
possible	9	0.15
uncertain	2	0.03
vague	1	0.02
Total	**12**	**0.20**

Table 5

The first conclusion from the findings presented in table 5 is that weak epistemic modality is more expressed through verbs than other parts of speech.

The most frequent among such adjectives, however, was *possible*, an adjective that points to hypothetical scenarios, which is often used together with other devices indicating epistemic possibility:

(19) McFALL: … The important thing is that we help people after six months, but **if it was possible** and it were felt that there was a detrimental effect after three months, and **if it were possible** to implement the proposal, I would quite happily support the hon. Gentleman's suggestion…

Still, we are dealing only with 9 uses of this adjective, as we have excluded its occurrences in the phrases *as soon as possible, as much as possible* and *as wisely as possible*, in which *possible* functions differently, as an amplifier.

Similar can be said of weak epistemic nouns, whereby only four were found in the UK parliamentary debate (table 6):

WEAK EPISTEMIC NOUNS	Total	
	RF	NF
uncertainty	6	0.10
assumption	3	0.05
possibility	1	0.02
doubt[3]	1	0.02
Total	**11**	**0.18**

Table 6

None of these measured any significant frequencies, which is why we shall not analyse their uses in detail. We shall, however, compare the BNC frequencies with our results for weak epistemic adjectives and nouns found in our corpus (table 7):

---

[3] We excluded its occurrences in the phrase *no doubt*, which carries strong epistemic meaning.

WEAK EPISTEMIC ADJECTIVES AND NOUNS	UK PARLIAMENT		BNC	
	RF	NF	RF	NF
possible	9	0.15	3339	0.03
uncertain	2	0.03	1952	0.02
vague	1	0.02	1432	0.01
uncertainty	6	0.10	2145	0.02
assumption	3	0.05	3032	0.03
possibility	1	0.02	6937	0.07
doubt	1	0.02	5887	0.06
Total	**24**	**0.39**	**24724**	**0.24**

Table 7

As with weak epistemic adverbs, the results are surprisingly similar, although the prevalence is slightly on the side of the parliamentary language. However, what we must bear in mind is that in everyday language there are other weak epistemic adjectives, nouns and adverbs which were not employed in corpus, which would mean that there should be more weak epistemic modality, i.e. more hedging in everyday language than in the parliament.

Conclusion

Our results point in the direction that there is more hedging in everyday discourse than in parliamentary language – defending is not a favoured tactic in political discourse, so often likened to war through the use of the corresponding metaphors, as has been heavily the case in our paper as well. A useful comparison would be that the analysis of strong epistemic

modality on the same corpus and using the same method resulted in 9.68 words per 1,000 words of the corpus, as opposed to 2.93 measured for weak epistemic modality, as can be seen in table 8:

WEAK EPISTEMIC MODALITY	Total	
	RF	NF
Weak epistemic adverbs and their equivalents	29	0.48
Weak epistemic verbs and verb phrases	127	2.07
Weak epistemic adjectives	12	0.20
Weak epistemic nouns	11	0.18
Total	**179**	**2.93**

Table 8

Persuasion and sounding convincing are three times as often favoured in political language as hedging and mitigation – results which are unsurprising having in mind the aims of political discourse – projecting firm and confident authority and strong personality so as to persuade the electorate to allow the speaker to be their leader.

What merits additonal comment is the fact that weak epistemic modality is mostly expressed through verbs and adverbs in the UK parliament, which is probably the case with the English language in general, whereas nouns and adjectives seem to play a peripheral role.

This methodology of analysing weak epistemic modality, despite all its limitations, could be reproduced to other corpora taken from different genres, thus giving us useful and interpretable results of how present hedging is across various discourses.

References

Bayley, Paul, Cinzia Bevitori, and Elisabetta Zoni. "Threat and fear in parliamentary debates in Britain, Germany and Italy." *Cross Cultural Perspectives on Parliamentary Discourse*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins 2004. 185-236.

Bevitori, Cinzia. "Negotiating conflict: Interruptions in British and Italian parliamentary debates." *Cross-cultural perspectives on parliamentary discourse*, 2004. 87-109.

Bijeikiené Vilma and Utka Andrious. "Gender-related Linguistic Stereotypes in Lithuanian Parliamentary Discourse". *Humanities in New Europe* (2), 2007: 423–430.

Brewer, Nicola M. *Modality and facivity: One perspective on the meaning of the English modal auxiliaries*. Diss. University of Leeds, 1987.

Carbó, Teresa. "Parliamentary discourse when things go wrong." *Cross-cultural perspectives on parliamentary discourse*, 2004: 301-337.

Cornillie, Bert. "Evidentiality and epistemic modality: On the close relationship between two different categories." *Functions of language* 16.1 (2009): 44-62.

David, M., S. Govindasamy, and M. Nambiar. "Levels of Politeness in Malaysian Parliamentary Discourse." *Language in India* 9 (2009): 1-31.

De Haan, Ferdinand. "The relation between modality and evidentiality." *Linguistische Berichte* 9 (2001): 201-16.

De Haan, Ferdinand. "Typological approaches to modality." *The expression of modality* (2006): 27-69.

Elspass Stephan "Phraseological Units in Parliamentary Discourse". In *Politics as Text and Talk: Analytic Approaches to Political Discourse*, 2002: 81-110.

Ensink Titus. "The Footing of a Royal Address: An Analysis of Represantitiveness in Political Speech, Exemplified in Queen Beatrix's Address to the Knesset on March 28, 1995". In *Analysing Political Speech*, 1997. 5-32.

Frumuselu Mihai Daniel and Ilie Cornelia. "Pseudo-Parliamentary Discourse in a Communist Dictatorship: Dissenter Pârvulescu vs. Dictator Ceauşescu". In *Journal of Pragmatics* 42 (2010): 924-942.

Gelabert-Desnoyer, Jaime J. "Not so impersonal: Intentionality in the Use of Pronoun Uno in contemporary Spanisch political discourse." Pragmatics 18.3 (2010): 407-427.

Hyland, Ken. *Hedging in Scientific Research Articles*. 1998.

Ilie, Cornelia. "Cliché-based metadiscursive argumentation in the Houses of Parliament." *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* 10.1 (2000): 65-84.

Ilie, Cornelia. "Discourse and metadiscourse in parliamentary debates." *Journal of Language and Politics* 2.1 (2003): 71-92.

Ilie, Cornelia. "Insulting as (un) parliamentary practice in the British and Swedish parliaments." *Cross-cultural perspectives on parliamentary discourse* (2004): 45-86.

Ilie Cornelia. "Politeness in Sweden: Parliamentary forms of address". In *Politeness in Europe*, 2005. 174-188.

Sauer Christoph. "Echoes from Abroad – Speeches for Domestic Audience: Queen Beatrix's Address to the Israeli Parliament". In *Analysing Political Speech*, 1997: 33-67.

Simon-Vandenbergen, Anne-Marie. "Modal (un) certainty in political discourse: A functional account." *Language Sciences* 19.4 (1997): 341-356.

Trbojević-Milošević, Ivana. *Modalnost, sud, iskaz: epistemička modalnost u engleskom i srpskom jeziku*, 2004.

Varttala, Teppo. "Remarks on the communicative functions of hedging in popular scientific and specialist research articles on medicine." *English for Specific Purposes* 18.2 (1999): 177-200.

Van Der Valk, Ineke. "Right-wing parliamentary discourse on immigration in France." *Discourse & Society* 14.3 (2003): 309-348.

van Dijk Teun. "On the Analysis of Parliamentary Debates on Immigration". In *The semiotics of racism. Approaches to critical discourse analysis*, 2000: 85-103.