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REVIEWS

Františka Schormová

Carrying the Conversation Forward (Or perhaps Keep the Conversation Going)

"It is so strange to see actual people in front of me – I haven't delivered a paper in front of a live audience for two years," was a frequent introduction to papers delivered at the Anglophone Conference at our department in March 2022. This issue of *Hradec Králové Journal of Anglophone Studies* draws partly at papers delivered at the conference; but it also draws on the energy and almost palpable joy of having a chance on exchanging ideas, concepts, and advice, testing theories and introducing research projects among fellow scholars and the wider academic community face to face again.

The current issue starts with a section on Linguistics and Methodology. The paper written in cooperation of Božena Horváthová and Anja Hrćan focuses on the use of metaphors in Business English and examines their function in texts presented in online business newspapers and magazines. Zuzana Hrdličková's paper titled "Function and Usage of Idioms in Written Discourse Focused on Business" looks at idioms in UK and US-based business magazines and examines the application of the findings in ESP classrooms. Vladimíra Ježdíková compares the way cultural backgrounds are presented in two English language textbooks. In her article, she looks at the frequency of text dedicated to socio-cultural backgrounds, what territories these texts describe in terms of World Englishes, and also the overall didactic potential of these discourses. Staying within the realms of didactics, Oleksandr Kapranov shows how EFL students react to a course on advanced grammar delivered online: through the use of questionnaires, Kapranov looks not only at the perception of these courses but also at the challenges the student associate with them. Finally, in his article, Roman Ševčík evaluates the state of the plurilingual approach to teaching languages in Slovak primary and secondary schools, advocates for the use of its approach, and makes suggestions for teaching German through English.

The second section, dedicated to Literary and Cultural Studies, begins with Šárka Bubíková's examination of the urban settings in American crime fiction. She looks at their representations in the works of contemporary fiction writers such as Sara Paretsky, Linda Barnes, Laura Lippman, S.J. Rozan, and Les Roberts. In the following article, Eva Čoupková shows in her text on the English melodrama that muteness, too, can become language. In her inquiry into legal restriction and contemporary conditions, Čupková shows that the manifestations of muteness on stage shaped not only the English theatre of the nineteen century, but also the movie production of the early 20th century. The following article by David Livingstone sheds light on two novels from the Hogarth Shakespeare Project. Through his discussion of *Vinegar Girl* by Anne Tyler based on Margaret Atwood's *Hag-Seed*, he questions the pre-existing expectations and challenges the specific way Shakespeare adaptations were framed and executed in the framework of the project.

In his article titled "Remediation, Empathy, Creative Exegesis: The Potential of Hypermedia for Generation of New Ways of Interpretation in Art and Life," Peter Luba looks at *Remediation* (1999), a shared work of Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin, and applies their arguments on different media and their interrelations to see the effect they have on how we engage with works of art. Batuhan Lüleci employs post-colonial theories to look at the theatre and journalistic work of James Sanua (or Ya'qub Rafa'il Sannu'), the "Egyptian Moliere" and the role this cultural figure played for Egyptian national consciousness, focusing on the ways Sanua used self-orientalization to subvert the hegemonic discourses of his time.

With the travel restrictions of the last two and half years, Rome was one of the places that seemed out of reach: Helena Polehlová shows this was not true for medieval travellers to the city. She looks at Anglo-Saxon travellers, their journeys, and the ways these journeys influenced the relationship between Britain and the Papal See. Michala Rusňáková's article titled "Be a man, be a warrior: enforcement of masculinity by the army in Owen Sheers' *Pink Mist* and *The Two Worlds of Charlie F.* and Gregory Burke's *Black Watch*" takes us to the UK today. Her text looks at the characters of soldiers in contemporary British war theatre plays and explores how these represent (and undermine) the army's take on masculinity.

In her article "An Heir to Disraeli or Cameron? A Critical Look at Boris Johnson's Rhetoric of One Nation Conservatism", Alice Tihelková takes a closer look at the former Prime Minister's brand of Conservativism and compares the One Nation rhetoric with Johnson's political decisions. While the puzzling nature of the current British political scene, together with the necessity to orient oneself in the post-pandemic era, might lead to feelings of disconnection, Agata Walek demonstrates that the physicality of the word can help to overcome this sentiment. In her analysis of Mark Z. Danielewski's novel *Only Revolutions* (2006), she goes against the notion of the postmodern view on the subject.

The final text of this issue is the review of the new translation of *Hamlet* by Filip Krajník in which Jan Suk stresses the importance of an updated version opened to students, scholars, and theatre practitioners. Translation projects such as this one are part of an ongoing intellectual exchange to which also this issue of *Hradec Králové Journal of Anglophone Studies* hopes to contribute. The year since the last issue was published in December 2021 brought chaos, war, and further restriction of human rights, challenges which we also face as scholars and educators, challenges we face through and with our intellectual work. This is made possible by the often invisible labour of reviewers and proofreaders and journal associates whom we would like to thank here. Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to all the contributors for their articles that carry this conversation forward on the pages of this journal.

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LINGUISTICS AND METHODOLOGY

Božena Horváthová, Anja Hrćan

Functions of Metaphors in English for Specific Purposes

Abstract: *This paper focuses on metaphors in English for Specific Purposes, precisely Business English, as well as on their identification in various online business newspapers and magazines. The first part of the paper is dedicated to the theory of metaphors, and looks at their classification from several points of view as well as their functions. Further on, their use within Business English as a part of English for Specific Purposes is explained. This paper presents a qualitative approach to investigating the functions of metaphors. The practical part of the paper is aimed at the identification and analysis of metaphors in business texts looking at their functions within example sentences. As for the main functions of metaphors, the cognitive function was identified as the most frequent one, followed by the function of giving new meaning to words, and the affective function. Metaphors with overlapping functions were also detected.*

Introduction

Figurative language should form imagination, give words more power, and have an emotional as well as psychological impact on readers. The word "figurative" comes from the Old French *figuratif* meaning "metaphorical". According to Abrams and Harpham (2011), figurative language is noticeably different from the general meaning. Obviously, figurative language is not only used to embellish text, but it has a much deeper importance. In the last number of decades, a large amount of research has been carried out on figurative language which helps us to better understand the relationship between language and thought.

The most common representative of figurative language are metaphors. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) provide an interesting concept of metaphors. They conveyed the main idea of conceptual metaphors and the importance of their use and they also showed the significance of conceptual metaphors for mental processes as they are considered to be important for thought evolution.

The Definition and Functions of Metaphors

According to Gajdáčová Veselá (2019, 67), a metaphor can be defined as a *"transfer of the name of one object to another"*. In other words, metaphors are understood as words that describe an object, place, or a person by referring to something that has similar characteristics. Metaphors are not literally applicable to an object. Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 5) define metaphors as *"understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another".*

A rather complex definition of metaphors is given in the Oxford Learner's Dictionary online (n.d.) in which a metaphor is defined as *"a word or phrase used to describe somebody/something else, in a way that is different from its normal use, in order to show that the two things have the same qualities and to make the description more powerful".*

To understand a metaphor and to be able to recognize it in a spoken or written form, certain knowledge about the language and about the field in which metaphors are used is needed. It is important to know that metaphors do not simply have an ornamental function and are not there just to embellish text. However, the main goal of metaphors is to enrich language, make it more imaginative and provide context as well as to help visualise situations that occur in business.

Research conducted down through the years has discovered a wider and deeper range of the metaphor functions (Stefanowitsch 2005, Yin 2013, Jabat 2017, Macagno & Rossi 2021). Cognitive function, which is prevalent today, was introduced with the help of cognitive metaphor theory by Lakoff and Johnson. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) stated that with the help of metaphors, abstract ideas and feelings can be comprehended which are more familiar to us or that are directly unavailable to us. Fetterman et al. (2011) provided an example of the colour "red" that is very often associated with the feeling of anger, or with negative emotions, which leads to the conclusion that metaphor can also have an affective function. It is well known that colours are associated with evoking emotions. Another function of metaphors worth mentioning is their ability to provide new meanings to words that are distinct from their general meaning. It is necessary to mention that very often one metaphor can have multiple functions which may overlap.

The Classification of Metaphors

Metaphors can be classified into several different groups and types based on different approaches, e.g., according to the type of transfer, their similarity, or their structure (one-word metaphors, multi-word metaphors, compounds, etc.). Often different authors classify metaphors differently.

Gajdáčová Veselá (2019, 67-68) categorised metaphors according to the type of transfer and according to different types of similarity:

1. According to their type of transfer:
   - Concretive metaphor: the light of learning, a vicious circle;
   - Humanizing metaphor: a friendly city, a charming river;
   - Animistic metaphor: killing half an hour, eye of tornado.

2. Based on different types of similarity:
   - Similarity of behaviour: a fox;
   - Similarity of shape: a head of cabbage;
   - Similarity of function: the key to the mystery;
   - Similarity of position: the foot of a mountain.

Conceptual Metaphors

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) expressed the main idea of conceptual metaphors and the importance of their usage. According to them, a conceptual metaphor is a metaphor that is based on the similarity between the concept and experience. Conceptual metaphors are part of common language. They are highly unconscious and are part of automatic thought process. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue that metaphors are present in everyday life, literally in everything including our thoughts, concepts and actions. Some examples of conceptual metaphors are: an argument is war, ideas are food etc. Kövecses (2002) classified conceptual metaphors into three groups:

a. Structural metaphors
b. Ontological metaphors
c. Orientational metaphors

Structural Metaphors

Kövecses (2002, 33) defined structural metaphor as the metaphor in which "*the source domain provides a relatively rich knowledge structure for the target language. The cognitive function of these metaphors is to enable speakers to understand target A by means of the structure of source B".*

Cognitive linguists Lakoff and Johnson (1980) defined structural metaphors as well. According to them, structural metaphors are connected with our experience, and they are important for creating new metaphors, since they allow us to use concepts that are very well formed and able to create another metaphor. In other words, structural metaphor is a type of a metaphor in which one thing is understood in terms of another.

Ontological Metaphors

The term ontological metaphor refers to metaphors in which a concrete object or an idea is transferred to an abstract object. We can also perceive personification as a form or a subtype of ontological metaphor. Kövecses (2002, 34) states that ontological metaphors *"provide much less cognitive structuring for target concepts than structural ones do. Their cognitive job seems to be to "merely" give an ontological status to general categories of abstract target concepts."*

According to Kövecses (2002) ontological metaphors are connected with how we perceive abstract ideas, objects, events.

Orientational Metaphors

Orientational metaphors, according to Kövecses (2002, 36), *"provide even less conceptual structure for target concepts than ontological ones".* Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 14) define orientational metaphor as *"one that does not structure one concept in terms of another but instead organizes a whole system of concepts with respect to one another".*

Based on this, concepts are connected with each other, or in other words they are related to each other in terms of space. They are dealing with some kind of orientation, more specifically spatial orientation, such as up-down, on-off, centre-periphery etc.

Metaphors in English for Specific Purposes

The English language as a universal means of communication across many professional disciplines acts as a central principle for the diffusion of English language into distinctive linguistic subgroups according to their specification. The formation of these specialised subgroups of English related to individual academic or professional subjects started due to the growing demand for the recognition of individual types of professional vocabulary in English. Commerce, business, and technology followed by medicine and law are, according to Nagy (2014), amongst the first subtypes acknowledged as parts of academic and specialised English, also referred to as English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Many authors define ESP differently; however, the definitions share common features. Hutchinson and Waters (1987, cited in Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998, 2-3) state that *"ESP does not involve a particular kind of language, teaching material or methodology. ESP is centred on the language (grammar, lexis, and register), skills, discourse and genres appropriate to these activities"*, whereas according to the Collins English Dictionary (2007) ESP specifies a particular genre of teaching of the English language to students whose native language is not English but who need it for a specialised job, activity, or purpose.

According to Dudley-Evans and St John (1998), ESP can be classified into two main groups: English for Academic Purposes and English for Occupational Purposes. The main difference between these two groups is that English for Occupational Purposes applies to English that is not meant to be used academically, but rather by people who are already working in a particular field and they need appropriate vocabulary and skills for a certain job. Taking this classification into consideration, Business English also called English for Business Purposes (EBP) belongs to the second group. Business English is used mainly in business contexts such as trading, banking, and finance.

The use of metaphors in fields such as commerce or business has become common over the past number of decades and it is constantly evolving. Metaphors are preferably used in business contexts because they help to present ideas logically and make them more comprehensible. They are original and capture the attention of listeners, which can be useful during meetings, or other business-related contexts. Their importance in Business English has been supported by economic and linguistic research which confirmed that metaphors are an important device for communicating business-related ideas and business phenomena to the public (Lan & MacGregor 2009, Silaški 2011, Łuczak 2014, Herteg 2016, 2017).

RESEARCH

The Research Aim and Research Sample

The main aim of this research is to analyse the metaphors collected in specific business texts from the perspective of their function according to the Kövecses' (2002) classification.

The research sample comprises online webpages, financial networks, newspapers and magazines issued daily or weekly which cover a wide range of topics related to international business, financial news, entrepreneurship, business management, market and investing (N=13). The corpus contains two hundred and thirty-six metaphors (N=236). For our research we conducted a search in the following online sources (for date of publication see References): CNBC (N=139), Entrepreneur (N=28), Forbes (N=16), The Guardian (N=9), The Financial Times (N=7), Black Enterprise (N=7), BBC News (N=5), CEOWORLD Magazine (N=4), Wall Street Journal (N=4), The Economist (N=2), Harvard Business Review (N=2), Investopedia (N=2), and The Times (N=1). Most of the metaphors were found in the CNBC articles.

Methodology

This section provides the theoretical and methodological background for the present study. For the purposes of the paper, a qualitative approach was implemented and content analysis was applied as a research method. Content analysis is defined as a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding (Krippendoreff 1980). The focal point of the research was to determine what types of functions were the most dominant in the analysed samples. Selected metaphors were categorised based on their functions introduced in the theoretical section of the paper. To analyse the data, the research used six steps from Creswell (2014), as follows: organizing and preparing data, reading through the data, categorising the data, describing and classifying, and interpreting and representing.

The analytical part was divided into several stages. In the first stage, examples of metaphors used in business texts were collected from different online sources. Furthermore, their functions were identified and a sentence containing a particular metaphor as an example was provided. The article explains why certain types of metaphors are preferably used in Business English. The results are presented in the tables below, containing the identified function and the context for better understanding. They were selected to represent all identified functions and to show that some metaphors can have more functions that overlap.

Research Results

The main functions which were identified in the texts are: cognitive function (N=164), affective function (N=12), and the function of giving the words new (figurative) meaning (N=16). Since the criteria for

particular functions are interconnected, some examples were put into more than one category. The cases of overlapping functions were also considered in the analysis (N=44) and are divided into further subcategories.

Table 1 Overview of analysed metaphors

Category		Number of metaphors
Cognitive function		164
Giving new/figurative meaning to words		16
Affective function		12
Overlapping of functions		44
Subcategory	Cognitive function - affective function	24
	Cognitive function - giving new meaning to words	14
	Giving new meaning to words - affective function	6
Total		**236**

An in-depth examination of all 236 collected metaphors goes beyond the scope of this paper, therefore examples of metaphors from each category were chosen for further in-depth analysis. Since the context is crucial when discussing metaphors at any level, particular metaphors were highlighted within their original sentences. The findings are outlined in Table 2.

Table 2 Example metaphors and their functions

Category	Examples in context
Cognitive function	"*Covid vaccine success **is a shot in the arm** for FTSE." (The Times)*
	*"**The company is** an eight-hundred-pound **gorilla** in retail and wholesale markets." (Entrepreneur)*
	*"I **became a** 'salon **guinea pig**' to save $25." (CNBC)*
	*"Taiwan **is** no longer **"a sleeping tiger"**, says Steven Pan of Silks Hotel Group, who discusses how its economy has benefited over the past year from re-elect President Tsai Ing-wen's pro-growth policy and the decoupling of the U.S.-China trade war." (CNBC)*
	*"Iran and the U.N.'s nuclear **watchdog** reached a compromise late Sunday to avert the impact of a deadline set by Tehran that could have seen nuclear inspectors expelled from the country." (CNBC)*
	*"Warren Buffett's **right-hand man** offers 3 tips for investors to boost long-term returns." (CNBC)*
Giving new/figurative meaning to words	*"We cannot have the **fat cats** make money at the expense of the workers." (CNBC)*
	*Between rising interest rates and inflation concerns, Wall Street is watching the bond market closely and **checking the pulse of the U.S. economy.** (CNBC)*

	An educator also might create a 30-, 60- or 90-day development plan ***to keep sharpening workers' skills****, done through a learning management system. (Entrepreneur)*
Affective function	*"Dr. Anthony Fauci, the country's top infectious disease official, has said that* ***the variants were the "big wild card."*** *(Forbes)*
	„A lot of people turn to technology to change the game and become ***the silver bullet****" (Forbes)*
	Still, it ***is making markets nervous*** *and yields have been rising all around the world, as commodities prices surge. (CNBC)*

The first category to be considered embodies selected examples of metaphors with a cognitive function. As for the metaphor *"success is a shot in the arm",* it is obvious that success cannot be a shot. Success is something that people view as a positive "event" in their lives. This metaphor is positive in meaning despite the fact that it contains a word that is connected with war, violence and fighting. It means that something has an unexpected positive result or impact on something. In this case, the success of Covid vaccines has a sudden positive effect on the process of overcoming the pandemic. Considering the metaphor *"to be a gorilla"*, we can agree that it is frequently used in business environments. This metaphor describes powerful, strong and large companies such as Walmart, Amazon, Microsoft, etc. that have a big impact on the business world, and because of these characteristics they are compared to a gorilla, a huge mammal. In business, there are different types of companies, and some of them produce products. Obviously, before releasing a product on the market, numerous tests and experiments must take place. This is when the metaphor *"to be a guinea pig"* is used. Figuratively speaking, this metaphor is used to refer to someone who agreed to be a subject for testing or experiments, which means that the new product will be tested on them first. Another interesting metaphor we chose for the analysis is *"to be a sleeping tiger".* Tigers are animals that radiate with dominance and strengths and they are known for their impressive stalking abilities when hunting. This leads us to the metaphor *"to be a sleeping tiger"*. The meaning of the metaphor illustrates, for example, a country that lies in the shadows, having a great power without realizing it, or it can refer to a country that has just recently developed power and it still needs to be awakened. Another metaphor we chose to analyse is *"to be a watchdog".* Literally speaking a watchdog is a dog that guards something, but figuratively speaking the meaning is slightly different. To be a *"watchdog"* in business is a serious task. Usually, it detects a person or an organization whose job is to make sure that companies are acting according to given standards and are avoiding actions that are illegal or reckless. The word hand is often considered as a "tool" used to perform certain actions and this notion leads to the metaphor *"to be the right-hand man"* which is based on the similarity of function. This metaphor can be misinterpreted since some people can understand it as a person who uses their right hand for writing and other activities. When referring to someone as *"the right-hand man"* this generally refers to a critically important person who assists someone doing a job.

The second most frequent category denotes the function aimed at giving new meaning to words. The metaphor *"to be a fat cat"* is a common metaphor used in business to describe investors or owners of the company that are extremely wealthy and powerful. We can say that in this case, the word *fat* symbolises a huge amount of money that is owned by someone. The metaphor *"to check the pulse of the economy"* is not possible in a literal sense. Figuratively speaking, checking the pulse of the economy is a complex process of collecting all sorts of data to see how the economy is performing at that exact moment, and potentially to see how the economy will perform in the future based on the

collected information and current situation. In the business world, there are always ways to engage in continued professional development. The metaphor *"to keep sharpening workers' skills"* creatively refers to the improvement and development of workers' skills making them more effective.

The third category to be examined is represented by examples of metaphors with affective function. The metaphor *"to be the big wild card"* is usually used to refer to someone or something that we think might cause unpredictability and doubt because we do not know how they will act. In business, a big wild card can represent a disagreement or an argument between the company and its workers. The meaning of the metaphor *"to be a silver bullet"* represents an easy solution to a problem or a difficult situation and it can be found in various business texts. The meaning of this metaphor dates back to ancient Greece, where people believed silver and silver weapons possess magical powers. One more metaphor that fulfils an affective function is the metaphor *"to make markets nervous"*. It represents a situation that can occur in markets worldwide. Markets cannot be nervous, but what is meant is that often a market is a place of uncertainty which can make investors and traders nervous.

Metaphors have been acknowledged to have several different uses because they pursue diverse purposes, therefore, the last category represents examples of metaphors in which the functions overlap. We classified three subcategories within the category of overlapping functions, namely the combinations: cognitive function - affective function; cognitive function - giving new meaning to words; and giving new meaning to words - affective function. The findings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Metaphors with overlapping functions

Category	Examples in context
Cognitive function - affective function	*"FedEx and Pfizer **are blue chips** that spurred all sorts of high-flying stocks to become even more expensive, and with good reason," the "Mad Money" host said." (CNBC)*
	*"$100 billion market cap **is the blue-sky scenario** for Moderna, analyst says." (CNBC)*
	*"**I'm the black sheep** of the family" she acknowledges. "From an early age my family realized they had to let me do my own thing". (Forbes)*
	*"Air freight companies typically use that extra capacity at **the belly of a passenger plane**." (CNBC)*
Cognitive function - giving new meaning to words	*"I think **the heart of the matter** is the two levers the Fed has to pull is the taper schedule, or the QE schedule and the hike cycle," he said. (CNBC)*
	*"We have seen a genuine rotation from growth to value," said Altaf Kassam, **head of investment strategy** for State Street Global Advisors in Europe." (Wall Street Journal)*
Giving new meaning to words - affective function	*"These habits are like snowflakes — they build up, and then you have **an avalanche of success.**" (CNBC)*

Some colours represent positive feelings, while others, such as grey or black tend to describe unexciting situations and events. Most colour metaphors have both the affective and cognitive functions which makes them even more interesting. For the further analysis, we chose the metaphor *"to be a blue-chip"*. The colour blue gives us the feeling of brightness, but it also represents calmness, stability and wisdom.

"To be a blue-chip" means to be a wealthy, financially stable and strong company. Good examples are companies such as Coca-Cola or Disney. It is safer to invest in these types of companies than to invest in new start-ups. When we wish for a particular situation to *"be a blue-sky scenario"*, especially in business, we wish and expect the best possible result. For example, on the stock market the blue-sky scenario is when prices rise high, while the opposite situation, called the *"worst-case scenario"*, would be the fall of prices incredibly low. The metaphor *"to be the black sheep"*, describes a member of a family, or an organisation considered as unfit in group. These people may have different opinions or beliefs, goals than the rest of the family or an organisation. Another metaphor we chose to analyse is *"the belly of a passenger plane"*. The belly here refers to a space in an airplane, commonly known as a cargo hold, where the entire luggage and other things are placed and kept during a flight. It is clear as to why and how this metaphor was created and the word *belly was* chosen.

The combination of the cognitive function and the function of giving new meaning to words is represented by this example *"to be head of something"*. The metaphor means to be a leader, someone who guides the entire organization or a group of people. It is interesting to compare this meaning with the actual part of our body, the head. As already mentioned, the metaphorical meaning of the word *head* is leader, but when thinking about the actual head, we came to a conclusion that for humans the head is the leader of their actions and behaviours. For further analysis, we chose the metaphor *"the heart of the matter"*. The heart is considered to be the main and central organ in our body without which humans and other living beings cannot survive. The metaphor *"the heart of the matter"* means to be the central or most important factor, element of a problem or a certain situation.

The last selected metaphor belongs to the subcategory which combines the function giving new meaning to words and the affective function – *"avalanche of success"*. An avalanche is a large mass of snow moving downward from a mountain or a hill. The word *avalanche* often refers to something that has happened all of a sudden and in a great amount, which correlates with the original meaning of the word. This metaphor explains a situation in which someone or something starts to experience a great success in business.

Conclusion

The problem of determining the functions of metaphors in English for Specific Purposes, specifically, in Business English, was addressed in this paper. As mentioned before, some metaphors overlap across some categories of functions. Consequently, some metaphors were assigned to more than one category of function, where appropriate. Considering different functions of the analysed metaphors, the following outcomes can be presented.

The analysis has yielded clear evidence for the cognitive function. The highest number of instances in the analysed sources belongs to the category of metaphors that have a cognitive function, which is considered to be the primary function of metaphors. This function uses a familiar idea or a concept to avoid the need for expanded and complicated language to convey the concept more clearly.

The second most extensive group is represented by metaphors with the function of giving new/ figurative meaning to words. They help to explain complex ideas and the concepts that are not literal by making them more imaginative and comprehensible, such as *"the bare-bone budget"* or *"to be armed with financial knowledge"*. Furthermore, this function often paints a picture of how we perceive situations, events, or things as Lakoff and Johnson (1980) explained, metaphors are based on the similarity between the concept and experience, in other words, they are related to our conceptual system.

The third category concerns the emotive dimension of metaphors and is represented by metaphors that have an affective function. These metaphors help arouse different emotions and feelings. They help to express our experiences, beliefs, as well as visualise particular situations that may occur in business such as *"to make markets nervous"*. Colour metaphors are the perfect example of affective function since every colour evokes different emotions and reactions that are connected with the idea of how we perceive things.

The analysis revealed that functions tend to overlap frequently, which means that a metaphor can have more than one function. The interrelation between the different functions of metaphors is evident in the category of overlapping functions. Looking at the results from a broader perspective, we can state that they happen to be quite predictable and correspond to the theoretical part of the paper.

For future research, we propose addressing the pragmatic and communicative functions of metaphors in Business English as well as identifying purposes that characterize the use of metaphors in discourse such as explaining, summarizing, supporting a viewpoint, supporting a conclusion, illustrating, justifying and clarifying, persuading, or making a proposal.

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Zuzana Hrdličková

Function and Usage of Idioms in Written Discourse Focused on Business

Abstract: *Idioms form a natural part of native English speakers' speech. However, they present the learner of English with a tall order – having to master distinctive expressions whose meanings cannot be deduced from the meaning of their individual words. It is an extremely important, yet difficult, area of study for university students. The paper aims to discuss the function and usage of idioms gathered from articles published in British and American magazines or newspapers such as MoneyWeek, Adweek, Newsweek, Elite Business, Forbes and others, read by 20 first-year university students in a course in business English within the KEGA Project. The articles are focused on different areas of business – accounting, commerce, e-commerce, economics, finance, human resources, insurance, information technology, law, manufacturing, marketing, production, property, stock exchange, trade and transport. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses of articles for idioms are applied in the study. Research results prove that learners of English in the ESP classroom can enrich general English idiomatic vocabulary with idiomatic expressions in two specific areas, professional and academic, and thus increase confidence in communication. In addition, the paper intends to help the learner of English in his or her endeavour to succeed in business or in an internationalised academic environment.*

Introduction

Globalisation in the 21st century involves the considerable importance of English as a lingua franca, which results in the growing number of people around the globe getting into contact with it. Since English is the language of science and international business, the need to learn it becomes a necessity. However, research shows that graduates of the University of Economics in Bratislava are required by their employers to improve written and spoken communication, mainly business correspondence, conversation and presentation skills (Spišiaková and Kittová 2020). In "Business English for Advanced Students" courses, students develop reading, writing, listening and speaking skills both in the classroom and at home. Using information and communication technologies, the Internet and the Moodle platform in the teaching and learning process, they are involved in doing several activities.

There is no doubt that vocabulary difficulty reduces reading comprehension. Vocabulary load and lexical complexity, mostly idiomatic expressions, are major predictors of text difficulty. Therefore, learning and acquiring them is very important. The following scholars and many others investigate *collocations* (Hoey 2015, Nattinger and DeCarrico 1992; Sonomura 1996), *phrasal verbs* (Kačmárová 2011, Böhmerová and Trebatická 1984), *idioms*, *metaphors*, *hyperboles*, *similes*, *proverbs*, *situation-bound utterances*, *clichés* (Čermák 2007, Fernando 1996, Kavka 2003, Kecskes 2013, Kvetko 2006, Mel'čuk 2012, Mlacek 2001, Moon 1998, Sonomura 1996, Strässler 1982). From recent research, the Slovak scholars need to be mentioned: Bilá, Kačmárová, Kášová, Tomášiková, Vojtek, and Koželová (2015) do research on *multiword expressions* in the Germanic and Romance languages. Spišiaková (2017) and Adamcová (2020) investigate *idiomatic expressions* in professional texts in Spanish, German and English. Rusiňáková (2018) and Maierová (2018) deal with English *idioms* in economics, diplomacy, international trade, marketing and advertising. They state that students face difficulties when using idiomatic expressions properly as well as in translating texts.

The paper addresses the issue of idiomaticity as one of the basic but challenging elements of English that must be acquired by non-native speakers because idiomatic language tends to occur in business

and academic English (Lea, Bull, Webb, and Duncan 2014, McCarthy and O'Dell 2016, Parkinson and Noble 2005). The main aim of the study is to find out what general English idioms were identified by 20 (out of 395) students participating in the KEGA Project "Idioms in Business Communication" during one semester. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses of articles for idioms will be carried out. All example sentences showing idioms in the theoretical part were found in *Adweek*, *MoneyWeek*, *Newsweek*, *Elite Business*, *The Guardian*, *Forbes*, *The Independent* and *The New York Times* by the students.

Business English idioms are commonly used in the corporate world. They are used with reference to the domains of sport, war, gambling and others, e.g. *move the goalposts*, *up in arms*, *come up trumps*. However, there are also idioms that are used in both business and academic English (*BusE*, *AcadE*), e.g. *in place*, *in the long/medium/short term/run*, *in effect*, etc. First-year university students need to distinguish at least between two styles, academic and journalistic. In business English courses, they also start to work with academic literature and later in written examinations they are asked to produce quality written discourse. When dealing with business vocabulary attention is also paid to academic English vocabulary. For instance, quantifying expressions are important as it is often necessary to comment on figures and trends, e.g. *a great deal of*, *in excess of*. Certain chunks of language occur very frequently in spoken and written context, e.g. chunks expressing number, quantity, degree or chunks for generalising and specifying, e.g. *with respect to*, *in addition to*, *for the most part* etc.

Research will try to answer a *research question*: "To what extent do idioms identified in general English also occur in business and academic English?"

Function of idioms

If the learner of English concentrates on idioms from the point of view of what speakers do with them in discourse – what their role and function is in it – he or she can find out that idioms play different roles. They are used to name objects and actions or describe situations. They may express certain generalisations, truth and advice, evaluate, emphasise, organise the discourse; they may focus on individuals or the whole community etc.

Since the subject matter of idioms is human life, human relations, attitudes, feelings, humour as well as determination, unwillingness, hostility, rivalry etc., they perform an important social function in many situations. They strengthen people's arguments and provide stylistic variety. In this connection, various categorisations of idioms are used (Čermák 2007, Fernando 1996, Kvetko 2006, Moon 1998).

Idioms from the point of view of the function

Conventionally, from the *point of view of the function of idioms* the following basic groups are distinguished:

Idioms with a *nominative function* express concepts and name objects, states, processes, actions, qualities etc. They have the structure of a phrase, e.g.:

(1) High public debt and a struggling economy make Italy's the **Achilles' heel** of the Eurozone. (Annunziata)

(2) One of five small employers has a member of staff from Europe **on their books**. (Cherry)

Idioms with a *communicative function* describe situations and express independent statements. They have the structure of a sentence (clause – full-sentence idioms), e.g.:

(3) Who will capitalize on this trend and who will be left in the AI dust? **Only time will tell**, but early signs indicate that there is a changing of the guards in store, with AI being the key catalyst for change in the IT vendor landscape. (Sujai)

(4) Having surveyed, 1,200 UK workers, CV-Library found that 59.4% of people try to exercise during the working week. However, this may be **easier said than done**, as 24% of them fail to do any training at all and 31.6% only work up a good sweat one or twice a week at the most. (Johansson)

Idioms *with* both *nominative* and *communicative functions* are idioms with a mixed, limited variable structure, e.g. *break the ice – the ice is broken*, *close the door on – the door is closed*, *lead sb by the nose – sb is led by the nose* etc.

(5) Although it **opens the door for** some consumers to take advantage of policy, it's one of the ways that Amazon in particular uses to gain the trust and repeat business of shoppers. (Masters)

Idioms *without* any distinctive *nominative* or *communicative function* – usually modal and interjectional idioms or idioms that have a cohesive function are included here, e.g.:

(6) So we need analyses of the potential impact of technology that are less deterministic. **As luck would have it**, one such study has recently emerged from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (Naughton)

(7) In formulating such policies – whether through legislation, regulatory rule-setting, international agreements, or measures addressing related issues such as tax and trade – the goal should be to limit the downsides of technology without stifling innovation. **To that end**, five interrelated issues should be kept in mind. (Boskin)

In relation to words, some idioms with a nominative function have single-word equivalents, e.g. *ad hoc – impromptu*; *fast and furious – frenzied*; *of the essence – vital* etc.

(8) Britain has **well and truly** embraced a cashless society because of its ease and convenience, said Mark Latham, director at Handepay, a provider of card machines. (Lyons, Jones, and Collinson)

(9) The future of employment will, **of course**, be influenced by technology. (Naughton)

They may also correspond to non-idiomatic phrases (syntagmas, collocations, e.g. *as red as turkey cock – very angry*; *a big fish – an important person*; *cross sb's path – meet by chance*) or they may be correlated with approximate (free) description, e.g. *be a dab hand at sth – be an expert in sth (be skilful at/experienced in (doing) sth)* etc.

Nominative idioms correlate with word classes (parts of speech) and may carry word class (part of speech) labels. These are sometimes called *idiomatic* or *phraseological classes*. They may be divided into: noun, verbal, adjectival and adverbial idioms (Kvetko 2006) etc., e.g. *a king's ransom*, *make up one's mind*, *as sharp as a needle*, *like a bullet out of/from a gun* etc.

(10) When it comes to the **big-ticket** items – mortgages, student loans, 401(k) providers and the companies that control our credit data – we often don't get to pick whom we're doing business with or when we can exit our relationships with them. (Lieber)

Their function is not exactly identical with that of single words, since their meaning usually includes a higher degree of both expressiveness and evaluation (Kvetko 2006).

Idioms from the pragmatic point of view

From the *pragmatic point of view and discourse*, linguists such as Fernando (1996) and Kvetko (2006) distinguish these groups of idioms:

Ideational idioms ("the state and way of the world" idioms) – expressing actions, events, situations, people, things, attitudes, emotions etc., e.g.:

(11) As more machines take over more jobs, the future is being clouded by fears – what will humans do? Rather than accept human obsolescence as **a foregone conclusion**, we need to ask new questions: 'So what and now what?' (Sawhney)

(12) Macron said it was important to define the difference between "using aggregate data, and intruding into data." "We have to have **clear cut** regulations", he added. (Olson)

Interpersonal idioms – expressing greetings, agreement, rejections etc., e.g. *so long*, *you're telling me*, *not on your life*.

Relational idioms – ensuring cohesion etc., e.g.:

(13) **So long as** we keep viewing innovations as job destructors, the AI will remain a source of great fear. (Olson)

(14) **To date**, Chinese investment in Rason has been held back by international sanctions and China's own troubled relations with North Korea. (Babones)

Other linguists give more detailed categorization of idioms. Some idioms may have more than one function. Moon (1998), for instance, distinguishes the following groups of idioms:

Informational idioms – conveying information of different sort, e.g. *be in the black*, *a blind alley*, *funny business* etc.

Evaluative idioms – having an attitude to the situation, e.g. *be a piece of cake*, *a fine/pretty kettle of fish*, *do/work wonders* etc.

Situational idioms – expressing conventions, clauses and exclamations, relating to the extra linguistic context, e.g. *so long*, *talk of the devil*, *walls have ears* etc.

Modalizing idioms – expressing modality, truth values, advice and request, e.g.:

(15) Glassdoor is a reviews website on which employees rate their employers – Trip Advisor for jobs, **in effect**. (Stepek)

(16) Any insurance company that does not bear financial risks on behalf of the insured, is not, **for all intents and purposes**, providing insurance services. (Winegarden)

Organizational idioms – organising the text and signalling discourse structure, e.g.:

(17) "This isn't an example any CEO should be setting to their staff and industry peers, **let alone** a new generation of entrepreneurs who need to be setting exemplary business leadership," she said. (Saraogi)

(18) That was the consensus of 150 experts who weighed in on the discussion on Thursday, **in light of** the European Parliament's recent question of whether or not robots need special rights. (Dovey) (*AcadE*)

Considering the Czech scholars, Čermák (2007) distinguishes the following functions of idioms: *nominative*, *structural*, *pragmatic*, *aesthetic*, *economic*, *evaluative*, and *metalanguage*.

Usage of idioms

Vocabulary does not remain the same but changes all the time. When the learner of English compares idiomatic dictionaries, he or she can find out that new idioms occur and other become outdated. The extent of the occurrence of idioms is shown by their frequency. In comparison with words, the frequency of idioms is lower, because they are used only on special occasions (Fernando 1996, Kvetko 2006). Among the most frequent idioms are *minimal idioms*, e.g. *after all*, *by the way*, *of course* etc., which are generally used as discourse organisers. They are followed by idioms with a more complex structure.

Certain idioms are part and parcel of the "core" of language, e.g. *have/keep an open mind*, *hit the nail on the head*, *drive sb up the wall* etc. Other idioms, though still occurring in fiction or journalism, are used more by older rather than younger generation, who consider them old-fashioned, e.g. *before you can say Jack Robinson*, *the Old Bill, raise Cain* etc. On the other hand, the "newer" idioms are, e.g. *back to basics*, *a level playing field*, *move the goalposts* etc.

The frequent occurrence of certain idioms – their "fashionable" overuse in certain periods – often causes them to be considered as clichés, e.g. *an angry young man*, *leave no/(not) any stone unturned*, *plough a lone/lonely furrow* etc.

Stylistic restrictions

In relation to *formality* (situation, style), the majority of idioms are used in informal contexts or very informal situations (spoken expressions), i.e. they are often suitable only in conversations with friends and are preferred especially by younger generations. The usage of these expressions, including idioms with the F-word, is, in general, considered as vulgar (taboo idioms). A smaller number of idioms occur in formal contexts, such as "serious" or official writings. The degree of formality may differ also in individual variants of the same idioms, e.g. *beat one's breast* is more formal than *beat one's chest* (Moon 1998).

These *stylistic connotations* are most frequently used when considering idioms (Cowie, Mackin, and McCaig 1993, Kvetko 2006, Waite 2009, Walter 2006):

Informal (colloquial) *idioms* are normally used in context such as letters or conversations between friends, members of family or people one knows in relaxed situations, e.g.: *and all that jazz*, *a can of worms*, *sweet Fanny Adams* etc.

Very informal idioms (slang) are idioms which are used in a very informal or not very polite way, often between members of a particular social group, e.g. *get the hell out*, *pissed out of your head/mind/skull*, *sweet FA* etc.

(19) In other words, you can tell WTO to **get stuffed** and do what you like. (Stepek)

Formal idioms are normally used in a polite way, for example in writing – business documents, serious newspapers and books, news or in broadcasts, lecturers etc., e.g. *de trop*, *depart this life*, *your goods and chattels* etc.

(20) More holidaymakers **are falling prey to** scams. (Jackson-Kirby) (*BusE*)

Literary idioms are idioms which are mainly used in literature, e.g. *be (all) part of life's rich pageant/tapestry, curl your lip, the Grim Reaper* etc.

Old-fashioned idioms – (*archaic*) very old-fashioned language, that is not in ordinary use at all today, but sometimes it is used to give a deliberately old-fashioned effect, or it is found in works of the past that are still widely read; (*dated*) language no longer used by the majority of English speakers, but it is still encountered occasionally, especially among the older generation, e.g. *Stuff and nonsense!*, *devil-may-care*, *man and boy* etc.

Foreign idioms are, e.g. *faux pas*, *mea culpa*, *persona non grata* etc.

(21) As exemplified by disability insurance, the entire **raison d'être** of an insurer is to bear the financial risks on behalf of the insured. (Winegarden)

(22) "The first step is to decouple projects from organizational units and build **ad hoc** teams to tackle specific challenges," says Christopher Ross, research director at Gartner's digital marketing group. (Tynan)

Emotional restrictions

Many idioms are *emotionally coloured*, i.e. they express attitudes and degrees of emotions (expressive connotation, positive or negative connotations) and are labelled as:

Derogatory (impolite, disapproving) *idioms* are intended to express a low opinion or to insult somebody, e.g. *a flea pit*, *the rag-tag and bobtail (of sth)*, *a big bug* etc.

Offensive or *very offensive idioms* are likely to cause offence, especially racial offence, whether a person using it means to or not, e.g. *Go to hell!, shut your mouth*; (*vulgar slang*, *taboo*) very informal

language that is likely to cause offence, usually because it refers to sexual activity or bodily functions, or likely to offend people and not used in formal situations.

Humorous (jocular) *idioms* are used with the intention of making people laugh, sounding funny or playful, e.g. *strut your stuff*, *gnashing of teeth*, *Old Nick* etc.

(23) Researchers who carried out a study among 1,000 businesses found the majority prefer to employ **their nearest and dearest** than risk taking on unsuitable candidates. (Shields)

Ironic idioms are, e.g. *big deal(!)*, *not much*, *thank you (very much)* etc.

Euphemistic idioms are used instead of a more direct or rude idiom, e.g. *spend a penny*, *let sb go*, *in a family way* etc.

Idioms may also be restricted in relation to genre, i.e. some idioms are used (or preferred) only in one genre, e.g. in newspapers (journalism), fiction, drama or other literary writings, though their usage in different genres may overlap. The frequency in different genres varies (Kvetko 2006, Waite 2009, Walter 2006).

Geographical variation of idioms

Even though the majority of English idioms are common to all parts of the English-speaking world, there are also some that are limited to particular geographical regions or used by certain social groups. There are idioms or their variants typical, for instance, only for the United Kingdom, the United States or Australia. The learner of English can find completely different British, American or Australian idioms (Briticisms, Americanisms, Australianisms) or different geographical idiomatic variants. Geographical varieties are marked as follows: *British* – these idioms are only used in British English (*BrE*; e.g. *jam tomorrow*), *American* – these idioms are only used in American English (*AmE*; e.g. *a judgement call*), *Australian* – these idioms are only used in Australian English (*AustrE*; e.g. *be home and hosted*), *mainly British* – these idioms are mainly used in British English (e.g. *hum and haw*, *be home and dry*), and *mainly American* – these idioms are mainly used in American English (e.g. *iron out the kinks*, *be out for/after sb's scalp*) (Kvetko 2006, Walter 2006).

In general, when comparing British, American and Australian idioms, the learner of English will notice the following types:

Identical idioms, i.e. the majority of English idioms are common in all varieties (British, American, Australian), e.g. *red tape*, *a sinking ship*, *to my mind* etc.

(24) Video is already taking up **the lion's share** of all web content, so it pays to market to your customers through this medium. (St. Louis)

(25) Preparation is the key so **take the bull by its horns** and knock those hurdles down as they come. (Pledge)

Identical idioms may have additional meaning, additional variant or may have different frequency and/or stylistic value. There are examples when an idiom may have an additional meaning in one variety, e.g. *Indian summer* means in both varieties "warm and sunny weather in autumn". In British English, however, it is used to describe "a happy and successful period of time especially later in one's life or career." Some idioms may be used in both (all) varieties, but one variety has an additional variant or a synonymous idiom, e.g. *in the hot seat* (*BrE*, *AmE*, *AustrE*) – *on the hot seat* (*AmE*), *rub shoulders with sb* (*BrE*, *AmE*, *AustrE*) – *rub elbows with sb* (*AmE*, *AustrE*) etc.

Different idioms – idioms only used in American English, e.g. *a one-two punch*, *the hot ticket*, *sell sb a bill of goods*, etc.

(26) The things we took for granted in the past – easy access to exotic markets, a general consensus that globalisation and ever-growing levels of trade are good things, and that governments were largely **on the same page** when it came to free markets – are now up for discussion again. (Stepek)

(27) A well-executed crisis response can actually boost your brand image **over the long haul**, says Brandwatch CMO Will McInnes. (Tynan)

On the other hand, idioms such as *go under hammer*, *name and shame* etc. are only used in British English.

(28) Environmentalists say the EU can do more to keep the pressure on its international partners by **naming and shaming** those countries, both within and outside the EU, who are not taking climate change mitigation seriously. (Keating) (*BusE*)

(29) Since 2015 workplace-pension providers have been required to appoint independent governance committees (IGCs) to ensure savers get "**value for money**", says the Financial Times. (Jackson-Kirby) (*AcadE*)

Rarely the learner of English can also find *false friends* (intervariety homonyms, geographic-variety homonyms or paronyms), i.e. formally identical idioms with different meanings in the two varieties, e.g. *be on the up and up* ("improving, increasing, becoming more successful" in *BrE*, "not hiding, honest" in *AmE*).

The situation in Australian English is more complex, since this variety includes both British and American idioms, as well as it has its own typical idioms.

Methodology

Research aims to find out what general English idioms were identified by a group of students participating in the KEGA Project during the summer semester of 2018.

Participants. Twenty first-year students from the Faculty of Economic Informatics of the University of Economics in Bratislava participated in the study.

Materials and procedure. The following sources of information were investigated: *Adweek* – a weekly American advertising trade publication. *Newsweek* – an American weekly premier news magazine bringing the latest news, in-depth analysis and ideas about international issues, technology, business, culture and politics. *MoneyWeek* – a British weekly investment magazine covering financial and economic news and providing commentary and analysis across the UK and global markets. *Elite Business* – the magazine interested in the startups and SMEs that are spearheading Britain forward. *Forbes* – an American business magazine, published eight times a year, featuring articles on finance, industry, investing and marketing, technology, communications, science, politics and law. *The Independent* – a British online newspaper and *The New York Times* – an American broadsheet daily newspaper.

This group of students did a traditional course "Business English for Advanced Students II" as well as they were enrolled on "Business Communication" e-course in LMS Moodle. Each student worked with 12 magazine or newspaper articles. While reading, they looked for idioms, identified their meanings via online dictionaries such as idioms.thefreedictionary.com, en.oxforddictionaries.com, dictionary.cambridge.org, merriam-webster.com, and others. They submitted their work with each article into LMS Moodle since *blended learning* enhances the effectiveness of the process itself and improves learning experience (Gluchmanova 2016, Lasić-Lazić, Ivanjko, and Grubješić 2017).

Method: Both quantitative and qualitative analyses of articles for idioms will be carried out. The aim of both methods is to build up corpuses of idioms, to identify different types of idioms as well as identify general, business and academic English idioms (Fernando 1996, Lea et al. 2014, Parkinson and Noble 2006).

Research will try to answer a *research question*: "To what extent do idioms identified in general English also occur in business and academic English?"

Results and discussion

Elite Business was read by 5 students who were able to compile a 29,151-word corpus, *MoneyWeek* by 5 students who built up a 36,222-word corpus and *Adweek* by 4 students who made a 26,604-word corpus. There were also smaller corpora since *The Guardian* was read by 2 students, *The Independent* also by 2 students, and both *Newsweek* and *Forbes* by 1 student. In addition, one article was chosen from *The New York Times*.

Since students were able to compile corpora of different lengths, this study only includes data from *MoneyWeeek* and *Adweek* to answer the research question. Idioms from other sources are used in the theoretical part in example sentences.

Tables 1 and 2 show a corpora of idioms found in the *Adweek* and MoneyWeek articles. They provide information about different types of idioms, i.e. nominals, adjectivals, adverbials and verbals, the occurrence of general, business (*BusE*) and academic (*AcadE*) English idioms and types of phrases: noun phrase (NP), adjective phrase (AdjP), prepositional phrase (PrepP) and adverbial phrase (AdvP) as well as stylistic restrictions: formal (*fml*), informal (*infml*), and geographic varieties (*BrE*, *AmE*, *AustrE*). Some adverbials function as adjuncts (A), disjuncts (Disj) or conjuncts (Conj).

Some nominals, adjectivals and verbals used in both business and academic English and adverbials only used in academic English are highlighted (in bold). There are lexical variants in some idioms, so the underlined words occurred in the investigated articles.

Table 1: Idioms in *Adweek* articles

Idioms (*Adweek*)	**Word count**
Nominals	**19**
alarm/warning bells *BusE*, a baby boomer *mainly AmE*, a blind spot, the bottom line, a breath of fresh air, a buzz word, common ground, a gold mine, the golden age (of *sth*), the golden rule, the lion's share (of *sth*), a long shot, a matter of hours/minutes etc. *AcadE*, the old/new school, the rank and file, **the rules of the game** *rather infml*, *BusE*, *AcadE*, second nature, track record of/in (*doing*) *sth*, a wake-up call	*BusE:* 2 *AcadE:* 2
Adjectivals	**14**
ad hoc (*Latin*) (2x), around/round the bend *infml*, **at risk (from/of *sth*)** *BusE*, *AcadE* (2x), easier said than done (Comp (AdjP)) (*saying*), fast and furious, **in line with *sth*** *BusE*, *AcadE*, (2x), in place *BusE*, lightning-quick, of the essence *AcadE*, one size fits all *rather infml*, *AcadE*, red-hot *infml*, round-the-clock *AcadE*, underway *AcadE*, up to speed (on *sth*) *infml*, *BusE*	*BusE*: 4 *AcadE*: 4
Adverbials	**43**
above all (else) *AcadE*, above and beyond *sth*, along the way, at *your/sb's* disposal *AcadE*, at *one's* own peril (A (PrepP)), **at large** *AcadE*, to be sure (Disj), **behind the scenes** (A (PrepP)) *AcadE*, **during/in/over the course of…** *AcadE* (2x), **either way** *AcadE*, **end to end** (A) *AcadE*, **for the sake of *sb/sth*** (1x) | **for *sb's/sth's* sake** (1x) *AcadE*, for sale *BusE*, *AcadE*, **the fact (of the matter) is (that)…** *AcadE*, for better or (for) worse, from on high *BusE*, **in (actual) fact** *AcadE* (2x), **in advance (of *sth*)** *AcadE*, **in the face of *sth*** *AcadE*, **in full** *AcadE*, **in the hands of *sb*** *AcadE*, in/over the long haul *AmE*, in the long/short/medium run *BusE*, *AcadE*, **in the meantime** *AcadE*, **in other words** *AcadE* (5x), in stark/marked/sharp contrast with/to (Conj (PrepP)), **in turn** *AcadE*, **(just) around the corner** *rather infml*, *AcadE*, to name (but/only) a few, **a number of *sb/sth*** *AcadE*, **of course (not)** (Disj (PrepP)) *AcadE* (8x), **on *sb's/sth's* behalf** (A (PrepP)) *AcadE*, **on *your* mind** *AcadE*, somewhere along the line *infml*, **that said** *AcadE*, **these days** (A (NP)) *AcadE* (2x), **this/that is not to say (that)** *AcadE*, time after time (A), to the tune of *sth BusE*, **(and) what is more** *AcadE*, **when it comes to (*doing*) *sth*** *AcadE* (6x), warts and all, **word of mouth** *AcadE*	*BusE*: 3 *AcadE*: 30
Verbals	**68**

be all things to all men/people *AcadE*, be at odds (with *sth*) *AcadE*, (be) on board, be on track *BusE*, bear/keep *sth* in mind (1x) I bear/keep in mind that *AcadE* (1x), beat *sb* at their own game *BusE*, beg the question *AcadE*, breathe (new) life into *sth AcadE*, bring *sb/sth* to life *AcadE* (2x), build bridges, change *your/sb's* mind *AcadE*, clean up *your* act *infml BusE*, come into play *BusE*, dig deep, do good *AcadE*, fall flat, fill a/the void, find fault (with *sb/sth*) *AcadE*, fly blind, follow suit *AcadE*, get *sth* right (1x)/wrong (1x), get there (in the end etc.), go hand in hand (with *sth*) *AcadE*, go overboard, have the fortune/misfortune to do *sth*, have a lot/enough on *your* plate, jump in with both feet, keep *sb* on their toes, keep pace (with *sb/sth*) *AcadE*, **keep/lose track of *sb/sth*** *BusE*, *AcadE*, **keep up/move with the times** *BusE*, *AcadE*, lead the way (2x), learn lessons *AcadE*, lose sight of *sth AcadE*, lose touch (with *sb/sth*) *AcadE*, lose *your* way *AcadE*, make *sth* clear/plain (to *sb*), make fun of *sb/sth*, make the most of *sth/sb/yourself AcadE*, make a pitch for *sth*, make *one's* way (3x), make way for *sb/sth AcadE*, miss the boat/bus, miss the/its mark, (open) the door to *sth AcadE*, poke fun at *sb/sth*, **play a (key/major/vital etc.) part/role (in *sth*)** *BusE*, *AcadE*, play devil's advocate, play (it) safe *infml AcadE* (2x), put (*sth*) to (good) use, ring true, sit comfortably/easily/well etc. (with *sth*) *AcadE*, raise/lift/up *your* game *BusE*, raise a question, see the light (of day) *AcadE*, sit on *your* hands, spread the word, stand a chance (of *doing sth*) *AcadE*, **stand the test of time** *BusE*, *AcadE*, take advantage of *sth/sb BusE*, take a beating, **take effect** *BusE*, *AcadE*, **take risks** *BusE*, *AcadE*, take a stand, take a step, tell the world (*that* etc.), walk the walk *infml*, *BusE*, wear *your* heart on *your* sleeve	*BusE*: 12 *AcadE*: 29
Total:	**145**
The ratio of business and academic English idioms:	**21:65**

Table 1 shows the highest occurrence of these idioms: of course (not) *AcadE* (8x), when it comes to (*doing*) *sth AcadE* (6x), in other words *AcadE* (5x), make *one's* way (3x), ad hoc (2x), at risk (from/of *sth*) *BusE*, *AcadE* (2x), bring *sb/sth* to life *AcadE* (2x), during/in/over the course of… *AcadE* (2x), in (actual) fact *AcadE* (2x), in line with *sth BusE*, *AcadE*, (2x), lead the way (2x), play (it) safe *infml*, *AcadE* (2x) and these days *AcadE* (2x). It is really surprising that nearly all of them occur in academic English.

Table 2: Idioms in MoneyWeek articles

Idioms (*MoneyWeek*)	**Word count**
Nominals	**29**
a baptism by/of fire, **the beginning of the end** *BusE*, *AcadE*, a big deal (2x), boom and bust *BusE*, a course of action, a domino effect, a dirty trick, doom and gloom, the early days, the golden age (of *sth*), a hidden agenda, a house of cards, an iron man *AmE*, *AustrE*, the jewel in the crown (of) (2x), a loved one, a matter of time, a no-win situation, the old/new school, one's (own) peace of mind, peace of mind, a port of call *AcadE*, sabre-rattling *BrE*, *AmE*, *AustrE*, the smart money, a storm in a teacup *BrE*, *AustrE*, a track record (2x), value for money *BrE*, *AcadE*, a wake-up call, a whistle-blower, a zero-sum game	*BusE*: 2 *AcadE*: 3
Adjectivals	**8**
heavy-handed, in a different league, **in place** *BusE*, *AcadE*, out of line (with *sb/sth*) *BusE*, on the up *BusE*, tit-for-tat *infml* (3x), for real (Comp/A (PrepP)) *infml*, on *your*/the/its way *AcadE*	*BusE*: 3 *AcadE*: 2
Adverbials	**73**

all but *AcadE* (2x), all in all (Disj) (2x), all the time *BusE* (2x), **at *your/sb's* disposal** *AcadE*, at the end of the day *BrE*, *infml*, **at large** *AcadE*, **at the very least** *AcadE*, **at will** (A (PrepP)) *AcadE*, business as usual *BusE*, **by and large** *AcadE*, by the way/by (Disj (PrepP)) (2x), to cut a long story short (Disj) *BrE*, *AustrE*, **either way** *AcadE*, **far from it** *AcadE*, **for all (that…)** *AcadE*, **for one thing (…(and) for another thing)** (Conj (PrepP)) *AcadE*, **for that matter** *AcadE*, give or take, a good/great deal (A (NP)), hand over fist (A), **if/when in doubt, do** *sth AcadE*, in all/total (A (PrepP)), **in *sb's* day/time** (A (PrepP)) *AcadE*, **in effect** (A (Prep)) *BusE*, *AcadE* (3x), **in essence** *AcadE*, **in (the) face of** *sth AcadE*, in the first place (A (PrepP)) (2x), **in an ideal/a perfect world** *AcadE*, **in the first instance** *fml*, *AcadE*, in the heyday of *sth* (A (PrepP)) *BusE*, **in line with** *sth BusE*, *AcadE*, **in the long/medium/short term** *BusE*, *AcadE*, **in the meantime** *AcadE*, in *one's* mind (A (PrepP)), a number of *sb/sth AcadE* (2x), **in other words** *AcadE* (8x), **in person** *AcadE*, **in a row** *AcadE* (2x), in/within the space of *sth* (A (PrepP)), in stark/marked/sharp contrast with/to (Conj (PrepP)), **in short** *AcadE* (5x), **in tandem** (with *sb/sth*) *AcadE*, **in this/that regard** *AcadE*, **in turn** *AcadE* (3x), **in *sb's/sth's* wake** (A (PrepP)) *AcadE*, it goes without saying, the jury is (still) out on *sth rather infml*, *BusE*, *AcadE*, **just about** *infml*, *AcadE*, let alone (Conj), **more and more** *AcadE* (2x), **more or less** *AcadE*, **not least** *fml*, *AcadE*, on the back foot *BrE*, on the basis of *sth* (A (PrepP)), on the ground(s) that (A (PrepP)), **(on the one hand…) on the other (hand)…** *AcadE*, **on the surface** (Disj (PrepP)) *AcadE*, **on top of** *sth/sb AcadE* (2x), once again/more (A) (2x), **or so** *AcadE* (4x), one day (A (NP)) (4x), slowly but surely (adv + adv non-rev) (3x), so much for *sb/sth infml*, **that said** *AcadE*, **these days** (A (NP)) *AcadE* (3x), the time has come (for *sb*) to do *sth* (2x), **to date** *AcadE*, **to the point** (Comp/A (PrepP)) *AcadE*, **to a great/lesser degree/extent** *AcadE* (2x), **to that end** (A (PrepP)) *fml*, **when it comes to (*doing*)** *sth AcadE* (5x), year on year *BusE* (*Accounting*) (2x)	*BusE*: 8 *AcadE*: 45
Verbals	**69**
add fuel to the fire/flames, be about to *do sth AcadE*, be/come/stay/etc. on board *BusE*, be cut to the bone, be firing on all cylinders, be hard hit (by *sth*) *BusE*, be in charge (of *sth*) (3x), be in the firing line *BusE*, *BrE*, *AmE*, *AustrE*, be/remain etc. in the red (*Stock Exchange*) *BusE*, be in retreat *BusE*, be on the same page *esp. AmE*, *BusE*, **be/get/run out of control** *BusE*, *AcadE*, be up for *sth BusE*, bear/keep *sth* in mind *AcadE*, bend to the will of (*sb*), breathe a sigh of relief, catch/take *sb* by surprise *AcadE* (3x), cherry-pick *sb/sth*, come out on top *BusE*, corner the market (in/on *sth*) *BusE*, climb/jump on the bandwagon *BusE*, crunch (the) numbers, dodge/duck the issue, get hold of *sth rather infml*, *AcadE*, get there (in the end, etc.), go Dutch, go gangbusters, go public (*Stock Exchange*) *BusE*, *AcadE* (2x), **go/put *sb* out of business** *BusE*, *AcadE* (2x), **go/jump through hoops**, have (*sb/sth*) on (*one's*) hands, have *sth* up *your* sleeve, hold *your* breath *AcadE*, keep a close watch/eye, keep an eye on *sb/sth AcadE* (3x), keep an eye out for *sb/sth*, keep tabs on *sth/sb infml*, jockey for position, **keep/lose track of *sb/sth*** *BusE*, *AcadE*, lay/put/throw the blame (for *sth*) on *sb*, learn a lesson *AcadE*, lock horns (with *sb*) (over *sth*) *BusE*, make *sth* clear/plain (to *sb*) (3x), make *one's* point, open season for *sth* (Comp (NP)), pick holes in *sth*, pick up the bill/tab (for *sth*) *BusE*, pick up steam *AmE*, **play (it) safe** *infml*, *AcadE*, play to the gallery, **play a (key/major/vital, etc.) part/role (in *sth*)** *BusE*, *AcadE* (2x), pull the plug on *sth/sb BusE*, put the boot in *BrE*, *infml*, put a lid on (*sth*), raise (the) money etc. (2x), rattle *sb's* cage *infml*, reach/shoot for the moon, *sth* rears its head *AcadE*, ride out/weather the storm, ring a bell, rise from the ashes, steer clear of *sth/sb*, steal *sb's* clothes, take charge (of *sb/sth*) (3x), take *sth* for granted, **take its/their toll (on *sb/sth*)** *BusE*, *AcadE*, wait and see (v + v non-rev), walk a tightrope	*BusE*: 19 *AcadE*: 15
Total:	**179**
The ratio of business and academic English idioms:	**32:65**

Table 2 shows the highest occurrence of the following idioms: in other words *AcadE* (8x), in short *AcadE* (5x), when it comes to (*doing*) *sth AcadE* (5x), one day (4x), or so *AcadE* (4x), be in charge (of *sth*) (3x), catch/take *sb* by surprise *AcadE* (3x), in effect *BusE*, *AcadE* (3x), in turn *AcadE* (3x), keep an

eye on *sb/sth AcadE* (3x), make *sth* clear/plain (to *sb*) (3x), slowly but surely (3x), these days *AcadE* (3x), take charge (of *sb/sth*) (3x), tit-for-tat *infml* (3x), all but *AcadE* (2x), all in all (2x), all the time *BusE* (2x), a big deal (2x), by the way/by (2x), go public *BusE*, *AcadE* (2x), go/put *sb* out of business *BusE*, *AcadE* (2x), in the first place (2x), in a row *AcadE* (2x), the jewel in the crown (of) (2x), more and more *AcadE* (2x), a number of *sb/sth AcadE* (2x), on top of *sth/sb AcadE* (2x), once again/more (2x), play a (key/major/vital, etc.) part/role (in *sth*) *BusE*, *AcadE* (2x), raise (the) money etc. (2x), the time has come (for *sb*) to do *sth* (2x), to a great/lesser degree/extent *AcadE* (2x), a track record (2x) and year on year *BusE* (2x).

Research *question*: "To what extent do idioms identified in general English also occur in business and academic English?" *Answer*: Idioms identified in general English are used to a greater extent in academic English than in business English. The ratios are 65:21 in *Adweek* articles and 65:32 in *MoneyWeek* articles.

Conclusion

It is true that one learns to read by reading more, but it is also true that learners of English enjoy reading more when they are intrinsically motivated by making sense of what they read. The selection of and exposure to varied reading materials are important, no doubt, and consequently doing varied tasks and activities can help learners in their reading comprehension. Working with English-language magazine or newspaper articles using the Internet and LMS Moodle facilitates blended learning and LMS Moodle has proven to be an invaluable asset in the teaching and learning process since it also supports the major features of Communicative Language Learning, e.g. the learner autonomy, alternative assessment, diversity etc.

The paper includes a rich selection of general, business and academic English idioms. Thanks to their expressiveness, brevity and conciseness, they occur in spoken and written discourse. Moreover, informal usage becomes ever more prevalent in written language.

Quantitative and qualitative analyses of articles for idioms provide important insights for educators and learners. To improve written and spoken communication in English as well as to sound more like a native English speaker, the learner needs to be familiar with the function and usage of idioms in order to use them appropriately from time to time in different situations and contexts.

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Teaching Cultural Background Studies to EFL Students: Comparison of Textbooks

Abstract: *The research paper deals with cultural background studies, focusing on their presentation in two English language textbooks for intermediate to upper-intermediate students. The investigated books have been designated as study material for future professionals in the sphere of travel and tourism industry. The comparative analysis was aimed at three criteria, namely the frequency of occurrence of texts about socio-cultural background of particular geographical regions, the types of countries described, which were classified according to the role English language plays in their societies into Kachru´s circles of World Englishes, and didactic potentiality. Didactic criterion evaluated both individual classes of didactic potentiality and overall didactic potential, including also the representation of four basic skills and lengths of articles in the study books.*

Introduction

Cultural awareness and cultural competence are an indispensable part of the highly complex set of skills and knowledge which together make up communicative competence, the basic aim of foreign language instruction. The importance of the ability to treat all the issues in communication with people from different background sensitively, with proper understanding of the extra-linguistic diverse social context, becomes apparent especially in the professions which include constant contact with foreign countries or facilitation between different ethnic identities, such as tourism sector.

The research paper concerns presentations of information about life and culture of English-speaking countries in English textbooks. The investigation concentrates on two textbooks of English that have been designed for students who are preparing for their future career in tourism industry.

The aim of the research article is to analyse and compare two textbooks for EFL students whose training and instruction prepares them for their future careers in the tourism service sector to find out if the learning material also includes data-based articles about cultural background of individual countries. Other points of interest were the representation of Inner, Outer and Expanding Circle (Kachru 3-6) countries in the researched corpora and didactic potentiality (Průcha, *Učebnice: teorie* 94-143) of books.

Theoretical background

Addressing the topic of background cultural studies, the present paper defines background cultural studies as those which are centred upon the information and knowledge about life and culture of English-speaking countries, including way of life, habits, customs, art, social organization, and other aspects of life transferred as cultural heritage from generation to generation. The English-speaking countries that are included in the present research belong to the Inner Circle of Kachru´s model of division of World Englishes into three circles (Kachru 3-6) so that the UK, the United States of America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand are the main points of interest.

The ultimate goal of background studies should be understanding of different cultures, which has been studied by Sue ("Multicultural Counseling"64-88,"Multidimensional Facets" 793-4) and Helms and Richardson (60). It should be noted that the theory of cultural awareness and competence was developed mainly in the sphere of mental health counselling and psychotherapy. Sue, as well as Helms and

Richardson, is a psychologist. Sue sees the attainment of cultural competence as a complex process which, according to his theory, can be divided into three levels, for which he has proposed the term three components of cultural competence – attitudes/beliefs, knowledge, and skills (Sue et al. 64-88).

Another psychologist and a counsellor, Paul Pedersen, published a handbook for healthcare professionals about cultural awareness in counselling (1988), in which he included the three-stage model of development of multicultural competence. Moreover, Pedersen´s study also includes exercises that he devised to train the three the stages - awareness, knowledge, and skills. The reverse of multicultural competence was labelled as "cultural encapsulation" (103-4), which arose from the denial of the differences of other cultures and the inability to move out of cultural assumptions of one´s background in order to understand the influence of another, different context on cultural beliefs of its members. Even if the problem of cultural encapsulation was mentioned as early as in the 1960s (Wrenn 1962, qtd. by Pedersen 2001), it still had persisted in some health institutions to such an extent that Pedersen considered it necessary to mention this problem in 2001 ("Multiculturalism" 15-25).

As for the stages of cultural competence – both Sue and Pedersen distinguished three stages, with the first having a different name. Sue et al. (64-88) called the first stage attitudes/beliefs while Pedersen (*A Handbook* 9) used the word awareness. However, the present theory of multicultural competence and its individual levels were created by a merger. Hence, the stages are called awareness/attitude, knowledge and skills (Byram *Teaching and Assessing* 34; Martin & Vaughn 33).

Textbooks, their classification, and criteria of evaluation

The next steps in theoretical considerations should be delimitation of the material under investigation, which are textbooks, and a description of the best methods for their evaluation.

I agree with the statement of Průcha (*Učebnice: teorie* 13) that textbook definition is difficult to provide since it will differ according to point of view from which it will be seen. Průcha (ibid.) thus distinguishes three conceptions of textbook – textbook as a curricular project, source of educational content for pupils, and didactic means for teachers.

On the other hand, Mikk compares narrower and broader interpretation of the term textbook. In a sense, any written materials used in teaching can be regarded as textbooks, while rather more concrete conception describes them as books that were written to be used in the educational process (Laws and Horsley 7-15, in Mikk 17). The narrow definition of textbook includes only those texts that meet the requirements for educational texts, that is, tally with curricula, their content is delivered in a didactic way and facilitates learning (Vaněček, in Mikk 17).

Similarly to the different standpoints towards textbook definition, also the division of books for foreign language teaching into types varies since it stems from divergent criteria for their classification. Apart from the classification of textbooks by the age for which they are designed, and inclusion or exclusion of a student's mother tongue (bilingual or monolingual schoolbooks), they can also be grouped according to the teaching method used (called approach by Celce-Murcia et al.) The present research article uses the division of textbooks by didactic approaches that was devised by Hendrich (256-277) and Celce-Murcia (4-13).

Textbooks based on the historically oldest approach, the grammar-translation approach, put the main emphasis on grammatically correct translation from and to a foreign language (Hendrich 257; Celce-Murcia 4-5). In the 19th century, the direct method developed, which advocated an intuitive and inductive way of language learning and communicative competence (Hendrich et al. 261-2; Celce-Murcia et al. 5); its main drawback being almost total elimination of theoretical grammar teaching (Průcha et al. 230).

Then, a group of textbooks that prefer a mediating approach can be sorted; these issue from the direct method but include theoretical considerations about grammar, analysis of language and mother tongue. They likewise value the knowledge of foreign culture students can gain, develop audio-oral skills and real-life language (Beneš 53-4). The reading approach, on the other hand, emphasizes only reading comprehension

The audio-oral approach, also called audiolingual approach (Celce-Murcia 6), which utilized behavioural theory (Matthews 42-43), became popular in the USA during WWII, when an urgent need arose to quickly teach a large number of soldiers to use a foreign language very effectively. Choděra (117) describes its mainly mechanical character, with its principle resting in listening, multiple repetition of phrases and comparison with mother tongue. In my opinion, its most significant disadvantage is its lack of grammar teaching and automatic drill without conscious awareness of language rules. Similarly, the audio-visual method prefers repetition and drill, but, in addition to it, it stresses the links between pronounced words and pictures that imitate real situations (Hendrich et al. 266-9).

Moreover, a British counterpart of audiolingual approach, oral-situation approach, which stresses spoken language, developed in Britain in the 1940s as a reaction to the reading approach. It taught foreign language "situationally, (eg "at the post office")" (Celce-Murcia 7). Communicative approach aims at communication in foreign language, therefore practical communication competence is preferred to the knowledge of foreign language system (Choděra 2013).

The latest approaches, which are mentioned by Byram ("The Routledge Encyclopedia" 277, 620), Choděra (93) as well as Celce-Murcia (7-14)), include total physical response method (based mostly on obeying teacher's commands by some physical activity, language is acquired, not learnt), silent way (teacher tries to be silent and encourages pupils to speak, demands student's participation and self-correction, teacher provides feedback), community language learning (utilizes the work of community of students in the classroom combined with individual learning and teacher's support). Byram (ibid.) also speaks about task-based learning, which encourages students to practise foreign language in real-life situations simulated in the classroom.

Further, Celce-Murcia (2014) mentions cognitive approach (focused on rules and cognitive behaviours), comprehension-based approach, affective-humanistic approach (creating positive classroom atmosphere, peer support) and suggestopedia, or accelerated learning (utilizing suggestions in a relaxed atmosphere, with background music).

A very frequently discussed approach is content and language integrated learning (CLIL), defined as "a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of content and language with the objective of promoting both content and language mastery to pre-defined levels" (Marsh and Martín 911).

For the comparison of textbooks, two methods of analysis were chosen – the assessment method of didactic potential of textbooks that was developed by Průcha (*Učebnice: teorie* 141–143) and, for the research of the cultural background data presented in the researched corpora, Kachru's (3–6) division of societies into three concentric circles according to the role the English language has played in their history and socio-cultural background.

Průcha (*Učebnice: teorie* 94–143) has created a complex system for comparison and assessment of teaching resources of any kind which is recommended for teachers who try to find the best learning tools for their students, regardless of the subject the textbooks are specialized in. Průcha's method consists of a series of questions about the presence or absence of certain components in the evaluated corpus.

Kachru (3–20) has been interested in the current trends in the English language development all over the world, especially the emergence, history, and the latest evolution of the local forms of English

that are called World Englishes. For the purposes of his investigation, he divided countries into three concentric circles called Inner Circle, Outer Circle and Expanding Circle. The Inner Circle is constituted by the countries where English is a mother tongue of the majority of population – the United Kingdom, the United States of America, the Republic of Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand. In the Outer Circle countries, English is used as a second language. These areas are usually historically linked with the British Empire, like India, Malaysia, or Singapore. English in the Expanding Circle is taught as a foreign language and is used for international communication, for example in China, Japan, and Taiwan.

The material under investigation

Two textbooks of English focused on students in the branch of tourism have been selected for the research in question. They use only English as their language of instruction and were published by renowned publishing houses – Pearson Education and Cambridge University Press.

The first textbook, written by Leo Jones, is called *Welcome: English for the Travel and Tourism Industry* (further called *Welcome*) and is a part of *Cambridge Professional English* series. Being first published in 1998 by Cambridge University Press, it presents its topics in 50 double-page lessons. The analysed material is the fifth printing from the year 2001. It is described as a course for those who are studying English because they expect to use it in their profession in the travel, hospitality, and tourism industries (Jones). The level is determined as intermediate, that is, B1 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference (*English Level Comparison* 2021).

The second material under investigation is *English for International Tourism* by Peter Strutt, published by Pearson Education Limited in 2007. The author himself introduces his schoolbook stating it is aimed at catering "for learners studying for vocational qualifications in the travel trade and for working professionals undertaking in-service language training" (Strutt). The stage of English is assessed to be intermediate – B1.

Results and discussion

At its first stage, the comparative analysis focused on the organization of the examined corpora and the main themes are discussed. From the point of view of their organization, the investigated materials differ significantly in the number of sections and units. The textbook *Welcome* is divided into fifty units which are grouped into 10 modules according to their similar content. Modules include either six or four units and there is regular rotation of four-unit and six-unit modules. Units are unusually short – just two pages. Moreover, there is an appendix with 38 communication activities in the final part.

The authors of *English for International Tourism* have decided for a different organization by inserting three *Consolidation units* between the 12 units of their coursebook so that one *Consolidation unit*, which is in fact a revision unit, always follows four units. Four appendices, presenting data for pair work, writing, grammar and listening tapescripts, are placed after all the units, at the back of the book.

Comparing the topics on which the particular study books are focused, it should be noted that *English for International Tourism* devotes one lesson to festivals and traditions. On the contrary, *Welcome* concentrates more on various methods of communication and financial matters, since whole units have been dedicated to these subjects, named Phone calls, Letters and faxes, and Money.

The two textbooks include texts and exercises about transport; however, they are only parts of other units, and are rather culturally unspecific, focusing on basic information. Further, both *Welcome* and *English for International Tourism* have reserved one complete unit for the topics Food, drink and eating out.

Apart from the above-mentioned variations, both educational discourses present the same subject matters that give an account of the spheres of operation of a travel and tourism professional, namely

travel agencies; careers in tourism – tour operators, travel agents; issues connected with dealing with people – enquiries, booking, hiring or complaints; sightseeing, and guiding a tour.

Moreover, although being concentrated on tourism themes, the general topics are presented through texts which are set in some concrete cultural background quite frequently. Therefore, comparing the cultural background presented, the frequency of texts on a special cultural setting has been investigated as well as the type of culture introduced. Kachru's (3–6) model of various Englishes, which divides countries into three circles according to the function of English in a given society, was applied to the investigated material.

The analysis results have shown that the *Cambridge Professional English* series book, called *Welcome*, is focused mainly on listening, since it includes little material for reading and it tends to be rather short. Hence my research also took the length of printed topics into account. Texts consisting of up to approximately twelve or fifteen lines were regarded as short ones. The sorting out according to length depended not only on the number of lines but also on their lengths and size of fonts, which vary in different sections. Dialogues were included into short texts class because some lines often consist of just a few words. The analysis involved four texts in the part of the textbook called Communication Activities as well. Some reading part is included in 27 out of 50 units, however, they are so distributed that there is at least one text for reading in each of the ten modules, which the 50 units are grouped into. There are 15 (28.3%) articles which can be classified as longer texts and 38 (71.7%) short ones, mostly emails, letters, or tourist advertisements, with timetables and forms to be filled in being excluded from the examined corpus.

Considering their topics, most texts deal with general issues such as enquiries, rules for guests, customers, car hire, letters of customers (35 out of 53 texts, which equals to 66.1%). Five (9.4%) are focused on the cultural background of a country from Kachru's (3-6) Inner Circle where English is the main language – introducing a fish and chips restaurant or a hotel in England, McDonald´s new service, rules for drivers in Florida, or tipping in Australia.

Next, 10 articles, which makes 18.9%, deal with themes connected with countries which belong to Expanding Circle, that is, English is taught as a foreign language there; out of these, three are about Japan, two about Greece, the other countries are Thailand, Mexico, Venezuela, Spain, and France. Saint Lucia in Lesser Antilles, West Indies, and Malaysia are the two representatives of Outer Circle, creating 3.8 per cent of all texts, where English relates to the British colonial history and is a second language. One text (equalling to 1.8%) presents an itinerary with more countries, all of them from Outer and Expanding Circles from which just two have not been mentioned yet – Singapore and Indonesia.

Although this study does not analyse additional teaching sources such as tapescripts, it should be noted that they mostly deal with general topics – complaints, bookings, and various types of dialogue between a guest and a tourist industry professional – and are set in a neutral cultural background. The exception are four dialogues where paella, a Spanish dish, is described, the way to JFK Airport in New York is explained, tipping in Japan and USA is discussed, or photographs of famous destinations (from UK, USA, Australia, France, China, Mexico) are briefly depicted. In the case that other tapescripts deal with specific cultural background, they are connected with articles in textbook.

On the other hand, *English for International Tourism* offers a higher number of texts, 81 altogether, out of which 29 are long texts and 52 short ones, which equates to 31.8 per cent of long texts as compared to 28.3 per cent of long texts in *Welcome*. The result of this comparison indicates that the difference of 3.5 per cent is statistically significant.

The prevailing number of texts in *English for International Tourism* are about general subjects – telephone and email conversation related to ordering a hotel, holiday, complaints, unspecified enquiries

about hotel equipment or dialogues with a receptionist. The analysis has shown that 38 texts, that is 46.9 per cent, treats general themes. The rest of the reading materials, 53.1 per cent, presents topics that are culturally specific, which is importantly higher than the proportion of generally aimed printed discourse in *Welcome* – 33.9 per cent. Most of them are describing cultural background in Expanding Circle (24 = 29.6%), with the range of countries slightly wider than in Welcome – Germany, France, Spain, Hungary, Italy, Corsica, Portugal, Tibet, China, Japan, Egypt, and Morocco. There are six shorter samples discussing Germany, four about France, Spain is represented three times, and Japan and Egypt twice; the background of the rest of the countries always occurs in one text. The Outer Circle is represented by two countries – India and the Caribbean. The Inner Circle countries whose special features are described – the United Kingdom, the U.S.A., Australia, the Republic of Ireland, and New Zealand – comprise 19.8 per cent of the investigates samples.

Table 1 Frequency of texts about countries classified according to the role of English in their society into Kachru's Circles

Countries presented	Textbooks			
	Welcome		English for Int. Tourism	
	No	%	No	%
General texts	35	66,1	38	46,9
Inner Circle	5	9,4	16	19,8
Outer Circle	2	3,8	3	3,7
Expanding Circle	10	18,9	24	29,6
Mixed Outer/Expanding Circle	1	1,8		
Total	53	100	81	100

On closer inspection, articles about the background of a country concentrate on the best-known destinations and do not teach students much specific information about the particular cultural heritage of a region. Thus, England is introduced in four texts, all of which are about London, namely – the Tower of London, Buckingham Palace, National History Museum and Lanesborough Hotel, while Australia is brought closer by means of texts about transport in Sydney and very general Australian car hire rules. A promotion leaflet about Getty Museum in Hollywood, more universal than specific advice for driving in New York, renting motorhomes in New Zealand, passport application and a text about San Diego, noticing only Sea World, the zoo, and Old Town, are followed by an article about Hollywood, which is the only text about the U.S.A. that gives rather more detailed information. Contrariwise, the Republic of Ireland is oulined by a data-based discourse about Dublin and Guinness beer production. Other more concrete articles from Outer and Expanding Circles narrate about Indian Diwali Festival, the Nile Valley, sights in Madrid in Spain, Asian Tea Ceremony, Japanese theatre, and history.

To compare the two teaching sources, the above-described analysis has proved that *Welcome* contains fewer texts than *English for International Tourism* and there is a higher number of shorter texts in the former textbook. *English for International Tourism* offers a higher percentage of articles about cultural background of individual countries, especially about countries from the Inner Circle, with the difference being 10.4% for the Inner Circle, 0.1% for the Outer and 10.7% for the Expanding Circle. Texts with generally aimed topics constituted the most numerous category in both analysed books. It could

be stated that the books strive to enhance the cultural competence and awareness skills of students, although they prefer practical language training to learning about different social and historical backgrounds of destinations.

Thus, from a didactic point of view, supplementary ESP reading materials focused on cultural background studies might be recommended, such as *UK and US Background Studies* (Mountney and Anténe 2018), *Británie a USA: ilustrované reálie* (Peprník 2011) or *The World of English* (Farrell et al. 1995).

The next step in the present analysis should be the measuring of didactic potentiality (Průcha, *Učebnice: teorie* 141–143) of the examined textbooks. The method records the occurrence of 36 structural components of didactic potentiality of teaching resources regardless of their frequency of occurrence. All the coefficients are calculated as a percentual quotient of the number of really utilized components from the number of all possible components.

Průcha (*Učebnice: teorie* 94–143) divided components according to the didactic function they perform into three groups which he named apparatus of exposition of subject matter, apparatus regulating the learning and apparatus for orientation in the textbook (ibid.: 141-3; 2014: 94). Both the apparatus of exposition (presentation) of subject matter as well as the apparatus regulating the learning are further subdivided into two subgroups – verbal components and pictorial components.

The first group – apparatus of exposition of subject matter – includes nine verbal components (explanatory text; explanatory text with overview diagrams, tables, etc.; summary of the new subject matter; overall summary of the subject matter of the previous school year; overall summary of the subject matter of the current school year; supplementary text (e.g. documentation, quotes from sources); descriptions/notes below pictures; vocabulary list; notes and explanations) and five pictorial components (fine art illustration; scientific illustration; photographs; maps, graphs); coloured image presentation (different colour of text)).

The second group of apparatus regulating learning consists of fourteen verbal components (e.g. introduction; revision lessons; recommended literature; instructions for use; answer key; revision questions and tasks for each unit; final revision questions and tasks; explicitly stated aims for students) and four pictorial ones (graphic symbols denoting particular parts of text (homework, exercises); particular text parts are distinguished by different background colour; or by different fonts; textbook cover or endpaper contain tables, maps.).

The last group, named apparatus for orientation in textbook, comprises four verbal components only (table of contents; division into units, chapters; head notes, side notes; index).

Table 2 Didactic potentiality of textbooks

Didactic potentiality	Maximum (100%)	Textbooks			
		Welcome		English for Int. Tourism	
		No	%	No	%
Presentation of subject matter					
A – verbal components	9	6	66,6	6	66,6
B –- pictorial components	5	5	100,0	5	100,0
Apparatus regulating learning					
C – verbal components	14	8	57,1	10	78,6
D – pictorial components	4	3	75,0	4	100,0

Apparatus for orientation in textbook E – verbal components	4	3	75,0	3	75,0

Total didactic potentiality	36	25	69,4	28	77,8

As can be seen in the table above, the didactic potentiality of researched textbooks is the same for both apparatus of exposition of subject matter and apparatus for orientation in the textbook. The reason can be an unofficial standard for the layout, graphic design and way of presentation expected from ELT textbooks published by renowned English publishing houses. Both resources lack overall summary of the subject matter of the previous and current school year and vocabulary lists. However, their verbal devices for regulating the learning process differ, since the didactic potentiality of *English for International Tourism* has reached 78.6% but *Welcome* 57.1% because it does not involve revision lessons and recommended literature.

Conclusions

The comparative analysis has proved that *Welcome* is an example of a study-book aimed at listening and speaking skills. It combines audio-oral and communicative methods of teaching, lacking grammatical parts and concentrating primarily on listening comprehension and pronunciation exercises during which whole sentences or phrases are automatically repeated after the recording. *English for International Tourism*, although it also emphasizes listening and comprehension skills, has its contents divided more proportionally between reading, grammatical, listening, writing, and speaking sections. It utilizes practical communicative approach. Both study sources use task-based learning and employ a large scale of communicative activities, especially pair work, group work and role-playing that are always focused on everyday tasks of tourism professions. Their didactic potentiality differs only in the devices directing the teaching process, with the total didactic potentiality of *English for International Tourism* being higher.

In spite of the fact that they are both designed for future professionals in tourism industry, *Welcome* and *English for International Tourism* do not present many articles on interesting facts about particular countries or destinations. The most numerous groups in both study materials are texts about general topics. Texts with themes concerning specific socio-cultural background discuss mostly countries from Kachru's (3–6) Expanding Circle. In accordance with its focus on audio-oral English teaching method, the frequency of occurrence of reading materials is significantly lower in *Welcome*.

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Oleksandr Kapranov

EFL Students' Perceptions of an Online Course in Advanced Grammar: Affordances, Challenges, and Implications

Abstract: *This article presents a study that seeks to examine how university students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) perceive a course in advanced grammar of English that is delivered online via Zoom (further – the course). The study involved a questionnaire adapted from Henderson, Selwyn, and Aston (1567) and a series of yes/no statements that were based upon the recent research literature. The questionnaire and the yes/no statements were distributed to a group of EFL students (henceforth – participants), who were enrolled in the course at a university in Norway. The questionnaire and the yes/no statements were analysed quantitatively in the computer software program SPSS (IMB). The results of the analysis revealed that the majority of the participants perceived the course positively. Concurrently with that, however, it was found that 85% of all participants noted that they encountered challenges in terms of the absence of in-class interaction and the inability to stay focused during the course. These findings are further discussed in the article through the lenses of affordances, challenges and implications associated with the online EFL courses.*

Introduction

Online teaching and learning have firmly established themselves as an integral part of the university landscape (Ozawa 226), where they proliferate across all disciplines (Heift and Chapelle 565, Kapranov 205, Levy 255), inclusive of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Whilst universities offer a substantial number of EFL courses online due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Bailey and Almusharraf 66, Bailey and Lee 178, Goşa and Mureşan 91, Shastri and Clark 116, Suk 8), relatively little is known about how EFL students on the advanced levels of EFL proficiency perceive courses in EFL grammar that take place exclusively online (Kara 45). The article introduces and discusses a study that seeks to provide insight into this under-researched topic.

The study is commensurate with a plethora of research publications that explore EFL students' beliefs (Sato and Oyanedel 110, Sato and Storch 1, Simon and Taverniers 896) and perceptions of courses that teach EFL grammar (Almuhammadi 14, Goşa and Mureşan 91, Graus and Coppen 571, Henderson, Selwyn, and Aston 1569, Khalil 33, Levy 255, Lin and Gao 169, Noroozi, Rezvani, and Ameri-Golestan 112, Ozawa 225, Pinto-Llorente et al. 632, Schurz and Coumel 1, Wang et al. 297). It should be noted that in applied linguistics and EFL studies, the teaching of grammar is regarded as any instructional technique that draws learners' attention to some specific grammatical form in such a way that it helps them either to understand it metalinguistically and/or process it in comprehension and/or production so that they can internalize it (Ellis 84).

Whilst the prior literature focuses upon the EFL students' perceptions of grammar courses on the beginner and intermediate levels, the novelty of the present study rests with the group of participants, who are EFL students on the C1 level of EFL proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (The Council of Europe). Given the scarcity of research that elucidates how EFL students on the C1 level perceive online courses in advanced grammar of English (Anglada 49), the research focus of the study appears to be novel and topical (Kılıçkaya 1). The study addresses the following research question (RQ):

RQ: What are the participants' perceptions of the university course in advanced grammar of English?

Prior to answering the RQ, I provide a review of the recent literature on EFL students' perceptions of online courses in EFL grammar in section 2. Then, the theoretical framework of the study is given in section 3. This is followed by the description of the study context inclusive of the participants, instruments and methods of the data analysis in section 4. Thereafter, I summarise the major findings and discuss them in relation to the prior literature. The article is concluded with a number of linguo-didactic implications that are relevant to the online EFL courses.

Literature review

There are multiple studies that investigate EFL teachers' and learners' perceptions of grammar courses that take place in the in-class instructional settings on campus (Almuhammadi 15, Graus and Coppen 575, Wegscheider 9). In this study, however, attention is given to the review of the recent literature that illuminates university EFL students' and teachers' perceptions of grammar courses that are delivered online in their totality or, at least, partially as a combination of online and in-class instruction that requires physical presence on campus (Fitrawati and Syarif 250, Khalil 33, Kılıçkaya 2-3, Noroozi, Rezvani, and Ameri-Golestan 112, Pinto-Llorente et al. 632, Wright 64). The former combination is discussed by Noroozi, Rezvani, and Ameri-Golestan, who have established that EFL students show positive perceptions of the online component in the course in English grammar (127). Similarly, Wright seeks to shed light on undergraduate EFL students' responses to online lessons in the course in English grammar. She has discovered that they report positive attitudes towards both online and in-class instructional settings. These findings suggest that "online lessons can be skilfully incorporated into existing in-class courses" (70). Analogously to the aforementioned studies, Pinto-Llorente and her colleagues posit that the university students' perceptions of digital tools in the course in advanced grammar of English are positive. The positivity appears to be associated with the students' "greater autonomy to be able to set and organize their own pace of study and individual learning" (632).

The research topic of EFL learners' and teachers' perceptions of digital resources in online courses in EFL grammar is explored by Fitrawati and Syarif (250), and Khalil (33). In particular, Fitrawati and Syarif (257) indicate that EFL lecturers, who teach English grammar, express positive perceptions of the electronic grammar book designed for advanced EFL students. They consider it an appropriate instructional medium in the teaching and learning of advanced grammar of English in terms of its interface, interactivity, and practicality (257). The digital resource Google Docs is examined by Khalil in conjunction with an online course in English grammar. Specifically, Khalil investigates undergraduate EFL students' perceptions associated with the use of Google Docs as a digital tool in the collaborative learning environment. She posits that the majority of the participants in her study exhibit positive attitudes towards this digital resource (33).

The research focus on the feedback practices in an online course in English grammar is brought to the fore by Kılıçkaya (1). Notably, he focuses on the undergraduate EFL students' preferences regarding different online written corrective feedback in a university course in advanced grammar of English. It has been found that the preferred types of online corrective feedback in the course are metalinguistic (i.e., a brief grammatical description without providing the correct form) and direct feedback, which is operationalised in his study as an indication of the error and the correct form (19).

In contrast to the aforementioned research foci, however, there are fairly recent studies that emphasise the importance of discussion forums and guided online exercises in the context of online courses in English grammar (Bailey and Almusharraf 66, Khalilian, Hosseini, and Ghabanchi 42, Smyshlyak 81, Yurko and Vorobel 115). In particular, Bailey and Almusharraf set out to compare an instructor-led EFL class on Facebook with an EFL online class without the instructor's presence. They have established that guided online

exercises that are facilitated by the instructor are more effective in comparison to the online activities that occur without the instructor's involvement (80). Similarly, Smyshlyak (90) argues that guided online exercises are beneficial to intermediate EFL students. She posits that they emblematise a "guided discovery" (93) that involves both an EFL instructor and an EFL learner. Smyshlyak asserts that guided online exercises provide EFL learners with autonomy and responsibility for fostering their skills in English grammar. Likewise, the importance of guided online exercises is brought to the fore by Yurko and Vorobel (115), as well as by Khalilian, Hosseini, and Ghabanchi (44). They have conducted a survey of mobile applications (apps) with online exercises, in particular, *DuoLingo* (DuoLingo 2011), *LearnEnglish* (British Council 2020), and *Kahoot* (Kahoot 2018). It is posited in the studies that online exercises, which are expedited by the apps, are an effective means of learning English grammar, especially on the A1 and A2 levels of EFL proficiency (45).

Summarising the recent literature in applied linguistics and EFL studies, it seems possible to suggest that EFL students' and teachers' perceptions of the online courses in English grammar are, predominantly, positive. It is inferred from the literature outlined in this section of the article that a substantial number of prior studies award attention to the EFL cohorts on the beginner and intermediate levels. However, it follows from the literature that the advanced EFL students' perceptions of online courses in EFL grammar appear to be less researched (Fitrawati and Syarif 250).

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of the study is based upon the premises of the Transactional Distance Theory (TDT) formulated by Moore (76). The TDT is focused on distance education, which is defined as the instructional methods that involve physical and psychological separation between the teacher and the learners. In the light of the TDT, the lack of in-class communication between the learner and the teacher is compensated by print, electronic, mechanical, or other device (76). As indicated by Moore (79), a distance course is characterised by transactional distance between the learners' and teachers' interactions. In the TDT, the construal of transactional distance is problematised as a pedagogical concept and "not simply a geographic separation of learners and teachers" (22). Transactional distance presupposes constraints, as well as affordances, in terms of mutual interactions between the teacher and the students (Kara 45, Selwyn 85). From the vantage point of the TDT, transactional distance is defined as the physical, cognitive, psychological, and behavioural distance between the teacher and the student that is concomitant with the impediments to the student's learning and the interaction between the student and the teacher (Zhang 32).

As noted by Yates et al. (62), the types of interaction in the TDT involve i) learner to teacher, ii) learner to content, and iii) learner to learner interactions. According to the TDT, the dialogic nature of interaction in distance education maps onto the course structure, the capability to meet individual learner's needs, and learner autonomy (Moore 84). The latter is theorised to be comprised of the learners' goals and experiences. In particular, Moore envisages an autonomous learner as a person, who is emotionally independent of the teacher and capable to approach subject matter directly (31).

It is argued in the TDT that a greater transactional distance results in a more autonomous learner, whilst its decrease involves an increase in the interaction between the teacher and the learners (Moore 86). In addition, transactional distance is thought to decrease due to the level of contextual support provided by the teacher and the online instructional environment (Benson and Samarawickrema 5). As far as the instructional environment is concerned, it should be specified that in the TDT it is considered one of the variables that may influence the learners' perceptions of transactional distance (Huang et

al. 740). In this regard, it is posited that the means of communication, for instance, the online course environment, are one of the most important factors that affect the extent and quality of interaction in a distance course (739). In particular, Huang et al. (740) argue that the learners, who use digital tools in the rich online environment (for instance, a virtual classroom), perceive transactional distance as a less obvious phenomenon compared to the students who use text-based communication.

Informed by the theoretical tenets of the TDT and, especially, its focus on the learning environment, the study further presented in the article seeks to identify and classify the participants' perceptions of the course that is delivered exclusively online. It should be reiterated that the review of the literature points to the current gap in the state-of-the-art research that consists in insufficient attention to the perceptions of online grammar courses by the EFL students on the advanced levels of EFL proficiency. Further, in section 4, I present and discuss the study that endeavours to address the abovementioned gap.

The present study

The present study is set in the context of the online course in advanced grammar of English (further – the course) at a university in Norway. The course is delivered online only, with no in-class meetings on campus during its entire duration (the course runs for one semester). The course is open for enrolment to bachelor, master, and doctoral students, and the students in the so-called Year Course in English. The latter is a stand-alone EFL course that is comprised of two semesters of EFL studies that last for one year (hence, it is labelled the Year Course). The Year Course is a terminal course in the sense that it does not impose any obligations upon the students to proceed to bachelor and/or master programmes.

In line with the course description, the admission to the course depends on the completion of the introductory courses in i) English grammar and ii) general linguistics. Additionally, all students who are enrolled in the course are expected to show the mastery of the English language on the C1 level of proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, or CEFR (The Council of Europe). Following CEFR, the overall C1 level descriptors are as follows:

N	CEFR Descriptor Scheme	Descriptor
1	Overall oral comprehension	Can understand enough to follow extended discourse on abstract and complex topics beyond their own field, though they may need to confirm occasional details, especially if the variety is unfamiliar. Can recognise a wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms, appreciating register shifts. Can follow extended discourse even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly.
2	Overall reading comprehension	Can understand in detail lengthy, complex texts, whether or not these relate to their own area of speciality, provided they can reread difficult sections. Can understand a wide variety of texts including literary writings, newspaper or magazine articles, and specialised academic or professional publications, provided there are opportunities for rereading and they have access to reference tools.
3	Overall oral production	Can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on complex subjects, integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.

4	Overall written production	Can produce clear, well-structured texts of complex subjects, underlining the relevant salient issues, expanding and supporting points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples, and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion. Can employ the structure and conventions of a variety of genres, varying the tone, style and register according to addressee, text type and theme.
5	Overall oral interaction	Can express themselves fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Has a good command of a broad lexical repertoire allowing gaps to be readily overcome with circumlocutions. There is little obvious searching for expressions or avoidance strategies; only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language.
6	Overall written interaction	Can express themselves with clarity and precision, relating to the addressee flexibly and effectively.
7	Overall mediation	Can act effectively as a mediator, helping to maintain positive interaction by interpreting different perspectives, managing ambiguity, anticipating misunderstandings and intervening diplomatically in order to redirect the conversation. Can build on different contributions to a discussion, stimulating reasoning with a series of questions. Can convey clearly and fluently in well-structured language the significant ideas in long, complex texts, whether or not they relate to their own fields of interest, including evaluative aspects and most nuances.
8	General linguistic competence	Can use a broad range of complex grammatical structures appropriately and with considerable flexibility.

Table 1: The C1 Level Descriptors according to CEFR

It is specified in the course description that the study aim of the course is to provide the students with advanced knowledge and insight into the structure of English, key concepts in syntax and morphology, and the competence to analyse the English language by means of employing relevant terminology and linguistic methods of analysis. The course focuses on the coursebook *Understanding English Grammar* by Payne (2011). In total, the course involves 12 lectures and 12 respective seminars. Typically, each seminar immediately follows the lecture, so that both of them are taught on the same day. The lectures and seminars reflect the majority of the chapters in the coursebook, with the exception of chapters 1, 4, 14 and 15 that are taught in the introductory course of English grammar. The course structure is further illustrated by Table 2 below.

N	Lecture Nr	Topic
1	Lecture 1	*Introduction to the course. Chapter 3. The Lexicon*
2	Lecture 2	*Chapter 2. Typology*
3	Lecture 3	*Chapter 5. Participant Reference*
4	Lecture 4	*Chapter 6. Action, States, and Processes*
5	Lecture 5	*Chapter 7. Basic Concepts in English Syntax*
6	Lecture 6	*Chapter 8. Advanced Concepts in English Syntax*
7	Lecture 7	*Chapter 9. Complementation*

8	Lecture 8	*Chapter 10. Modification in the Noun Phrase*
9	Lecture 9	*Chapter 10. Modification in the Predicate and at the Clause Level*
10	Lecture 10	*Chapter 11. Auxiliaries*
11	Lecture 11	*Chapter 12. Time and Reality*
12	Lecture 12	*Chapter 13. Voice and Valence*

Table 2: The Course Structure

In the course, all lectures and seminars that are summarised in Table 2 are delivered online via Zoom. It should be specified that the participants were exposed to the online teaching and learning due to the COVID-19 restrictions in 2020-2021. Given that the participants experienced a substantial period of time in the online teaching and learning environment, it is hypothesised that they would be able to express their perceptions of the course and communicate their views on its positive and negative aspects. Based upon the hypothesis, the study seeks to learn about the participants' perceptions associated with affordances and challenges associated with the course. The specific research aims of the study are formulated as follows:

1) To identify possible aspects of the course that the participants perceive positively;
2) To identify possible aspects of the course that the participants perceive negatively.

Guided by the hypothesis and the specific research aims, the study employs a questionnaire that involves a series of questions that are concerned with the participants' perceptions of the course. In addition, the study involves a set of yes/no statements that are associated with the participants' experiences of the online teaching and learning in general. The questionnaire and the yes/no statements are further given in subsection 4.3 of the article.

To summarise the novelty of the study, it should be mentioned that whilst there exists a cornucopia of prior research on beginner and intermediate EFL students' perceptions of EFL grammar courses (see section 2), there are no current studies that specifically focus on the perceptions of online grammar courses by EFL students on the C1 level of the mastery of the English language. Arguably, a specific insight into the cohort of EFL learners on the C1 level could contribute to a more efficient way of EFL grammar instruction, which is considered in the literature "an issue that language teachers still have to resolve" (Richards and Reppen 5).

Instruments and methods

The instruments in the study involved the questionnaire and several yes/no statements. The questionnaire was adapted from the study conducted by Henderson, Selwyn, and Aston (1568). Following their research methodology, the questionnaire involved yes/no/no answer responses that were calculated as the percentage of participants per group. The yes/no statements were generated by the author of the article based upon the recent literature (Fitrawati and Syarif 254, Noroozi, Rezvani, and Ameri-Golestan 115). Both the questionnaire and yes/no statements were administered at the beginning of the semester in electronic form as a shared document via the learning management platform Canvas. The participants were requested to download the questionnaire and provide answers to the questionnaire items. In addition, the participants were asked to comment on their answers. The participants' comments were subsequently used in order to illustrate their answers. In contrast to the questionnaire, however, the

participants were instructed to provide only one answer, either "yes" or "no", per each yes/no statement, so that the possibility of leaving them unanswered and writing, for instance, "I do not know" were factored out. The questionnaire items and the yes/no statements were sent by the participants to the article's author via e-mail.

Methodologically, the study adopted a quantitative approach to the data analysis. Specifically, the data generated from the questionnaire and yes/no statements were analysed quantitatively in the computer program Statistical Package for Social Sciences, or SPSS (IBM). It was assumed in the study that the quantitative analysis in SPSS could facilitate the research focus on surveying an overall pattern associated with the participants' perceptions of the course. To reiterate, in line with Henderson, Selwyn, and Aston (1568), the participants' perceptions across all questionnaire items and yes/no statements were examined by means of percentages.

Participants

In total, the study was comprised of 72 participants (14 males, 58 females, mean age 24.5 years, standard deviation 6.8). The participants were assumed to be on the C1 level of EFL proficiency. The assumption was based upon the requirements that were explicitly stated in the course description (see section 4 of the article). The students who identified English as their native language (L1) were factored out. The participants' linguistic background in terms of their L1 and foreign language/languages (FL) was summarised in Table 3 below.

#	Language	Percentage of Participants' L1	Percentage of Participants' FL
1	English	0	100%
2	Norwegian	83%	10%
3	French	0	22%
4	Spanish	6%	21%
5	German	0	10%
6	Swedish	0	4%
7	Danish	0	3%
8	Italian	3%	0
9	Arabic	3%	0
10	Russian	1%	0
11	Chinese	1%	3%
12	Greek	0	1%
13	Catalan	1%	0
14	Dutch	1%	0
15	Kurdish	1%	0

Table 3: The Participants' Linguistic Background

In addition to providing the data concerning their age, gender, L1 and FL/FLs, the participants were requested to indicate their study level, which was outlined in Table 4.

#	Participants' Study Level	Percentage of Participants
1	Bachelor programme	44%
2	Master (teacher programme)	32%
3	Doctoral programme	3%
4	Year Course	21%

Table 4: The Participants' Study Level

Results and discussion

The results of the quantitative analysis in SPSS (IBM) have revealed the participants' perceptions of the course (see Table 5) and the online teaching and learning in general (see Table 6) as percentages per group as a whole.

#	Questionnaire Items	Participants' Responses to the Questionnaire
1	Do you have any prior experience of studying online?	Yes 100% No 0% No answer 0%
2	What kinds of digital technology do you use in the course?	Zoom 100% Canvas 100% University e-mail 100%
3	Do you think that the course can be taught as an online-only course?	Yes 69.4% No 11.1% No answer 19.4%
4	What are your perceptions of the course?	Positive 68.1% Negative 30.5% No answer 1.4%
5	What are your perceptions of Canvas in conjunction with the course?	Positive 68.1% Negative 19.4% No answer 12.5%
6	What are your perceptions of the online resources of the university library in conjunction with the course?	Positive 43.1% Negative 22.2% No answer 34.7%
7	What are your perceptions of the lecture recordings in the course?	Positive 79.2% Negative 8.3% No answer 12.5%
8	What are your perceptions of using Google in conjunction with the course?	Positive 76.4% Negative 15.3% No answer 8.3%
9	What are your perceptions of a student group on Facebook in conjunction with the course?	Positive 63.9% Negative 27.8% No answer 8.3%

10	What are your perceptions of using Wikipedia in conjunction with the course?	Positive 54.2% Negative 38.9% No answer 6.9%
11	What are your perceptions of using YouTube in conjunction with the course?	Positive 84.7% Negative 8.3% No answer 6.9%
12	What are your perceptions of using electronic books/ electronic course book in conjunction with the course?	Positive 69.4% Negative 18.1% No answer 12.5%
13	What are your perceptions of advantages of the course?	Easy to access 29.1% Easy to focus 23.6% Comfort 16.7% Flexibility 8.3% Health and safety 5.6% No answer 13.9%
14	What are your perceptions of disadvantages of the course?	Hard to focus 38.9% Loss of direct teacher-student interaction 12.5% Hard to find classmates for group discussion 11.1% Exhaustion 8.3% Technical problems 8.3% Lack of motivation 1.4% No answer 0%
15	What are your perceptions of doing exercises digitally in the course?	Positive 77.8% Negative 13.9% No answer 8.3%
16	What are your perceptions of reading the lecture PowerPoints on Canvas in advance?	Positive 88.9% Negative 8.3% No answer 2.8%

Table 5: The Participants' Responses to the Questionnaire Associated with the Course

The statistical analysis of the yes/no statements in SPSS has yielded the results that are given in Table 6. In contrast to Table 5, Table 6 summarises the participants' perceptions of the online teaching and learning in general, i.e. without the reference to the course.

#	Yes/No Statements	Percentage of Participants
1	I like online courses	Yes 62.5% No 37.5%
2	I prefer in-class courses on campus	Yes 84.7% No 15.3%
3	Online courses are effective	Yes 66.7% No 33.3%

4	Online courses are boring	Yes 68.0% No 32.0%
5	Online courses are stressful	Yes 57.0% No 43.0%
6	Online courses are demanding	Yes 68.0% No 32.0%
7	Online courses are great during the COVID-19 pandemic	Yes 88.9% No 11.1%
8	I miss interactions with the teacher/teachers in online courses	Yes 73.6% No 26.4%
9	I miss interactions with other students in online courses	Yes 81.9% No 18.1%
10	University courses are going to be offered online after the COVID-19 pandemic is over	Yes 69.4% No 30.6%

Table 6: The Participants' Responses to the Yes/No Statements Associated with the Perceptions of Online Teaching and Learning in General

In the light of the findings presented in Tables 5 – 6, it appears pertinent to discuss in more detail the participants' negative and positive perceptions of the course. First, I discuss a range of affordances in the course that are perceived positively by the participants. Thereafter, the discussion involves the focus on the challenges that the participants perceive negatively in the course.

The participants' positive perceptions of the course

It is evident from Table 5 that there are several positive affordances associated with the course. Amongst them, the majority of participants (68%) point to their overall positive perceptions of the course. Notably, the positive perceptions of the course are concomitant with the positive answers (69%) to the question whether or not they think that the course can be taught exclusively online. These findings support the research literature, in particular, Noroozi, Rezvani, and Ameri-Golestan (127), Pinto-Llorente et al. (632), and Wright (70), who provide accounts of the EFL students' positive perceptions of online courses in English grammar. Whilst the present findings mirror those of the literature, the novelty concerning the positive attitudes towards the course rests with the cohort of participants, whose experiences involve several semesters of online teaching and learning in 2020 and 2021. Given that the participants have had to adapt to the corona virus-related quarantine settings of teaching and learning, their positive perceptions of the course seem to correlate with the predominantly positive answer to the yes/no statement "Online courses are great during the COVID-19 pandemic" (89%).

Another positive affordance associated with the course involves the participants' positive perceptions of the learning management system Canvas (68%). This finding is evocative of the recent literature that points to the EFL students' satisfaction with Canvas (see Kapranov 60; Pan and Gan 48). In the same vein, the participants show positive perceptions of the lecture recordings that are stored on Canvas (79%). In addition, the participants (89%) evaluate positively the upload of the lecture PowerPoints on Canvas in advance, that is before the respective lecture takes place. Arguably, the positive affordances associated with the use of Canvas are explicable by the participants' emphasis on the ease of access to the course materials provided by Canvas, as illustrated by Figure 1 below.

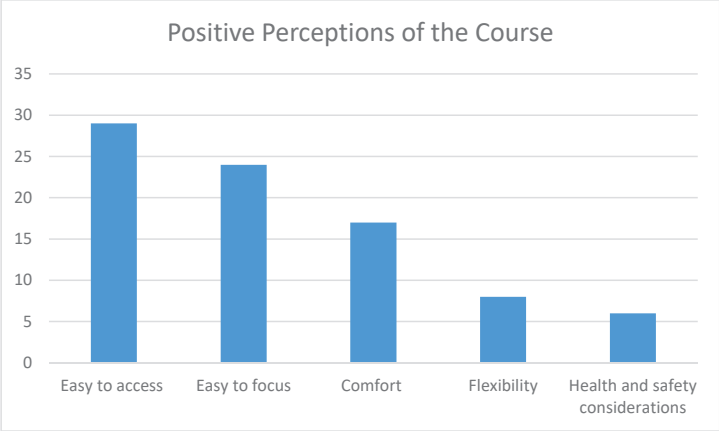

Figure 1: Positive Perceptions of the Course

In Figure 1, the participants' positive perceptions of the course are plotted against the percentage of participants as a group. Whereas the ease of access to the course materials via Canvas is prioritised by 29% of the participants, it is noteworthy to mention that 24% of them find it easier to focus in the online course environment provided by Canvas and Zoom. The latter finding is especially interesting from the vantage point of disadvantages and challenges associated by the participants with the course, since 39% of them experience difficulties with concentrations in the online instructional settings (see Table 5). It should be noted that the prior literature summarised in section 2 of the article does not seem to point to EFL students' ability and/or inability to focus in an online course in English grammar.

As far as the participants' positive perceptions of the course are concerned, it is evident from the findings summarised in Table 5 that 77.8% of them perceive doing online exercises in grammar positively. This finding is commensurable with the literature, which indicates that EFL students generally tend to exhibit positive perceptions of doing online exercises in English grammar (Bailey and Almusharraf 70, Smyshlyak 85, Yurko and Vorobel 119). However, whilst the prior literature provides evidence of positive perceptions of online exercises by the beginner and intermediate EFL students, there are no current studies that point to similar positivity that is displayed by the advanced EFL students. In this regard, the present finding appears to be novel and noteworthy in terms of the further research studies. Arguably, a promising avenue of research would involve an investigation of advanced EFL students' perceptions of online exercises on mobile applications, for instance Kahoot (see Khalilian, Hosseini, and Ghabanchi).

The participants perceive positively the use of such general interest websites as Google (76%) and Wikipedia (54%) in relation to the course. This finding lends support to Khalil (36), who, in a similar manner, has discovered the positive perception of Google by EFL students in the university course in English grammar. Furthermore, 85% of participants show positive perceptions of YouTube in the course, whilst 64% of them regard favourably the use of the course-related group on Facebook. The participants' positive perceptions of Facebook as a forum for discussing grammar-related issues are evocative of the study conducted by Bailey and Almusharraf, who point to the beneficial effects of using Facebook-based teaching and learning activities in an online EFL course. These findings are emblematised by Figure 2,

where the positive perceptions of the general interest websites are plotted against the percentage of all participants.

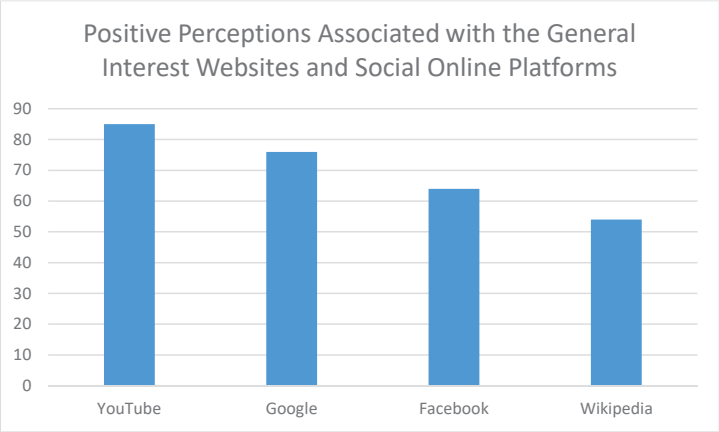

Figure 2: Positive Perceptions Associated with the General Interest Websites

Judging from the findings illustrated by Figures 1 – 2, it is possible to assume that the participants' positive perceptions of the course correlate with the contextual support provided by the online instructional environment, such as Canvas, as well as online support associated with the use of general interest websites (e.g., Google) and social online platforms (e.g., YouTube). This assumption echoes Benson and Samarawickrema (9), who argue that the online environment affects the students' perceptions in a distance course. Presumably, the participants' positive perceptions could be accounted by the contention formulated by Huang et al. (740), who suggest that studying in the rich online environment (for instance, Canvas, Zoom) leads to positive perceptions of the course and facilitates the minimisation of the transactional distance in the sense posited by Moore ("The theory of transactional distance" 84).

The participants' negative perceptions of the course

Given that 85% of the participants prefer in-class teaching and learning that take place on campus (see Table 5), it is, perhaps, not surprising that they express negative perceptions associated with the course that is delivered exclusively online. It follows from Table 5 that there are several challenges that the participants perceive negatively in the course, such as difficulties to focus in the online instructional settings (38.9%), the loss of in-class interaction with the course teacher on campus (13%), and difficulties with finding classmates for group discussion (11%), to name just a few. The former disadvantage is illustrated by Excerpt (1) that is taken from the comments written by Participant 71:

1) The disadvantage of the course is it is harder to focus on what's happening during Zoom lectures and seminars (Participant 71, female).

As far as the participants' negative perceptions associated with the loss of in-class interaction are concerned, they are emblematised by the comment provided by Participant 26 in Excerpt (2) below:

2) My perceptions of a digital course in advanced grammar are negative as I learn way better by interacting physically. It is easier to interact and collaborate with fellow students when meeting physically on campus. It is also easier to get in touch with the teachers and professors to ask questions and to learn. (Participant 26, female)

It should be noted that the course-related negativity does not seem to differ substantially from the participants' negative perceptions of the online teaching and learning in general, as seen in Figure 3.

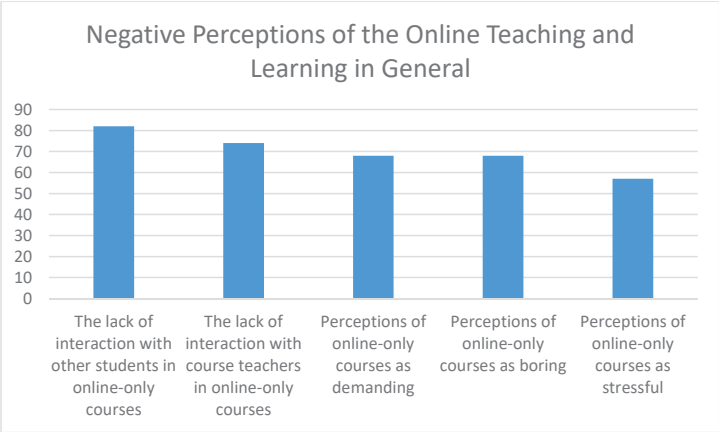

Figure 3: Negative Perceptions of the Online Teaching and Learning in General

It appears that the participants' lack of interaction with the teachers and other students in the online settings in general correlates with the negative perceptions of the course due to the loss of in-class interactions on campus. These findings are reflective of the participants' negative perceptions due the absence of in-classroom instruction irrespectively of whether they are enrolled in a teaching programme (see Table 4) or in non-teacher study programmes, for instance in bachelor and/or Year Course in English. The findings provide indirect support to Moore (22) and Zhang (64), who emphasise that a geographic separation of learners and teachers in a distance course leads to far-reaching consequences that involve not only the physical distance, but, in this particular case, psychological and behavioural types of distance that are regarded negatively by the participants. Notably, the participants seem to prioritise the lack of in-class interaction with the peers and teachers over technical problems (8%), which appear to be epiphenomenal.

Arguably, the aforementioned findings are noteworthy in the light of the participants' age bracket (mean = 24.5 years), which qualifies them to be representatives of the generation of digital natives (Pan and Gan 40), who, presumably, accept and use digital and online environments with ease. However, in contrast to the typical behavioural expectations associated with the digital natives that involve their familiarity with the online technology starting from their formative years (Deas 297), it follows from the findings that the participants, who are digital natives, manifest their preferences for the in-class teaching and learning on campus. This novel finding is in contrast to the recent research literature (see section 2), which is indicative of the EFL students' positive perceptions of online courses. In this study, however, the participants seem to experience the so-called "digital fatigue" that has commenced after two

academic years of online instruction that takes place off campus. Specifically, they point to i) difficulties with focussing (38.9%) and ii) the feeling of exhaustion (8.3%). In order to expand upon this observation, it should be reiterated that all the participants report previous exposure to the digital online courses (see Table 5). Moreover, the majority of the participants refer to two years of digital teaching via Zoom and Microsoft Teams in 2020 and 2021, e.g. "I spent nearly two years studying digitally with 7 courses taken digitally" (Participant P 51). A substantial amount of digital teaching is met by the participants with negativity, for instance "A full year of powerpoints and listening for 2 hours without any other interaction left me with a negative experience" (Participant P17, male). The negativity due to protracted exposure to the digital-only teaching and learning environment appears to be related to the aforementioned "digital fatigue", which is exemplified by Excerpt (3), e.g.

3) I find it difficult to attend zoom meetings as they are normally very similar/little variation as well as it is tiering to sit in front of a screen for several hours. (Participant P58, female)

Judging from (3), "digital fatigue" could account, at least in part, for the participants' negative perceptions of the course. Arguably, the negativity involves neither the participants' aversion to the subject per se, nor to the course teacher, but presupposes their dissatisfaction with the COVID-19 quarantine requirements that necessitate the online teaching and learning. Obviously, it is beyond the scope of the present article to discuss the notion of "digital fatigue", since it merits a separate investigation.

Conclusions and linguo-didactic implications

This article introduced and discussed a study that aimed to generate insights into the participants' perceptions of the course. That was achieved by means of distributing the questionnaire and yes/no statements to the participants, whose responses were analysed quantitatively in SPSS. The results of the analysis pointed to the participants' overall satisfaction with the course. Judging from the findings, the participants assessed positively such aspects of the course, as the ease of access, the ease of focusing on the learning process, the comfortable environment of studying from home that was afforded by the online mode of course delivery. At the same time, however, it was noted that the participants' perceptions of the course were marked by the negativity associated with the participants' inability to focus their attention during the online lectures and seminars, as well as the absence of in-class communication with the peers and the course teacher.

The findings in the study were suggestive of the following linguo-didactic implications. First, online courses in advanced grammar of English could successfully be introduced and delivered online to the generation of the digital natives, especially in the context of the COVID-19 quarantine restrictions. Second, whilst dissatisfaction and negativity could be expected to arise due to technical problems, the major source of negative perceptions of such courses might stem from the online environment that excluded in-class communication on the levels of teachers – students, an individual student – an individual student, and students – students. In order to minimise the negativity and maximise positive perceptions of the courses in advanced grammar of English, it could be desirable to include possibilities of in-class instructional settings on campus. Third, given that 38.9% of the participants indicated that they experienced problems with focusing and exhaustion (8.3%), it would be advisable to schedule lectures and seminars on separate days and not on the same day as a "lecture plus seminar" block. Fourth, factoring in the findings that online courses in general were perceived rather negatively as boring (68%), demanding (68%), and stressful (57%), it would be reasonable not to offer an online course in advanced grammar of English concurrently with other online EFL courses.

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Using English as a Medium for Teaching German

Abstract: *In Slovak primary and secondary schools, the German language is usually taught after students have gained at least basic understanding of English as their first foreign language. Many students, however, find continuing studying the two languages parallelly very difficult, not realizing that both languages are of Germanic origin and therefore share many common features. The approach to foreign language teaching promoted by the Council of Europe is plurilingual approach, which emphasizes the fact that foreign languages should not be taught in isolation. All students should be motivated to develop their plurilingual repertoire which includes all languages known by the individual. In spite of this fact, foreign languages are still taught in isolation in Slovakia. There are still very few materials for teachers available. In this article, we want to suggest some activities based on our experience in which the students' knowledge and skills in English can be used to make learning German easier, to build a positive attitude towards other cultures and to make the students more keen and autonomous language learners.*

Introduction

In the majority of Slovak primary and secondary schools, English is taught as the first foreign language. As far as the second foreign language is concerned, a few years later, many students decide to choose German. The German language still plays a very important role in Slovakia because of the proximity to the neighbouring Austria as well as the many German companies which have their seat in Slovakia, for example, Volkswagen Bratislava, ZF Trnava, or Stiebel Eltron Poprad. In spite of students' motivation to learn German, they usually find it very difficult and are not able to reach a higher proficiency level.

One of the major problems can be the fact that students are not led to using the knowledge and competences which they have already mastered in English. Both of these languages are of Germanic origin and therefore they share many common features both in lexis and grammar. These similarities can be used to make learning German easier. However, as Cenoz and Gorter (593) state, the idea of teaching and learning foreign languages in isolation is deeply rooted in the European education system.

In spite of the long tradition of teaching languages in isolation, the approach to language teaching currently promoted by the Council of Europe is plurilingual approach. Plurilingualism cannot be mistaken for multilingualism. CEFR (4) defines multilingualism as "the knowledge of a number of languages, or the co-existence of different languages in a given society." These languages are viewed in isolation. On the other hand, plurilingualism stresses the fact that different languages are not kept in "strictly separated mental compartments" but they contribute to building a language repertoire which includes all the languages an individual knows. These languages include for example the mother tongue of a person, foreign languages learnt at school, but also the languages in which the person learned only several phrases before travelling to a foreign country for holiday. Therefore, partial competence in a given language creates a "part of a multiple plurilingual competence which it enriches" (Coste et al. 12).

Plurilingual competence is characterized as an uneven and changing competence (CEFR 134), which means that the proficiency level in each language can be different. What is more, a person can have, for example, excellent writing competence and worse listening competence in one language, while he/ she can have excellent listening competence and worse writing competence in another language. This is caused by the way in which the language is used – if a person often watches films in the German language, his/ her listening skills can be very well developed. If these films are the person's

only contact with the German language, the speaking and writing skills of that person will probably be less developed.

Foreign language teachers should help students develop their plurilingual competence. The offer of foreign languages in schools should be diversified and students should be given the opportunity to develop their plurilingual repertoire (CEFR 4). Candelier et al. emphasize the need to decompartmentalise learning (9). Fenclová differentiates between 4 basic approaches to plurilingual education:

a) additive approach – two or more languages are learnt in isolation, plurilingual and pluricultural enrichment is not a goal, but it can be a consequence;
b) integrative approach – using knowledge and skills which an individual has in a language to learn another language (mother tongue to learn the first foreign language, mother tongue and the first foreign language to learn the second foreign language);
c) using skills acquired in a language to understand related languages which the students do not learn;
d) multilingually anticipating approach – students are exposed to various languages before they start learning foreign languages (11).

The additive approach is widely spread in Slovakia. Students learn two foreign languages, but these languages are taught separately and students usually do not realize that there are many similarities and that they can build on linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences which they have already acquired in another foreign language. This approach represents multilingualism more than plurilingualism. The integrative approach seems to be very useful as it makes learners aware of the similarities between languages. As Włosowicz (297) mentions, the recognition of similarities is not self-evident and learners should be taught how to profit from them. However, a significant proportion of second language teachers do not speak English. In the case of the school where we carried out our research, only 2 out of 7 German teachers (28.6 per cent) speak English. Even if second language teachers do speak English, they are not trained in creating plurilingual activities and including them in education. This is probably the main reason why the integrative approach is not widely spread in Slovak schools. The multilingually anticipating approach can be useful in pre-primary education as it can make children more sensitive to linguistic and cultural differences. Realizing the fact that what is different is not necessarily bad can help them accept other cultures which is vital for succeeding in today´s globalized world

Including plurilingual activities into education should be a conscious process and teachers should be aware of its basic principles. Little and Kirwan described the main pedagogical principles related to adoption of the plurilingual approach to education as follows:

"1. The teaching and learning of languages should be grounded in spontaneous and authentic language use: languages are "lived" only when they are used for communicative and reflective purposes.
2. Teaching and learning should draw on all the linguistic resources available to learners.
3. Teaching and learning should acknowledge that languages are discrete entities.
4. Teaching should help pupils to develop awareness of language and of what language learning entails, e.g. by drawing on their plurilingual repertoires to make connections between different languages. (20)"

As far as the principle of spontaneous and authentic language use is concerned, various materials which have connection with real life can be brought to the classroom – bus timetables, magazines, flyers,

or maps to name but a few. Activities done in lessons which have a connection with real life doubtlessly increase students' motivation. As Bérešová (2013, 180) notes, besides being attractive for learners, authentic materials are also suitable for learning grammatical structures, vocabulary and for practising receptive skills.

Based on the second principle, teachers should not demand students to use only the language which they are learning. They should encourage them to think about how the languages which they know can help them in learning other foreign languages. However, students should not forget that languages are discrete entities. Despite the fact that they are part of our plurilingual repertoire, most of the time they are used separately. This is why learners should strive to achieve a solid knowledge of all the languages they are learning.

Beacco et al. point out the importance to place "as much emphasis on the similarities between languages as on what differentiates them. (49)" Similarities can be identified in language structures such as vocabulary and grammar, but also in the field of pragmatic and sociolinguistic aspects. Beacco et al. (49) further emphasize that firstly it is important to focus on similarities, but later also on differences. Our experience is that the so-called false friends can cause a lot of misunderstanding and confusion (e.g. the German word *das Gift* means *poison* in English, *die Promotion* means *graduation,* etc.).

The aim of this paper is to present some plurilingual activities for German language classes suitable for students of secondary schools whose first foreign language is English, as well as the impact of these activities on learning German. The activities were created based on the above described theoretical principles.

Methodology

In order to answer the research question: "*What is the impact of including plurilingual activities into teaching and learning German?*", we decided to suggest three plurilingual activities for German classes. Each activity was related to a different aspect of the language – vocabulary, grammar, and mediation as one of the four modes of communication.

These activities were implemented into German lessons in secondary grammar school *Gymnázium Pierra de Coubertina* in Piešťany. Based on convenience sampling, the sample group included 12 students aged 15 – 16, who had been learning German for nearly 5 years, at that time working on A2 level. The first foreign language of these students is English in which they had achieved B1 level.

The data for our qualitative research were collected through unstructured observation and informal interviews with the students. We observed the reaction of students to plurilingual activities, the impact of these activities on students' motivation to learn languages as well as the students' ability to use two foreign languages at the same time (translanguaging). In the interviews, students expressed their opinions on plurilingual way of teaching and learning.

Results

To make learning German easier, we suggested some activities which help students build on their knowledge of English. As Bérešová (2016, 29) mentions, people who speak a certain language have fewer problems acquiring another language of the same branch thanks to the similarities in vocabulary, grammar and sentence structure.

Focusing on the similarities in English and German vocabulary, students created trilingual lists of words in German, English and Slovak language. These words included all new words from each unit from their coursebook *Motive*. The words were organized in a chart created in Microsoft Excel. In each unit, students were able to find many similar words. Consequently, they highlighted these word pairs. This

is how they realized that similarities between English and German really exist, which lead them to build on these similarities when learning German. Similar words which students were able to find within one unit (unit 12) are depicted in chart 1. Within this unit, students found 109 new words. Out of these words, 19 words (i.e. 17.4 per cent) are obviously similar to their English counterparts.

German	English	Slovak
chemisch	chemical	chemický
das Metall	metal	kov
die Technik	technology	technika
manipulieren	manipulate	manipulovať
kalt	cold	chladný
warm	warm	teplý
die Temperatur	temperature	teplota
windig	windy	veterno
planen	plan	plánovať
wenn	when	keď
die Aktivität	activity	aktivita
der Fingernagel	fingernail	necht
tolerant	tolerant	tolerantný
voll	full	plný
die Hütte	hut	chata
die Nordsee	the North Sea	Severné more
der Schild	shield	štít
fallen	fall	padať
der Zentimeter	centimeter	centimeter

Chart 1: Similarities between German and English words

Students evaluated this activity as a very beneficial one. They claimed that in spite of the fact that they had been learning German for nearly 5 years, they had never realized how similar English and German vocabulary is. The results in vocabulary testing improved. Not only students but also parents provided us with very positive feedback, claiming that this activity helped their children in learning German vocabulary. On the other hand, students still have problems with the gender of nouns in the German language, as this differs in many cases from the gender in English or Slovak. They also find learning plural forms of German nouns very difficult.

Another benefit of this activity is the fact that it develops students' cooperation and autonomy. Students make their own partial lists of unknown words, then they share their lists and create one comprehensive list of German words with their English and Slovak counterparts. In cooperative learning, students are willing to share their ideas for other students' benefit and vice versa, they know that they can benefit from other students' ideas. Relying on classmates and teacher rather than solely on the teacher is one

of the main characteristic features of the learner-centered approach (Bérešová 2013, 155). Learner autonomy plays a very important role. Each student realizes that his/ her learning needs and learning style may be different from his/ her classmates. Therefore, it is important not to rely exclusively on the teacher's instructions and classmates' ideas, but to develop such learning strategies which suit him/ her.

Another activity which we suggested is related to grammar. It includes explaining the German tense *Perfekt* based on students' knowledge of the English *present perfect tense*. Perfect tenses, which do not exist in the Slovak language, are rather difficult for Slovak students. Students were given a short German text written in *Perfekt*. Then they were asked if English has a tense with a similar form. Most of the students were able to identify the similarities with the present perfect tense (haben + past participle vs. have + past participle). Based on these similarities, students understood the German tense *Perfekt* more easily. On the other hand, there are some differences in usage which need to be explained and practiced. What is more, students still have problems with irregular verbs. Even when they learn them, they forget them very quickly. For this reason, irregular verbs require a lot of practice and revision.

There are also other grammatical structures in which similarities can be found. Our experience clearly shows that pointing out similarities between German and English when it comes to the use of definite and indefinite articles is very helpful. Students usually do not have problems with definite and indefinite articles in English, but they struggle with their use in German. Realizing that the principle is the same (a/an = ein, eine; the = der, die, das) helps the students a lot. Admittedly, the topic of German articles is much more complex, as other aspects, such as gender or grammatical case need to be taken into consideration.

The last suggested activity is related to mediation. Mediation is alongside with reception, production, and interaction one of the four modes of communication (CEFR 14). However, many times this mode of communication is not developed at all. We consider it very important to practice mediation in language classes, as students may be exposed to mediating in real life. After reading a short text in German from their coursebook, the students' task was to prepare a short presentation of that text in English. Students were allowed to work in pairs.

In the beginning, some students seemed to be rather confused, because they had never done a similar activity before. After reading the text, they started to discuss the topic in Slovak, later switching into English and German. Subsequently, each pair presented their ideas. In spite of the fact that students were rather insecure at the beginning of the activity, by the end of the lesson they appreciated the activity and said that it was interesting and fun. What is more, some of the students said that they were really surprised by the fact that they had managed to transform ideas from one language into another. There were also some students who are very good at English (achieving B2 level) but not that good at German (struggling even with A1), especially when it comes to productive skills. The possibility to present in a language at which they are more proficient gave them a sense of fulfilment, which they admitted in the interviews following the activities.

As mentioned above, while working on the mediation task, the students were using three languages. This is the so-called translanguaging which can be defined as "an action undertaken by plurilingual persons, where more than one language may be involved." (CEFR CV 31) In a discussion which followed the activity, students named some situations in which translanguaging can be useful in real life. All of them agreed that it can help them in communication with people from countries whose language they do not speak. Furthermore, they agreed that it can help them while studying as they can simultaneously work with sources of literature written in various languages.

Another positive point, and not negligible, is the motivation to learn languages which the plurilingual activities awakened. This motivation is connected with a sense of achievement. Students' results in testing

vocabulary improved, they realized that knowing German vocabulary is not an unreachable goal and this motivated them to devote more time to learning German. Some of the students even said that they were considering choosing German as an elective subject the following school year.

Discussion

It is our experience that German is extremely challenging for Slovak learners to learn. They are often not able to reach higher language proficiency levels, especially where productive skills are concerned. German grammar is very complex and the sentence structure is rather complicated. In contrast to English to which students are exposed on daily basis through the medium of the Internet and social networking sites, they are not exposed to German at all. Most of the time, their only contact with the German language is in their German classes. That is why teachers of German should make the effort to make learning German easier. One of the ways is to build on the similarities between German and English, which is in most cases the students' first foreign language.

All of the plurilingual activities which we suggested seem to be beneficial. The students realized that there are similarities between English and German and that these similarities can help them in learning German. In addition, these activities have a motivational effect on students. Being able to transform ideas from one foreign language into another makes students more confident in using the language, intrinsically motivated, and therefore also willing to devote more time to learning it. Nonetheless, teachers should not consider plurilingual activities as a "miracle" solution. There are still many parts of the language which students simply need to memorize. The gender of German nouns, their plural forms or irregular verbs are among the most problematic topics.

Another obvious problem is teachers' unpreparedness for implementing plurilingual activities into education. Firstly, many teachers of German do not speak English. Secondly, a very important aspect which seems to prevent the use of other languages is the fact that in the past years foreign language teachers were forced to use exclusively that foreign language which they taught. Using Slovak, English or even other languages in German classes was regarded as undesirable. Thirdly, there is a lack of courses for teachers where they would be taught how to make their classes plurilingual. For teachers, who are burdened by the ever-increasing amount of paperwork, it can be very difficult to read theoretical documents and create their own activities. Therefore, we suggest that courses related to plurilingual teaching be organized. In these courses, teachers would be explained the basic principles of plurilingual teaching and provided with ready-to-use plurilingual activities for different age groups of students as well as for different levels of language.

In conclusion, plurilingual activities have a positive impact on students, their motivation to learn languages, as well as on their language skills. In spite of the fact that they will not solve all problems related to language learning, they are worth implementing into teaching German, as students can undeniably benefit from them.

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LITERARY AND CULTURAL STUDIES

Šárka Bubíková

Urban Setting in Contemporary American Crime Fiction

Abstract*: Although crime fiction is now a standard topic of scholarly discussions, still very little attention has been paid to the role of place and space in the genre. The article attempts to add in filling the gap by analyzing the changing representations of urban setting in contemporary American crime fiction. Briefly characterizing the traditional image of the city in American hardboiled crime fiction, the article then moves on to contrast it with the way urban setting functions in many recent crime novels. Referring to crime series by Sara Paretsky, Linda Barnes, Laura Lippman, S.J. Rozan and Les Roberts, it analyzes how a new image of the city is constructed in contemporary crime writing. The article also tries to show that although the contemporary heightened interest in the role of places and spaces in literary works has been mainly focused on classic works or the so-called high-brow texts, it can yield interesting results when aimed at popular genres, such as crime fiction.*

Introduction

Crime fiction is a kind of genre literature centering on a crime and its investigation, and traditionally it could be characterized by its focus on the unexpected twists of plot, the mystery, the puzzle, or, in the words of Dagmar Mocná, on "the intellectual game" (Mocná 106). In a well-known 1931 essay on popular literature in general and crime fiction in particular, Karel Čapek, himself a fan of detective stories, assessed the early masters of the genre and claimed that in detective fiction objects and places exist only as traces and characters are nothing but sets of traces for the detection (Čapek 157). His observations were fitting for the so-called Golden Age of detective fiction in which the setting represented a mere background or a scene of crime. It provided a specific atmosphere enhancing the crime's atrocity, added in creating a mood, or supplied the investigator with both significant and misleading clues. However, Čapek's claim is no longer true because many contemporary crime novels create settings far richer and detailed than is necessary for the unfolding of the whodunit plot. It well documents the great potential of genre literature to evolve even within its generic formulas. It also shows that the so-called spatial turn made its impact in this popular genre as well.

Contemporary crime fiction uses its setting for many more purposes than just creating a stage, an atmosphere, and for providing clues. The setting can be designed to educate the reader in certain areas (this is often the case in ethnic crime fiction[1]), bring up current problems (as for example in environmental crime fiction), deepen psychological aspects of individual characters, etc. In the critical discourse on crime fiction in the first decade of the twenty-first century, David Geherin in his study of the importance of place in crime fiction persuasively shows that setting, although an often-undervalued component of fiction, is in fact very important even in works where plot is the dominant element (Geherin 3). Famous crime fiction writer P.D. James confirms his claim in her discussion of the genre when she states: "the setting exerts a unifying and dominant influence on both the characters and the plot" (James 110). In fact, some crime fiction writers managed to convey such a vivid sense of place in which their protagonists operate that some locations have become "indelibly associated with fictional detectives – Sherlock Holmes and London, Jules Maigret and Paris, Philip Marlowe and Los Angeles" (Geherin 8).[2] The article analyzes how the sense of place is created in contemporary American crime fiction with urban setting in contrast to the typical rendering of the urban milieu in the hardboiled tradition.

The "mean streets" of urban jungle

The traditional setting of the American crime fiction is urban, or, even more precisely, metropolitan. The private eyes of the American hard-boiled school typically steered along the hot and dangerous streets of Los Angeles, and big cities became the staple setting of American crime fiction for almost half a century. John Scaggs, in his outline of the genre's history, explains the urban setting as a result of the realism of the genre (especially of the police procedural) and as the legacy of the so-called Hard-Boiled School (Scaggs 88).

Leonard Lutwack in his groundbreaking *Role of Place in Literature* pointed out that places can be rendered in a variety of ways ranging from "geographical verisimilitude to symbolic reference" (Lutwack 18). Sometimes, a realistic description of a place can be infused with symbolic meaning at the same time. Traditionally, in the hardboiled fiction, the metropolis was depicted mainly as "dangerous, violent and squalid" (Willett 4) conforming to the common image of the city as a jungle.[3] Rather than a site of the fulfilment of the American dream, many early crime fiction writers saw the city in the words of Woody Haut as "the epicenter of an all-consuming nightmare" (Haut 179). Ralph Willett adds that in the traditional hardboiled fiction "the dark side of the city was evoked (and) its spaces were racialized through the white detective who confronts 'blackness' in its various meanings while absorbing mythically romantic aspects such as poverty and marginalization" (Willett 12).

Raymond Chandler's fiction managed to convey a strong sense of both intimidation and alienation connected with Los Angeles. He for example skillfully created scenes in which he juxtaposed Philip Marlowe alone against the backdrop of the busy city, usually somehow intruding into his private space suggesting that his PI can never be truly alone nor fully a part of the urban crowd, as these two examples from *The Big Sleep* illustrate: "There was a gusty wind blowing in at the windows and the soot from the oil burners of the hotel next door was down-drafted into the room and rolling across the top of the desk like tumbleweed drifting across a vacant lot" (Chandler 22); "The night air came drifting in with a kind of stale sweetness that still remembered automobile exhausts and the streets of the city. I reached for my drink and drank it slowly" (24). In fact, Willett considers this as one of the strongest assets of Chandler's prose: "The projection of menace in 'mean streets' and its registration as threat by the drifting individual is one of Chandler's particular successes" (Willett 21). The detective and the city have a peculiar love-hate relationship conveyed to the reader vividly through the first-person narrative. Silver Alain and Elizabeth Ward sum up Chandler's approach: "Unlike Agatha Christie, Arthur Conan Doyle, or even Dashiell Hammett, Chandler's descriptions are never pure 'objectivism'. Chandler is usually more interested in conveying the feel of a place to his reader than in merely relating its physical appearance" (Alain and Ward 2). Chandler's renderings of the city also articulate "a modernist sense of urban anomie and moral disintegration" (Horsley 37).

This dark picture of urban milieu is not limited to the 1940s peak of the hardboiled crime fiction but continues well into the second half of the twentieth century with the city typically pictured as a barren, tormented place of alienation, isolation and danger where the lonely figure of the detective moves through the often-crowded streets. This picture was in accord with the findings of sociologists studying the mid-twentieth-century processes of urbanization: they emphasized the non-existence of a community in cities, where the alienated and isolated individual collides with an anonymous urban crowd, described by Burton Pike as "anti-community within the dissociated culture" (Pike 100). And likewise, in the prevailingly realistic mode of the American crime fiction from up to the 1980s, the city was "a place of shadows, casual relationships and violence," usually depicted "on the edge of a social, financial or environmental precipice" (Haut 180-1). The last one is well depicted for example in later novels of Ross Macdonald where the dirty polluted city is seen as a parallel to the moral decay of contemporary society.

City as Home

The bleak urban scene of crime fiction began to change in the 1980s when female writers entered the field in large numbers and brought with them narrative interest in the private lives of their protagonists. This "intrusion of the personal" (Bertens and D'haen 59) might in fact constitute a major contemporary development in crime fiction. Interestingly enough, this new trend also influences the ways the urban setting is approached. While an acute awareness of the dangers of urban life still naturally constitutes an important feature of the city as setting, the crime novels' protagonists are no longer lonely outsiders in their urban milieu. They know where (and when) city streets can be mean, but they consider the city, above all, their home, a place where they are firmly rooted and socially connected. I believe this change in attitude is also in accord with the prevailing realism of the crime fiction genre because the city is the home of most of the American population (in fact of 83 per cent in 2020), therefore this new attitude may simply reflect the reality of urban dwellers – they have created strategies to make the city their home, to feel at home in the city.

The beginning of this change in the narrative attitude to urban setting can be detected in Sara Paretsky's Chicago-based V.I. Warshawski series and can later be found for example in Linda Barnes's Carlotta Carlyle series situated in Boston, Laura Lippman's Tess Monaghan series set in Baltimore, in S.J. Rozan Lydia Chin & Bill Smith series set in New York's Chinatown, or in Les Roberts's Milan Jacovich series taking place in Cleveland, Ohio.

How is this sense of a place domesticated, or this presentation of city as home achieved? Our first example is by Sara Paretsky. Beginning in 1982, she has published crime novels with a female private investigator V. I. Warshawski. The series is considered groundbreaking in several aspects – in its employment of a female PI, in being set not in a coastal metropolis but in a midwestern city, and in focusing on so-called white-collar crimes (for example insurance frauds) and their impact on common citizens. The importance of Paretsky's fiction probably cannot be overestimated. S.J. Rozan, herself a successful crime fiction writer, sums up Paretsky's fiction: "V.I. Warshawski, Sara Paretsky's Chicago-based private investigator, is that classic American invention, the hardboiled private eye. The fact that she's also a woman has, to her creator's disbelief, changed the face of crime fiction" (Rozan, "Sara Paretsky" 1). However, from our point of view, the series is also original in its presentation of the urban setting by offering a female point of view.

Most reviewers[4] agree that in Paretsky's work, Chicago becomes alive and a character in its own right. The protagonist's ability of keen observation of her city is introduced in the opening lines of the series in the investigator's description of a night drive along Lake Michigan in July in which she notes the quality of the air, the colors of the lights reflected on the lake's surface, the residues of barbecue dinners in the park, the heaviness of traffic, etc. Stating that "the city (was) moving restlessly, trying to breathe" (Paretsky, *Indemnity Only* 1), she speaks of Chicago as much as of herself. The intimate connection between the city and the protagonist is manifested throughout the series often and Paretsky's fiction thus confirms Hana Wirth-Nesher's observation that "in modern urban novel, cityscape is inseparable from self" (Wirth-Nesher 21).

Similarly, the protagonist of Linda Barnes's series feels connected to her city. Published since 1997, Barnes's Carlotta Carlyle series is set in Boston, and it also features a female professional investigator, all the more familiar with the cityscape as she is a former cab driver. Here is an example of how her emotional bond to the city is mediated: when Carlotta drives towards the Boston University Bridge the road suddenly offers "a spectacular view of Boston's church steeples, brownstones, and skyscrapers" and Carlotta admits: "It still gives me goosebumps after all these years" (Barnes 45). To her, the city possesses a special charm underlined with the silver band of the Charles River. Despite operating as a PI and therefore having experienced the city's dark underbelly, she has created a strong emotional bond with her urban milieu. Her experience as a taxi driver makes her all the more familiar with Boston's urban

geography, of which she is a keen and detailed observer. One observation in particular serves as a symbol of the detective's job: the importance of the right perspective. Carlotta observes that downtown Boston is a jumble, but she has found a precise spot where the John Hancock and Prudential towers guard the bay in which the view of the skyline seems to crystallize. Similarly, the traces and facts assembled in an investigation seem jumbled for a long time until the right perspective is found from which everything falls into place and the case is solved. Remapping the city through the mental movements of the investigation is paralleled to uncovering crime.

Another series, in which the city is depicted as a protagonist's home rather than a menacing alienating milieu, is Laura Lippman's Tess Monaghan series. Published between the years 1997 and 2015, the series is placed in Baltimore and in featuring a former journalist, now an amateur sleuth, it continues in the trend of female private investigators. In the series, the city is also presented as the protagonist's beloved home. In the opening of the first novel *Baltimore Blues*, the intimate connection between the protagonist and her city is foregrounded: the city echoes the mood of Tess. Unemployed and running out of resources, Tess is depressed and frustrated, and the city seen from the vantage point of her rowing boat also looks "dirty and discouraged" (Lippman 4). The parallel between the city and the protagonist is further emphasized: "Neither Tess nor her hometown were having a good year" (4). In the case of Tess, this is explained as a result of her year-long unemployment, while in the case of the city, the unprecedented murder rate it was experiencing is to blame. Although the mayor has nicknamed Baltimore the City That Reads, in facing its rising violent crime rate head on Tess ponders different epithets, such as the City That Bleeds or the City That Grieves. Still, when she comes up with the sobriquet the City One Leaves, she admits that she could never flee her hometown any more than she could surface from "the bottom of the Chesapeake Bay with an anchor around her neck" (4). To document her strong bond with the city both as a place and as a historical site, she almost instinctively begins to hum "The Star-Spangled Banner" as she is rowing towards Fort McHenry, the birthplace of the US national anthem (3). Therefore, although Tess does not romanticize her hometown, she has a strong bond with it.

From the examples above it may seem that the new image of the urban setting in crime fiction comes exclusively from female writers and their female protagonists. One could easily argue that this image stems simply from the inclusion of the network of family and friends, which is a focus more typical for female writers. However, the function of the city as home is not gender specific. A great example is the crime fiction series by Les Roberts. The series began in 1988 and it features second-generation Slovenian American Milan Jacovich, a Cleveland private investigator specializing in industrial security. Unlike the traditional PI of the hardboiled fiction, who as Bertens and D'haen emphasize "never articulates deep feelings" (Bertens and D'haen 212), Milan is pictured as a caring father, openly confessing his love for his sons and resenting the fact that after his divorce he is no longer present in their lives daily. He is equally vocal about his relationship to his hometown.

Similarly to the protagonists of Paretsky's, Barnes's, and Lippman's series, Milan loves his city too and he is at home there spatially as well as socially. Driving in his home neighborhood, the familiar houses and local establishments wrap around him "like a reassuring cocoon" (Roberts, *Deep Shaker* 224). A keen and alert observer of the city, Milan provides insights into Cleveland's geography and social life. For him, Cleveland simply is "a pretty good place to live if you don't mind the weather" (*Pepper Pike* 35). Situated strategically on both the Cuyahoga River and the banks of Lake Erie, the city has a reputation as a transportation hub and a manufacturing, blue-collar epicenter of the Midwest. And although in many instances, the descriptions underline it, the prevailing image of Cleveland as a Rust Belt city is what Roberts tries to contradict in his rendering of the rich cultural and artistic life to be found there.

Les Roberts's Slovenian protagonist's affectionate portrayal of Cleveland as a multifaceted city that has grown out of the resourcefulness and perseverance of the generations of immigrants who sought out their American dreams there resembles the trope of the city as a bazaar as characterized by Peter Langer in his typology of urban imagery. Viewed as a bazaar, the city is a place "of astonishing richness" of activity, diversity and opportunities, fostering "the development of unique combinations of social affiliations and lifestyles" (Langer 100). Indeed, such an unequivocally positive literary presentation of city, especially in crime fiction, is rather rare.

The last example of the new representation of urban setting comes from the crime writing of S.J. Rozan. Published since 1994, Rozan's series is unique because the volumes alternate between two narrative voices of her PI pair – Bill Smith and Chinese American Lydia Chin. Creating a pair of collaborating private investigators allows for even greater degree of realism as the physically toughest parts of investigations are done by Bill while the search for clues in New York's Chinatown is mainly up to Lydia. In addition, it gives the writer an opportunity to present the lore of Chinatown and the culture and habits of Chinese Americans, as a reviewer summed up:

> Through Chin, Rozan offers a realistic look at a community largely misunderstood by its urban neighbors, and a resourceful, courageous, and independent character, albeit one hectored by her mother, who disapproves of her chosen profession. While the cynical Smith is a more familiar type, both the lyricism of his narrative voice and the complexity of the plots his creator throws him into, place him in a class all his own" (Picker 52).

Although Rozan is not part of the Chinese American community, she is credited with depicting it authentically.[5] Both Rozan's characters have a strong bond to their urban environment. Lydia is deeply rooted in Chinatown and Bill, not immune to its exotic charms either, considers New York more pragmatically as a place of opportunity and, for him personally, welcomed anonymity. The combination of Lydia's neighborhood's picturesqueness and the many options available in the metropolis seem to echo both the trope of the city as bazaar and the image of New York Ralph Willett considers typical – i.e., "one of determined theatricality modified by pragmatic business sense" (Willett 49). Here is a vivid description of New York's Chinatown, linking the place to a theater stage:

> A bright sunny day in Chinatown brings everybody out, even in the cold. People wove through the packed streets like dancers (…) Their music came from the words they spoke: the Cantonese and English I understand, the Mandarin and Fukienese and Spanish and Korean that I don't. The percussion was their footsteps slapping and tapping the pavement in syncopated rhythm. Their costumes were marvelous: bright ski parkas, patterned scarves and mittens, plaid coats, black leather and brown leather and puffy white fur sweeping by one another in intricate, fast-moving choreography. The set was good, too. Crimson New Year's banners with glittering gold letters snapped in the wind (Rozan, *China Trade* 83).

The profound sense of place in the selected crime fiction series is heightened by employment of all senses in the descriptions of the city. Taking Paretsky's series as an illustrative example, one notices how V.I. Warshawski not only sees the city, but smells it: "a pungent mix of chemicals" burning "eyes and sinuses" (Paretsky, *Blood Shot* 2) in the industrial parts of South Chicago; hears it: such as "the clanking, shattering noise" (Paretsky, *Deadlock*, no pagination) of the conveyor belts in the Port of Chicago, and feels it when she walks downtown or swims in the Lake Michigan. Similar examples can be found in all

the series discussed. In Rozan's series, the smells in particular become an important element in the depiction of New York's Chinatown – attention is paid to the scents of various teas Lydia likes to drink as well as to spices used in Chinese cuisine.

Significantly for the crime fiction genre, the correspondence between the protagonist, the setting and the plot is also emphasized by introducing physical perceptions of discomfort as a foreshadowing of crime. So for instance in the opening of *Killing Orders*, Warshawski shivers in the cold January wind, her stomach tightening with anxiety due to both the unpleasant memories connected to a particular urban spot and to a crime gradually surfacing. Even in *Hardball*, which begins on a sunny day in September, while driving from a prison visit back to her office Warshawski notes how knotted her shoulders are, how "tension builds in the calmest muscles" (3). Although a beautiful evening is emerging, the setting sun is still painfully shining in her eyes. The physical discomfort is again foreshadowing an impending crime as well as the protagonist's initial blindness in investigating it.

City has been American crime fiction's most typical setting. The hardboiled tradition presented a bleak picture of the urban milieu – the city was imagined as a jungle, as an alienating, corrupt and dangerous place where the private eye felt isolated and disconnected from the anonymous crowd. However, this image began to change in the 1980s and more recent crime fiction, although carrying on in the hardboiled trend of featuring resourceful, independent and tough PIs, depicts the city in a far more positive way: as colorful, busting with life in all its diversity, rich in opportunities, and as such resembling the trope of the bazaar defined by Langer. Newly, the city is depicted as (often deeply beloved) home of the detectives where they enjoy a network of family, friends, and favorite local establishments (be them pubs, bars, coffee houses, bookstores). The image of the city as home implies therefore not only an intimate acquaintance with its urban geography, but also the individual's rootedness within its social background. It is also in accord with the prevailing realism of the genre because it reflects the strategies of how urban people carve a home out of the complex spaces of the city.

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Notes

(1) For more on the sub-genre, see for ex. Bubíková, Šárka. "Zločin v různých odstínech (pleti): Podoby a kořeny současné americké etnické detektivky." *Litikon: Časopis pre výskum literatúry* vol. 4, no. 1, 2019, pp. 29-37.

(2) Interestingly enough, a clearly defined setting is important even in the pulp magazine era, as Jozef Pecina points out, when the "rather formulaic and repetitive" sensational crime tales (such as published in the *Spicy Detective Stories*) could be distinguished often only by their individual settings (Pecina 54).

(3) For a detailed discussion see Peter Langer's "Sociology – Four Images of Organized Diversity: Bazaar, Jungle, Organism, and Machine."

(4) Several examples can be found in Kinsman's *Sara Paretsky*, 53-5.

(5) For example, Leonard Picker, reviewer for the *Publisher's Weekly*, states: "Rozan feels validated by the overwhelmingly positive reactions she's gotten from the Chinese-American community, as well as from readers in Japan, where there aren't a lot of strong independent female Asian protagonists for Asian women to identify with, and where her work landed her the Maltese Falcon Award" (Picker 52).

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Eva Čoupková

The role of mute characters and muteness in the first English melodramas

Abstract: *The form of melodrama arrived in England from France at the beginning of the nineteenth century and soon became a well-established and popular genre among many strata of society. Originally a working-class entertainment, it flourished within the aesthetic limits of the Licensing Act with its emphasis on music, pantomime and gesture, rather that the spoken word. The form was inaugurated in England by Thomas Holcroft who adapted René-Charles Guilbert de Pixérécourt's melodrama Coelina; ou, l'enfant du mystère as A Tale of Mystery in 1802. In this play, following the example of Pixérécourt, Holcroft introduced the mute character Francisco, whose tragic fate and visual means of communication excited a strong emotional response from the audience. The paper discusses the historical and social conditions that enabled the spread and vogue for the genre, and reasons why muteness became a language of the stage. Then, it analyses the first English melodrama and shows how the different manifestation of muteness in the form of postures, gestures, silent tableaux and music intensified the theatrical appeal of the play. Finally, it is argued that the legacy of the first melodrama reverberated in the English theatre of the nineteenth century and the first silent films, which is illustrated by the example of the first adaptation of Frankenstein with its mute Creature.*

Introduction

> "…he speaks to you in smiles and tears, the language of the heart – his only language" (*Deaf and Dumb* 59-60).

The mute characters, communicating with postures and gestures only, abounded in the English melodramas of the nineteenth century. Among many others, melodramas with silent protagonists include *A Tale of Mystery; The Inchcape Bell, or the Dumb Sailor Boy; Homicide, or The Dumb Boy and the Spectre Knight; The Dumb Guide of the Tyrol; The Dumb Friend;* or *The Dumb Girl of the Inn* (Booth 71). Michael Booth in his founding work on English melodrama explains this character as "almost always a sympathetic figure with a terrible and mysterious past who is meant to evoke great pity" (71). Peter Brooks, the author of the seminal book *The Melodramatic Imagination,* argues that the mute roles are remarkably prevalent in melodrama and define and shape this genre (56).

The aim of this paper is to examine the ways in which the mute character, together with other non-verbal theatrical features, such as music and tableaux, functioned on the early nineteenth-century stage, and why these visual and non-verbal means of expression reflected so well the tastes of the audience and conditions of the theatrical practice. To illustrate the point, I will discuss the first play denoted as melodrama in English, Thomas Holcroft's *A Tale of Mystery,* which initiated the popularity of the genre and its mute protagonist, and inspired a number of followers, among others the first adaptor of *Frankenstein*.

Historical and social background

The word melodrama literally means "music-drama" or "song-drama" in Greek. However, it arrived in Britain from France, where the first recorded use of "le mélodrame" was in 1772, and later Rousseau applied it in his *Pygmalion* in 1775 (John 4). The critics denote René-Charles Guilbert de Pixérécourt (1773–1844),

who borrowed the term, the dumb show and the music from *Pygmalion*, as the most proclaimed exponent of the genre in France. Pixérécourt, the author of some hundred and twenty plays, more than half of them melodramas (Brooks 24), established the form. Brooks sees the origins of melodrama within the context of the French Revolution, which brought about the dissolution of the traditional society and existing literary forms, such as tragedy or comedy of manners (14–15). Apart from that, the French Revolution also initiated the tendency described by Brooks as "desacralisation", i.e. the liquidation of the traditional sacred and its representative institutions, the church and monarch (15), with its consequent weakening of socially cohesive bonds. The advent of melodrama and the Gothic novel is then interpreted by Devendra P. Varma as "the quest for the numinous" (206), which means a search for the alternative ways to express anxiety and longing for a new order in the world where the traditional patterns of morality and social hierarchy no longer apply.

The plots of many melodramas were based on the successful novels of the day. The genre in vogue at the end of the eighteenth century was the Gothic novel, and English writers of these works were hugely successful in France. Bertrand Evans, for example, mentions the marked influence of Ann Radcliffe on one of Pixérécourt's melodramas called *Le Chateau des Appenins, ou Le Fantome vivant,* where the main characters are Montoni and Emilie, and the plot is borrowed from *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (163). Characteristics of the Gothic abounded in the French literature and theatre of the period, with the aim to provide a general mixture of fear, excitement and suspense.

Katherine Astbury aptly explains this phenomenon by the fact that, given what people went through during the French Revolution, it was widely recognized that highly dramatic works were required to have an effect on readers and theatre audiences (16). This view is confirmed by the Marquis de Sade's comment:

To those acquainted with all the evil that the wicked can bring down on the heads of the good, novels became as difficult to write as they were tedious to read. There was hardly a soul alive who did not experience more adversity in four or five years than the most famous novelist in all literature could have invented in a hundred (Marquis de Sade, *The Crimes of Love* 13-14, quoted in Astbury 16).

A similar view is expressed by the leading French theatrical critic of the period, Charles Nodier, who observed that melodrama is "re-enacting the trauma of the Revolution" (Introduction, vol. 1, vii, quoted in Astbury 17).

In Britain, melodrama functioned in socially different conditions. Booth in his *English Melodrama* argues that melodrama in England was distinctly lower-middle-class and working-class entertainment (52). Even in France, the genre evolved with an uneducated audience in mind, and its founder Pixérécourt declared openly: "I am writing for those who cannot read" (John 2). This tendency was even stronger in Britain, as the connection between melodrama and the uneducated was reinforced by the law. The Licensing Act of 1737, which remained in force until the Theatre Regulation Act of 1843, prohibited the acting of the so- called legitimate plays (those involving the spoken word only) outside the City of Westminster, thus allowing only Covent Garden and Drury Lane theatres, and during the summer months, also the Haymarket theatre, to present legitimate drama (John 4), subject to the approval of the censor. Moreover, at the end of the eighteenth century, the theatres were rebuilt and enlarged in order to accommodate more numerous audiences (Rowell 6).

Therefore, melodrama became an appropriate form to thrive within the aesthetic limits imposed by the Licensing Act; since it communicated mainly through music, pantomime and gestures, it was well-suited to those who "could not read", and, due to the larger distance between the stage and the boxes, pit and gallery, also to those who "could not hear" the actors properly. Indeed, as John noted (8),

melodrama proved so successful in Britain that eventually the legitimate theatres had to appropriate its techniques and staging to attract wider audiences. This can be demonstrated by an example of *A Tale of Mystery,* the first play performed in Britain denoted as melodrama, which was firstly staged at the legitimate Covent Garden theatre on 13 November 1802.

Melodrama retained its popularity during the first half of the nineteenth century, largely due to its capacity to absorb various influences and topics, giving rise to subgenres of the Gothic, eastern, military or nautical melodrama (Booth 93), and the ability to satisfy the tastes of a wide strata of spectatorship. Charles Dickens famously recorded his experience of attending melodramatic productions in his seminal essay, "The Amusements of the People," in 1850. He largely views the plays through the eyes of one Joe Whelks, a commoner, who is "not much of a reader, has no great store of books, (…) no very commodious room to read in." However, the theatres this character frequents are always full, and the theatre managers who "would live to please Mr. Whelks, must please Mr. Whelks to live". Dickens also observed a common trend seen in melodrama, the mixing of genres and audiences: "When the situations were very strong indeed, they were very like what some favourite situations in the Italian Opera would be to a profoundly deaf spectator. (…) so do extremes meet, and so there is some hopeful congeniality between what will excite Mr. Whelks, and what will rouse a Duchess" (Dickens 60, a part quoted also in John 8, and Booth 62).

Muteness as the language of melodrama

As was discussed in the previous section, the non-verbal means of expression gained increased importance in melodrama and became one of its defining features. Pantomime survived alongside melodrama, and pantomimic scenes formed a part of many melodramatic productions. Brooks interestingly argues that melodrama is, in fact, "the text of muteness" (56), and "different kinds of drama have their corresponding sense deprivations: for tragedy, blindness, since tragedy is about insight and illumination, for comedy, deafness, since comedy is concerned with problems in communication, misunderstandings and their consequences, and for melodrama, muteness, since melodrama is about expression" (57).

This observation is both ingenious and right, even if some exceptions may be found. Booth, to the contrary, believes that the "lack of sight could be melodramatically more exciting than lack of speech and just as pitiful" (Booth 72). This supposition is illustrated, for example, by James Kenney's melodrama *The Blind Boy* (1807), where the blind Edmond compensates for this disability by employing his extraordinarily developed senses of hearing and touch. He is the first to hear the horns of the approaching rival and usurper of his title, prince Rodolpho, and, in the decisive moment of crisis, manages to produce the corpus delicti, a ring, based on which the principal villain is identified – "One of the ruffians wore a ring, in quitting my grasp, it slipped his finger; behold it here" (16). However, his lack of sight brings him to mortal danger as well, when he is on the verge of slipping from the rocks into the Vistula river on a dark and stormy night, being rescued at the last moment by his to-be bride. The blind Edmond is quite a pathetic hero, bearing his destiny and cruel injustice with patience and resignation. However, in terms of emotional effectiveness and the use of non-verbal communication, the mute characters seem to be more successful on the stage.

Muteness is usually represented in melodrama as an extreme condition of deprivation, a result of some physical mutilation or extensive moral or emotional suffering. The plots of melodramas develop to reveal the cause of this deprivation and to decode the message that the mute characters try to communicate through cries, gestures and postures, i.e. the ways in which the mutes strive to "acquire the voice" (McDonagh 657).

The attitude to the mute has developed throughout history. Patrick McDonagh traces the notion expressed by the ancient Greeks that muteness was a severe disability often associated with some kind of mental or cognitive deprivation, which survived to the eighteenth century (664). For example, the deaf-mute character Theodore from Jean-Nicolas Bouilly's play *L´Abbé de l´Épée* (1799), a historical drama that was adapted by Thomas Holcroft as *Deaf and Dumb,* is referred to by another protagonist as "an idiot, an automaton" (35). However, there were also voices to the contrary: Daniel Defoe argued in *Mere Nature Delineated* (1726): "It is absurd to think, that all Mutes are Fools; that because they cannot hear, therefore they cannot think" (41, quoted in McDonagh 664). Due to the enlightenment thoughts, the mutes started to be regarded as persons whose condition cannot be cured, but their position in the society should be improved. McDonagh in his article discusses the establishment of the first institutions in France specialising in educating the mutes and the efforts to develop a universal sign language, reflected also in stage melodramas (662-663).

The belief that the mute characters use a special kind of language to communicate had significant consequences for the theatre of the period. Denis Diderot argued in 1751 in his *Lettre sur les Sourds et Muets* that gestural sign was a natural language which, in fact, existed before the development of the so-called artificial languages, such as Latin (McDonagh 664). Diderot, as a prophetic theoretician of drama, clearly links the mute scenes and gesture to moments of intense emotion. He speculates about the effects of "cries, unarticulated words, broken phrases…" and also "word, tone, gesture, action" as the actor' means of expression, which arouse deep passions in the audience (*Entretiens* 101-2, quoted in Brooks 66). Gestures and bodily expressions played a crucial role also later, in the Romantic theatre or silent cinema, largely building on the belief that these physical signs reveal true emotions, while spoken language may be used to "dissimulate thoughts" (Brooks 79).

Muteness in *A Tale of Mystery*

The analysed text of the first English melodrama comes from two published sources: the anthology of Gothic melodramas *The Hour of one: six Gothic Melodramas* edited by Stephen Wischhusen, in which the year of publication of the melodrama text is not given, but should be the year 1824 or later, as the cast of characters is given as of the Covent Garden performance from the same year. The other, an online source digitalised by the University of California, contains the original version published in 1802 in London by R. Phillips. The sources will be referred to as Wischhusen and Holcroft.

As stated in the preceding part, the first English play denoted as melodrama and recognised as such by many critics (Brooks, Booth, Evans) is an adaptation of the French source, Pixérécourt's *Coelina; ou, l' enfant du mystère* (1800). The indebtedness to the original text is not openly acknowledged by Holcroft in the two analysed texts, which was a common practice at that time; however, at least in the Advertisement for the original published version, the author mentions "the aid I received from the French Drama, from which the principal incidents, many of the thoughts, and much of the manner of telling the story, are derived" (Holcroft, Advertisement). He also alludes to the response he would like to elicit from his audience, his main aims being to "fix the attention, rouse the passions, and hold the faculties in anxious and impatient suspense" (Holcroft, Advertisement), i.e. the goals that many melodramatists following his example strove to accomplish.

The mute protagonist, the mysterious Francisco, excites a strong pity and compassion in the audience. Before he enters the stage for the first time, his role is sufficiently established, because he is described by other characters as a person of mild manners, proper behaviour, expressive eyes and sorrowful looks (Wischhusen 9). The tragic fate of Francisco is alluded to and he is supposed to be a victim of an attempted

murder perpetrated by his jealous brother. The physical disability of Francisco is made obvious by the description of his communication – he was "making signs that he was famished with hunger and thirst… using his clasped hands and thankful looks" (Wischhusen 10). Judging by his noble conduct, a sympathetic servant even concludes that he must be of a genteel parentage or a gentleman (Wischhusen 9–10).

As soon as Francisco appears on the stage in Act I., he confirms all the expectations of the spectators, being "poor, but clean; with a reserved, placid, and dignified air" (Wischhusen 10). Bonamo, the owner of the house, trying to verify the rumours about Francesco's origin and fate, employs a more varied means of communication with the mute character. Apart from gestures and postures (entreating by signs, pointing to heaven and his heart, gesticulating violently, denoting painful recollection), he makes Francisco use "pen, ink, and paper" and write his answers to questions (Wischhusen 10-11). Through the written notes, read by one of the characters, Francisco communicates briefly some details of his descent ("A noble Roman"), cause of his condition ("The Algerines") or who betrayed him ("the same who stabbed me among the rocks") (Wischhusen 10-11). Thus, the history of Francisco and the villains who harmed him is made explicit for the spectators. The clear thematic motivation for the introduction of a mute character is given, as the audience learns that Francisco's tongue had been cut out before the beginning of the play, and the melodrama, therefore, builds on the motif of muteness whose cause must be revenged and the moral equilibrium established anew.

A similar strategy of communicating with the mute character, i.e. via notes written by him, can be found also in *Deaf and Dumb,* where the mute, lost and disinherited orphan Theodore, demonstrates his ability to comprehend the sign language taught to him by his benefactor, l´Abbé de l´Épée. Theodore shows his aptitude by rewriting the questions put in a sign language and answering them correctly in writing (*Deaf and Dumb* 44-45).

The use of written notes in melodrama indicates the affinity of the genre to a form of pantomime that survived alongside melodrama and informed its aesthetics. The use of written word in pantomime is widely known; Brooks, for example, discusses the inscriptions and messages imprinted on banners that clarified the information content of the action in French pantomime (Brooks 63). This strategy survived up to the advent of the silent cinema at the turn of the twentieth century when inserts and intertitles containing texts of written messages, such as letters, inscriptions or words of a sign, sometimes even the written texts of dialogues, formed an integral part of the narrative (Silberman 43).

Apart from the mute character who uses non-verbal means of expression throughout the whole play, there are also moments in the plot development when all the actors in different roles have a recourse to the silent expression. These instances typically occur at the moments of crises in which all the actors freeze to form a tableau. Even if the scenes develop in the dialogic manner, they tend to the final fixed visual representation showing the reaction of characters to a plot twist. The use of tableaux in the moments of acute passion was explained by theatrical theoreticians, most prominent of them being Diderot, who in his *Entretiens sur le Fils naturel* (1757) and *Discours de la poésie dramatique* (1758) formulated the concept of dramatic tableau. Diderot described this aspect of stage representation as a succession of life-like scenes modelled on the figurative painting that is powerful enough to engage the emotions and imaginations of the spectators. The vivid visual manner of a tableau scene thus intensified the audience's sense of being present to the stage (Worvill 151).

In *A Tale of Mystery*, Holcroft employs this powerful theatrical device in Act II., which is full of dramatic twists. First, the joyful wedding is being prepared for Selina, an orphan and so far undisclosed daughter of Francisco, and Stephano, a son of her benefactor Bonamo. Initially, the scene features a marriage festival full of decorations and sweet music. To complete the list of invalids, Holcroft even introduces a band

composed of "the blind fiddler, the lame piper, I and my Jew's harp!" (Wischhusen 20). This happy mood is reflected in the first tableau when the wedding guests "seat themselves to sweet music. Piero peeps from behind a shrub, Stephano gives a gentle clap with his hands, and the peasants all rise from their hiding places, and suspend their garlands in a picturesque group, over Bonamo, Selina, and Stephano" (Wischhusen 21). The general festivity continues, being suddenly interrupted by the clock striking ten, at which time the villain's servant Malvoglio arrives with the critical information concerning the parentage of Selina. The atmosphere on the stage changes abruptly, as "the dancing suddenly ceases; the music inspires alarm and dismay. Enter Malvoglio. He stops in the middle of the stage… the company startup; Francisco, Stephano, Selina, and Bonamo, all express terror. The peasants, alarmed and watching: the whole, during a short pause, forming a picture" (Wischhusen 21). The spectator is, therefore, reminded of an illustrative painting, a kind of a visual summary of the emotional states of characters (Brooks 48).

These contrasts of action and frozen frames prepare the audience for the climax of the Scene I., which is, of course, the disclosure of the origin of the mute Francisco and his parentage of Selina, who was born out of the wedlock. This disclosure is affected by the birth certificate handed over by Malvoglio. As Brooks notes, the birth certificate "is the most important of those numerous melodramatic papers and parchments, forged or authentic, that are produced to establish true or seeming proof of moral identity" (Brooks 39). The reading of the birth certificate in *A Tale of Mystery* brings about two rather opposing effects: infuriated Bonamo banishes both Francisco and Selina as "a wretch and the offspring of guilt", and Selina embraces Francisco as her father. The rest of the Scene I. continues in a frantic pace and wild action, violence even, as Stephano tries to detain Selina and she is repeatedly thrown from him as the lovers are forced apart. As the stage direction indicates, the scene closes with "struggles and passion" (Wischhusen 23), a state from which the mute tableau often ensues.

This quick succession of scenes, emphasis on action, and rapid transitions from pathos to farce and violence, including a pictorial spectacle, is a typical feature of the genre (Booth 64). It is also true for the end of the play in Act II. where the villain Romaldi is finally apprehended. The scene is again full of action, out of which none is completed, just indicated. Francisco covers the mouth of his daughter to silence her, a peasant makes the sign of biting his right hand to ask Francisco to identify the villain, Romaldi presents his pistol in defence, Francisco opens his breast for him to shoot, and Selina falls between them. The stage direction says that "the whole scenes passes in a mysterious and rapid manner" (Wischhusen 31), but also without words, just accompanied by music. As the archers approach to capture the villain, the action becomes even more chaotic. The pistol is thrown to a distance, the villain runs distractedly from side to side, then struggles with archers on the bridge. Finally, the villain slips and falls, and Francisco intervenes to guard his body. Thus, the closing scene is prepared, in which, as the stage direction specifies, "all the principal characters are near the front" (Wischhusen 32) to be ready to form a final tableau, which retains the dramatic qualities of the previous action. The archers, even as they freeze, are prepared to shoot and strike with their sabres. After this closing tableau, the curtain falls to a slow and solemn music.

The role of music in the early melodrama was prominent. It was recognized by Booth, who gives several examples of the use of musical accompaniment in the early nineteenth century plays and asserts that "music never lost its importance on the melodramatic stage" (38). Brooks discusses the importance of music just briefly (48-49), noting that music usually marked the entrances and exits of characters, and playwrights employed music in climactic moments and the scenes of rapid physical action, particularly mute action (48). Other critics, for example Astbury, mention also the narrative function of music in addition to the enhancement of the dramatic effect, and discuss the scenes in which musical and visual elements play a more important role than speech in conveying emotion (19, 21). Since the

scores from the early nineteenth century have not been preserved, historians of the genre can rely on the texts of melodramas only, some of which contain stage directions related to music.

A Tale of Mystery in both the discussed editions contains an abundance of music cues because successful plays were published in England in acting editions that were intended for trade (Brooks 212). The name of the composer, Dr. Busby, is included in the title page in both versions, which illustrates the importance of music for the theatrical performance. The music cues are quite similar in both editions, sometimes the description is more specific in one of the versions (i.e. "music to express contention" versus "music to express chattering contention" Wischhusen 9, Holcroft 3). Confirming the view held by Brooks, music in this melodrama marks the entrances of characters. A peasant Michelli's arrival on the scene is, for example, preceded by "cheerful pastorale" (Wischhusen 27.) However, it is not just that simple, background function that music serves in the play. Its use in some mute scenes clearly indicates that the action and music were expected to synchronize. In the recognition scene where the noble Montano encounters the villain for the first time after the attempted murder, "music plays alarmingly, but piano when he enters and while he stays… music loud and discordant at the moment the eye of Montano catches the figure of Romaldi; at which Montano starts with terror and indignation. He then assumes the eye and attitude of menace; which Romaldi returns. The music ceases" (Wischhusen 14).

Music was also intended to enhance the emotional effect of tableaux. In Scene I. when the pastoral bliss of would-be spouses is interrupted by the arrival of a fateful messenger, peasants, before forming the tableau, dance to a "sweet music". As the clock strikes, "music inspires alarm and dismay". After Malvoglio presents the incriminating letter, "music expresses terror and confusion" (Wischhusen 21). In the closing tableau, the dramatic action is accompanied at first by "music of terror"; after the capture of the villain and the pardon he receives from his mute brother, "the curtain falls to slow and solemn music" (Wischhusen 32). Music in tableaux thus helped to intensify a static, climactic moment, and focused the audience's attention after rapid and chaotic scenes.

Legacy of muteness

The legacy of muteness in melodrama was felt through the English nineteenth century theatre and, later, in the silent cinema of the beginning of the twentieth century. One illustrative example can be seen in the first adaptation of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* called *Presumption; or, The Fate of Frankenstein* (1823) written by Richard Brinsley Peake. The role of the Creature, played by the famous actor Thomas Potter Cooke, was, contrary to the eloquent character in Shelley's novel, a mute role. The Creature's muteness was probably inspired by the melodramatic traditions imported from France and an example set by Holcroft in *A Tale of Mystery.* Louis James observes that Shelley's Creature "reads, and reasons, while the Monster of popular tradition is illiterate, and usually mute, expressing intense but inarticulate feelings through mime" (82). In *Presumption,* Frankenstein, who is about to bestow life on the Creature, refers to him as "a huge automaton in human form" (397), stressing his mechanical nature and lack of feelings. The first communication between the Creature and Creator occurs in a scene where the Creature tries to approach Frankenstein "with gestures of conciliation" (399). Being cruelly rejected, the Creature recourses to violence against his Creator in a dramatic scene accompanied by music. The Creature's sensitiveness to music is illustrated in a pantomime where he reacts to the flute melody played by Felix: "The Demon…stands amazed and pleased, looks around him, snatches at the empty air, and with clenched hands puts them to each ear – appears vexed at his disappointment in not possessing the sound…" (*Presumption* 405). The second attempt of the Creature to gain affections of the De Lacey family is also compromised. Even if he tries to assist them and expresses sympathetic feelings – "regards Agatha

with rapture", "tenderly guides the hand of De Lacey" or "hangs over them with fondness" (*Presumption* 412) – his horrid looks prevent the recognition of his virtues by other characters, including the noble but blind De Lacey. In comparison to the mute Francisco, whose gracious conduct ingratiates him with other characters of the melodrama so that they are willing to show pity and compassion for him, the mute Creature strives in vain to obtain his place in a human society.

The final scene of *Presumption* shows many affinities with the early melodramas. It contains a desperate fight of Frankenstein and his Creature in the snowy mountains, with the typical picturesqueness and frantic action. The scene is, again, accompanied by music, loud thunder and shots from Frankenstein's musket, that release an avalanche which annihilates both of them. The closing tableau is formed by all the characters witnessing the tragic fate of the Creature and his maker.

Conclusion

Muteness and mute characters played an important role in the English melodrama of the early nineteenth century and became one of the defining features of the genre. Originally an import from France, melodrama with its variety of subgenres became immensely popular on the stage of both legitimate and illegitimate theatres and appealed to various strata of society. Apart from mute characters who communicated through a range of non-verbal signs, such as gestures, postures, pantomime or written notes, eliciting pity and an emotional response from the audience, the playwrights employed also silent frozen scenes or tableaux that added an intense visual quality and vividness to the climactic moments of plays. To enhance the effect of mute scenes or tableaux, musical accompaniment was added that marked exits and entrances of characters, synchronized with the pantomimic action on the stage and focused the attention of the audience after dramatic plot twists. All these manifestations of muteness are present in the first English melodrama, Holcroft's *A Tale of Mystery,* a play that inspired a number of followers, among others the first adaptor of *Frankenstein,* and some of its features survived also in the silent cinema of the early twentieth century. Therefore, Holcroft in his melodrama proved that muteness, non-verbality, visual tableau and music were effective and rewarding for the audience in the conditions of the new, enlarged and modernised nineteenth century theatres.

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Insubstantial Pageant: Adapting Shakespeare in Two Texts from the Hogarth Shakespeare Project

Abstract: *This article focuses on two novels by women writers from the Hogarth Shakespeare project. The books are* Vinegar Girl *by Anne Tyler based on* The Taming of the Shrew *and Margaret Atwood's* Hag-Seed *drawing inspiration from* The Tempest. *The project was launched with great fanfare and with high anticipation on the part of readers and critics, this being a result of not only the two above-mentioned writers, but also the involvement of renowned figures such as Jeanette Winterson, Howard Jacobson and Jo Nesbø, among others. The combination of the canonical source material and the highly respected and awarded contributors arguably proved to be more of a curse in the end than a blessing as the expectations were inevitably unrealistic. In the case of the two scrutinized novels, I approached them (and I was certainly not alone in this) with the assumption that the two renowned women writers would attempt to come to terms with the problematic subject matter and themes of the two plays. The article posits whether these expectations were justified and whether adaptations along these lines are of particular value in the end.*

This paper focuses on the recent Hogarth Shakespeare project involving adaptations of Shakespeare's plays and on two novels in particular Margaret Atwood's *Hag-Seed* and Anne Tyler's *Vinegar Girl*, based on *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Tempest* respectively. The history of adaptations of Shakespeare's plays is a long and tumultuous one. The first important wave is in the Restoration period where the Bard's eccentricities and excesses were often revised in line with the tenets of Neoclassicism. The most famous adaptations from the Romantic period were *Tales from Shakespeare* from 1807 rewritten in prose for children by Charles and Mary Lamb. Victorian stage productions of the plays were frequently bowdlerized to suit the strictures of the time. The twentieth century witnessed a wide range of adaptations in both verse and prose, on the stage, film and television, novels and even comics. The audience for the adaptations also greatly varied from children to adults and from deeply serious to light comedy. These adaptations are not, of course, limited to English language productions, but cover the globe and a wide range of languages and cultures. The adaptations are often motivated by various trends and developments in critical and cultural theory: feminism, Marxism, queer theory, post-colonialism, etc.

A similar project to the Hogarth Shakespeare series, although published in 1982 with much less fanfare, was a collection of stories commissioned and edited by the writer and literary agent Giles Gordon, *Shakespeare Stories*. The project included twenty writers and seemed to have been completely open-ended, which is a strong point at least in my mind. The authors included renowned figures such as Salman Rushdie, Kingsley Amis and Angela Carter, amongst others. Carter's contribution, "*Overture and Incidental Music* for A Midsummer Night's Dream," is remarkable, providing a sensual, voluptuous account of the mysterious changeling (here a hermaphrodite, lusted after by Puck) which is the bone of contention between Oberon and Titania in Shakespeare's play. Robert Nye's contribution "The Second Best Bed" was actually the impetus to writing one of his fictional novel-length Shakespearian treatments *Mrs. Shakespeare: The Complete Works*.

The Hogarth Shakespeare Project, launched in 2015 and consisting of seven novels, all written by renowned writers and all but one (Jo Nesbø's version of *Macbeth* in Norwegian) originally written in English is the most prominent undertaking in this field thus far in the twenty-first century. Apart from Atwood,

Tyler and Nesbø's contributions, the remaining authors were Howard Jacobson's *Shylock is my Name* based on *The Merchant of Venice*, Jeanette Winterson's *The Gap of Time* inspired by *The Winter's Tale*, Tracy Chevalier, *New Boy* very loosely inspired by *Othello* and Edward St. Aubyn's *Dunbar* a version of *King Lear*. The books were all published between 2015 and 2018. Information concerning the nature of the commission is not particularly comprehensive. The plan was to seemingly cover all of Shakespeare's plays as stated by Clara Farmer, the editor: "But this will be a coherent series, ... We hope to do the entire canon. We are already in conversation with several other authors and are really eager to hear from other people who are interested … We need people to step up for the tragedies" (Flood). The informal, casual phrasing sounds, at least in my mind, suspicious and the project seems to have ground to a halt, very much shy of the entire canon. As concerns the philosophy behind the commissioned works, it seems to have been fairly ambiguous and open-ended. Alison Flood quotes the 'publisher' as follows concerning the commissioned novels: (they) "will be true to the spirit of the original dramas and their popular appeal, while giving authors an exciting opportunity to reinvent these seminal works of English literature" (Flood). One gets the distinct impression that there is no actual concept underlying the project.

Sabine Schülting, in an erudite article focused specifically on the Hogarth project points out how the authors were pigeonholed to some extent, with Winterson writing about orphans, Jacobson about Jews, and also her disappointment in the lack of inclusion of authors of colour. The books seem to blissfully ignore, on the whole, the political and cultural issues of our day. Schülting points out how, "Compared to contemporary stage productions, the Hogarth Shakespeare project appears fairly conservative in its reiteration of a humanist idea of selfhood, its modernist exploration of consciousness, and its return to the conventional (or commonsensical) understanding of Shakespearean character" (Schülting, 45). To be fair, Schülting does single out *Shylock Is My Name* as an exception, which is echoed by Petr Anténe in his recent monograph on Jacobson, who draws attention to, among other things, the political engagement of the novel: "As a result, despite not being the first modern attempt at revising *The Merchant of Venice*, Jacobson's novel is unique in that it functions as both a rewriting of and a sequel to Shakespeare's play, as it illuminates the themes of intolerance, revenge and mercy in relation to anti-Semitism by contextualizing them in the early 21st century" (Anténe, 131). Douglas Lanier, in a paper evaluating the contribution of the series, expresses disappointment with the way the novels have tended to sidestep the 'dark side' of the plays: "The emphasis on reshaping these novelizations' plotlines and character arcs so that they are insistently redemptive is surprising, particularly since many scholars and audiences have seen the source plays – *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Tempest* – as troubling or even potentially tragic, despite their technically being categorized as tragedies" (Lanier, 239). This begs the question as to whether our expectations might have been too high or unrealistic?

The Pulitzer-prize winning novelist Anne Tyler, whose books are almost exclusively set in Baltimore in the present-day, would seem to have very little in common with Shakespeare. This changed, however, when Tyler was asked to contribute to the Hogarth Shakespeare project and decided to take on *The Taming of the Shrew*, arguably Shakespeare's most problematic play in terms of women's rights and gender issues. Directors of the plays as well as various adaptations have used a range of approaches in order to come to terms with the problematic issues in the play. The so-called Induction with Christopher Sly provides a means of emphasizing the farcical nature of the play, providing the main plot with a certain distancing. Katherine's final speech, usually viewed as the most 'offensive' speech in the play has been staged in a number of ways: accompanied by her suicide, depicting her as brainwashed, winking to Petruchio in complicity, etc. The plot has been modernized, for example, with the teen-comedy *Ten Things I Hate About You* from 1999 which emphasizes a feminist reading. Stagings with either all male

or all female casts have attempted to displace the sexual politics and gender issues. As far back as 1611, John Fletcher wrote a sequel of sorts to the play *The Woman's Prize, or the Tamer Tamed* which depicts Petruchio getting his just deserves when his second wife Marie, after the death of Katherine, puts him in his place and takes the 'taming' in hand. Other productions have basically allowed the sexist, vicious message to resonate in all of its ugliness along the lines of In-yer-face theatre, rubbing the audience's nose, so to speak, in the ugliness of the account. Finally, a number of performances and interpretations seem to merely accept the play as good fun, often suggesting that Petruchio's behaviour is all for Katherine's own good, holding a mirror up to her 'shrewish' behaviour and thereby freeing her to be herself; the famous American musical *Kiss Me Kate* from 1948 being a prime example. One fairly recent film adaptation which seemed to have great promise was the BBC *ShakespeaRe-Told* version from 2005. This version in a contemporary setting goes overboard in making Katherine an MP and a genuine 'harridan'. Her sister, Bianca, is a super-model of sorts, who actually comes up with the idea of her sister marrying first so as to get rid of her manager-suitor. Although entertaining with charismatic actors, the story seems a muddle, to say the least. Her final speech reproaching her sister and mother for requiring pre-nuptial agreements prior to their respective weddings seems to be sincere. She becomes Prime Minister in the end while raising their new-born triplets, with her husband's help of course.

With the novel *Vinegar Girl* (2016), Anne Tyler takes her own distinctive approach to the source material, updating the play while nevertheless maintaining her own voice and style. I have read a number of her books and found them extremely enjoyable and imaginatively stimulating. Although Tyler in her books focuses almost exclusively on middle-class/working white people from Baltimore, she has a remarkable ability to capture their ennui, their existential struggles and bring dignity to the outcast and the elderly.

Katherine (Kate) in the book works half-heartedly in a kindergarten and has had the rearing of her younger sister Bianca (Bunny) and care for her impractical father, Battista, thrust upon her after the death of her mother. Battista's Russian assistant, Petruchio (Pyotr), is going to be sent home because of visa issues and suggests marrying his older daughter to him to prevent deportation. Pyotr is portrayed with all of the hackneyed Russian or Slavic stereotypes and provided with a comical foreign way of expressing himself: "'I fear I may be having cold," he told her. "My nose waters and I sneeze a great deal. Has been taking place since last night.'" (Tyler, 30). Battista's behaviour and lack of sensitivity is justified by making him a mad professor type, unable to cope with even the most mundane practical affairs. His emotionally clueless broaching of the subject with Kate exemplifies the stock character treatment.

"Now, Kate, you're overreacting,' her father said. 'You'll have to marry someone sooner or later, right? And this is someone so exceptional, so gifted; it would be such a loss to mankind if he had to leave my project. And I like the fellow! He's a good fellow! I'm sure you'll come to feel the same way once you're better acquainted" (Tyler, 62)

Kate is understandably horrified by the prospect and deeply hurt, but eventually agrees, after having grown to like and eventually love her husband. Interestingly, Bunny is the one who finds Kate's behavior the most troubling.

"I know you think you're just doing a little something on paper to fool Immigration,' Bunny said, 'but this guy is starting to act like he owns you! He's telling you what last name to use and where to live and whether to go on working. I mean, I do think it would be nice if I could have a bigger room, but if the price for that is my only sister getting totally tamed and tamped down and changed into some whole other person—" (Tyler, 163–164)

The book does have some positive moments with witty variations on the original, for example, Pyotr's late arrival at the wedding, still dressed in his laboratory garb.

"Pyotr was standing in the corridor doorway, with Miss Brood smiling anxiously behind his left shoulder. He wore an outfit so shabby that he looked like a homeless person: a stained white T-shirt torn at the neck and translucent with age, very short baggy plaid shorts that Kate worried might be his underwear, and red rubber flip-flops" (Tyler, 183).

When criticized for his appearance, Pyotr's retort is fitting and witty, "She is marrying me, not my clothes," (Tyler, 186).

I found Tyler's version of Kate's final 'problematic' speech troubling, to say the least. She launches into it, very much out of character having been shy and reticent up until now, in response to her sister's exasperation at the fiasco of a wedding ceremony.

Kate focused solely on Bunny. "Treat your husband any way you like,' she said, 'but I pity him, whoever he is. It's *hard* being a man. Have you ever thought about that? Anything that's bothering them, men think they have to hide it. They think they should seem in charge, in control; they don't dare show their true feelings. No matter if they're hurting or desperate or stricken with grief, if they're heartsick or they're homesick or some huge dark guilt is hanging over them or they're about to fail big-time at something—'Oh, I'm okay,' they say. 'Everything's just fine.' They're a whole lot less free than women are, when you think about it. Women have been studying people' feelings since they were toddlers; they've been perfecting their radar—their intuition or their empathy or their interpersonal whatchamacallit. … I'm not 'backing down,' as you call it; I'm letting him into my country. I'm giving him space in a place where we can both be ourselves. Lord have mercy, Bunny, cut us some *slack*!" (Tyler, 227).

This speech does not even fit her character as developed over the course of the novel. She has been shown throughout as being extremely dismissive of 'girly' behaviour and over-emotional displays. In addition, the description of suppressed 'bottled-up' males certainly does not apply to her husband Pyotr, who is repeatedly described as being too blunt and forward concerning his opinions and views. The speech is followed by Pyotr calling out in a triumphant voice, "kiss me, Katya" (Tyler, 228).

One wonders whether Tyler can actually not be familiar with the extremely controversial nature of the original speech or whether she has merely accepted it, lock, stock and barrel. Whatever the case, I personally found this extremely hard to swallow. I would have expected Shakespeare's arguably most sexist play to have generated more of a feminist response in Tyler. And I am obviously not alone. Schülting responds in a similar fashion, "*Vinegar Girl* was published before the #MeToo debate became viral, but given the misogyny of Shakespeare's play, it is astonishing how benign modern patriarchy appears" (Schülting, 48). Although I share the view expressed, I also have to admit that Tyler should not be expected to be the torch bearer for the feminist cause all the time (or any woman writer for that matter) or be forced to 'improve' Shakespeare's text.

The history of adaptations of *The Tempest* ranks among the most interesting and eclectic in all of Shakespeare's oeuvre. The science fiction classic *Forbidden Planet* from 1956 is undoubtedly the most famous. The art film *Prospero's Books* by avant-garde British director Peter Greenaway from 1991 met with great critical acclaim. Neither of these adaptations bothered to delve, however, into the critical issues connected with the text of the play. Most contemporary adaptations, performances and analyses of the play, in contrast, attempt to come to terms with the problematic depiction and treatment of Caliban and its colonial/post-colonial implications (and to a lesser extent Ariel and even Caliban's mother Sycorax, who never actually appears in the play, but who is described as a witch). There has also been interest in the sexual politics of the play, particularly in connection with Prospero's, arguably dictatorial if not abusive, treatment of his daughter Miranda.

The Martinician author Aimé Césaire and his French language play from 1969 *Une Tempête* laid the foundations for a more progressive post-colonial reading of the original. The English author Marina Warner provided not only a post-colonial reading, but also a feminist perspective (fleshing out the character of Sycorax, for example, and rehabilitating her) in her novel *Indigo* from 1992 loosely based on the play. The most highly touted recent film version, *The Tempest* from 2010 with Helen Mirren in the titular role as Prospero, flipped the gender, but failed to generate much excitement otherwise. The above-mentioned collection by Giles Gordon actually contains two stories related to *The Tempest*. Paul Bailey's dark contribution "A Mother's Lament" is of particular interest, consisting of a first person account by a working class London woman who has a one-night stand with a dark stranger and ends up giving birth to a dark, handicapped son Colin (Caliban) who eventually ends up murdering a group of people very similar to Prospero, Miranda and company. This version of Caliban's mother Sycorax pulls no punches in relating her sad fate and tragic end.

Margaret Atwood's *Hag-Seed* is an ambitious and highly imaginative take on *The Tempest*. The plot and characters of Shakespeare's original are not only the linchpins of the plot of the novel but the play is also performed (under the direction of the Prospero character, the 'usurped' elderly theatre director Felix Phillips) by the inmates of a prison as part of Felix's plot to take revenge on the villains of the story. The title comes from a dismissive insult directed at Caliban by Prospero, further besmirching the name and reputation of his mother Sycorax. The phrase is further incorproated into the novel when Felix establishes a rule whereby the prisoner/actors are only allowed to use profanity contained within the original play. With practically an all male cast in both the novel and the play, Atwood seems to barely touch on feminist concerns. The only female characters are Miranda (Felix's deceased three-year-old daughter) who seems to only be present in her father's mind (or perhaps not) and who is gradually transformed in a fashion into Ariel, Estelle who supports Felix's theatrical experiments and eventually becomes a love interest and finally Anne-Marie an actress and dancer who shines in the role of Miranda in the prison play.

Felix/Prospero is by far the main focus of the novel and is captured with much sympathy and accuracy. The novel is a brilliant study of sorrow, revenge, self-pity and bitter-sweet triumph, capturing the essence of complicated Prospero, warts and all. Krajník and Weiss astutely argue for the novel's affinity with the revenge tragedy, "Atwood's text deliberately employs a number of tropes of the genre of Renaissance revenge tragedies, making *Hag-Seed* part of the wave of the genre's modern revival …" (Krajník, 81). Felix is not only cheated out of his position as theatre director, but has earlier lost his only child, making his theatre work his only consolation. "Right after the funeral with its pathetically small coffin he'd plunged himself into *The Tempest*. It was an evasion, he knew that much about himself even then, but it was also to be a kind of reincarnation" (Atwood, 15). The division between art and life (and Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and his own production and life) becomes very much blurred in his mind. Miranda lives on in his mind: "Miranda would become the daughter who had not been lost; who'd been a protecting cherub, cheering her exiled father as they'd drifted in their leaking boat over the dark sea; who hadn't died, but had grown up into a lovely girl. What he couldn't have in life he might still catch sight of through his art: just a glimpse, from the corner of his eye" (Atwood, 15).

Apart from the poignant story-line involving Felix/Prospero, his sorrow and plans for revenge, the novel provides a lively portrayal of the preparations and final performance of the prison play and the inmates involved. The multi-cultural make-up of the prison troupe provides an opportunity to discuss the politics of the original play. A Native-Canadian prisoner/actor, Red Coyote, has very much topical insight into the problematic side of Prospero's ruling of the island: "'Plus he's a land stealer,' adds Red Coyote. 'Suckin'

old white guy. He should be called Prospero Corp. Next thing he'll discover oil on it, develop it, machine-gun everyone to keep them off it'" (Atwood, 127). The casting of the roles in the play also provides fodder for political discussion and the post-colonial issues involved.

'I know a lot of you wanted Caliban,' says Felix, 'but there's only one slot for that.'
'Caliban should be First Nations,' says Red Coyote. 'It's obvious. Got his land stole.'
'No way,' says PPod. 'He's African. Where's Algiers anyway? North Africa, right? That's where his mother came from. Look on the map, pox brain.'
'So, he's a Muslim? I don't whoreson think so.' VaMoose, another Caliban aspirant.
'No way that he's smelly-fish white trash, anyways," says Shiv, glaring at Leggs. "Even part white.'
(Atwood, 148)

Lanier comments aptly on the way Atwood demonstrates the continued relevance of the play. "For these incarcerated men, *The Tempest* has set in motion a liberatory line of imaginative flight that moves beyond the confines of the source plot while still remaining faithful to its spirit" (Atwood, 245).

Despite the novel being very much focused on men, Atwood does provide insight into the possibly abusive treatment of Miranda, not only in the original play, but also in Felix's own mind. "Maybe her eyes aren't wide because of innocence. Maybe it's fear. He has a split instant of seeing Prospero through the gaze of Miranda—a petrified Miranda who's suddenly realized that her adored father is a full-blown maniac, and paranoid into the bargain" (Atwood, 143). The characterization of Felix/Prospero and his development is arguably the greatest accomplishment of the novel. Although deeply flawed, Atwood manages to make his sorrow and character sympathetic. "Half blinded, choking, he blunders down to the fifties-period demonstration cell and collapses onto a bottom bunk. Scratchy gray blankets. Arms crossed on knees, head bowed. Lost at sea, drifting here, drifting there. In a rotten carcass the very rats have quit" (Atwood, 160). The passage powerfully portrays a temporary break-down triggered by the prisoners discussing their estrangement from their children.

Upon successfully accomplishing his revenge, Felix is also able to liberate his Miranda (transformed in a sense into Ariel) and free himself of his demons.

What has he been thinking—keeping her tethered to him all this time? Forcing her to do his bidding? How selfish he has been! Yes, he loves her: his dear one, his only child. But he knows what she truly wants, and what he owes her.
"To the elements be free,' he says to her.
And, finally, she is." (Atwood, 283)

As Felix/Prospero's fate is gradually resolved, the focus of the novel moves to the titular character, Caliban, who is provided with a number of witty, insightful and provocative raps.

"My name's Caliban, got scales and long nails,
I smell like a fish and not like a man—
But my other name's Hag-Seed, or that's what he call me;
He call me a lotta names, he play me a lotta games:
He call me a poison, a filth, a slave,
He prison me up to make me behave,
But I'm Hag-Seed!" (Atwood, 174)

During the actual performance of the prison version of the play, Caliban lays into Felix's temporarily imprisoned politician enemies with a hard-hitting critique of the vagaries of justice.

"You been callin' me a monster.
But who's more monstrous than you?
You stole, you cheated, you bribed, you lied,
You didn't care who you kicked aside,
You called me dirty, you called me a scum,
You called me a criminal, a no-good bum,
But you're a white-collar crook, you been cookin' the books,
Rakin' taxpayer money, we know what you took" (Atwood, 230)

Schülting also draws attention to the ingenuity of the Caliban raps: "It is both an homage to and a transformation of the original text which is sampled. The Caliban-song establishes a dialogue between the Shakespearean original and hip-hop culture, thus "finding a 'black voice' in the 'white text' of Shakespeare" (Atwood, 36). Atwood also has Felix pondering the after-lives of the characters with the inmates/actors. Caliban, in one of the accounts, becomes a rock star back in Milan with his band, Hag-Seed and the Things of Darkness and sings/raps the following.

"Freedom, high-day! High-day, freedom! Freedom, high-day, freedom!
Got outta my cage, now I'm in a rage—
No more dams I'll make for fish,
Nor fetch in firing
At requiring,
Nor scrape trenchering, nor wash dish;
Ain't gonna any more lick your feet
Or walk behind you on the street,
Ain't gonna get on the back of the bus,
And you can give our land right back to us!
Ban-ban, Ca-Caliban," (Atwood, 270–271)

Unlike Tyler's book which seems content to tell a good story, contributing very little to our understanding of Shakespeare's original, Atwood's *Hag-Seed* enriches our appreciation of the complexities of *The Tempest*, opening up new possible readings of the text and the characters, in particular Prospero and Caliban. A review published in *The Scotsman* appreciated this in particular: "It means the play's polyvalency – its capacity to elicit multiple interpretations – is put centre stage. These are among the most intelligent and inspiring readings of *The Tempest* I have read, and best of all, they contradict each other" (The Newsroom).

I have argued elsewhere when analysing works based on Shakespeare the character that those works which try too hard to live up to the canonical status and reputation of the original often end up failing. This would seem to be the case here as well, although in this instance, the present reader expected the two renowned female authors to take up the challenge of rectifying the sins of the originals. Should they even be expected to, however, the answer is obviously no. Atwood in her essay "Writing the Male Character" in her collection of non-fiction *Curious Pursuits* argues for her obvious right to creative freedom, regardless of people's expectations: "A novel based on other people's needs for having their ego stroked,

their images shored up, or their sensitivities pandered to is unlikely to live" (Atwood, *Curious Pursuits*, 55). This would seem to provide the answer.

Having granted this, I still might find myself dissapointed by Tyler's book and the Hogarth project in general. The shorter format of the *Shakespeare Stories* collection, edited by Gordon and mentioned earlier, is actually a positive, in my mind, as the authors were 'freed-up' to experiment and were not tempted to try to thematize an entire play by Shakespeare. Gordons' publication makes no pretences of being a definitive rewriting of the Bard, but nevertheless succeeds in collecting a number of worthy creative pieces, and what more can one ask for. I also found thoroughly delightful Ian McEwan's recent novel *Nutshell* from 2016 where Hamlet is an unborn foetus concerned about his father John who is to be murdered by his Mother Trudy and her lover/brother-in-law Claude. McEwan's fantastic approach gives him free reign to not only play with the original, but also provide much more. The beginning is delightful: "So here I am, upside down in a woman. Arms patiently crossed, waiting, waiting and wondering who I'm in, what I'm in for" (McEwan, 1). Sticking slavishly to the original text is obviously a recipe for disaster, with a better approach involving using the original as a springboard, as a starting-off point, and diving right in.

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Peter Luba

Remediation, Empathy, Creative Exegesis: The Potential of Hypermedia for Generation of New Ways of Interpretation in Art and Life

Abstract: *The submitted article aims to examine and illuminate the creative interpretative method of Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin presented in their shared work Remediation. The further focus is then to show how the three main cultural instruments in their understanding help to engage the interpreter's creative and empathetic faculties, for example, in an interpretation of an artwork. Their three main instruments are immediacy and hypermediacy, which fall under the overarching process of remediation. The article analyses the use of immediate artistic elements in the first-person shooter Half-Life, as an example of an immersive medium. Then it considers the signs of hypermediacy in The Backrooms and in the use of VHS medium and its filters. The discussion of remediation takes place within these two main arguments, as it occurs concurrently with the world building that uses immediacy and/or hypermediacy. The conclusion then focuses on how these processes influence our empathy and engagement with a work of art and offers a short pragmatic recommendation based on Frank O'Hara's approach to art and life.*

A postmodern artist or writer is in the position of a philosopher.
Jean-François Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge

The media understood as forms of transfer of information and means of communication ("Medium." Def. 1) have been changing rapidly throughout the 20th and 21st century. This is due to technological acceleration (Foster 5), and the tendency of mass media towards superficiality (Bolter and Grusin 41), resulting in the immediate/history-less schizophrenia of communal perception (Jameson 119). Individuals in the contemporary western society are immersed in the globalized shared space, which is saturated with multifarious channels of communication and sources of information. The number of these sources, continuously permeating this space (Rancière, *Method of Equality* 31), is set only to grow. This proliferation of immersive media and mediated experiences (Bolter and Grusin 42) has also had a profound effect on interpretative thought in general.

The contemporary situation leads us to the issue of interpretation and the effect of art on the human mind in this media-saturated space. Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin wrote their shared study, *Remediation,* as an analysis of the universal effects of contemporary media on human (interpretative, perspectivist) agency. The book came out in 2000, at the beginning of mainstream internet usage. It describes the processes that occur when new art constructs are created using new media and their possibilities. Our interest here will be, however, exegetical. The aim of this paper is to observe Bolter and Grusin's method in practice and attempt to apply its functional principles in interpretation of several innovative digital projects. Building on the said description of these creative processes, this application will then lead to a more sophisticated understanding of how creative exegesis operates in individual mind that is submerged in the contemporary multimedia environment. Bolter and Grusin describe remediation as a functional phenomenon; we will attempt to further adapt remediation to a general rule of creative exegesis.

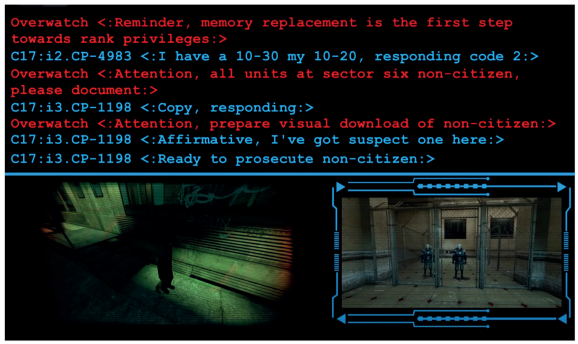
Bolter and Grusin claim that the contemporary digital media fall into 3 processual categories—media offering the experience of immediacy; media offering the experience of hypermediacy; and hypermedia

fostering empathy. These 3 categories will be the foundation of this analysis, and each argument will describe one of these processes occurring in art, utilizing immediacy/hypermediacy. Remediation itself happens alongside both of these phenomena, as it is essentially a reformation of older media formats into new ones (Bolter and Grusin 55). The focus of this essay is, therefore, to examine these three phenomena in three different media formats: Immediacy and remediation of the *Half-Life 2* combine radio chatter; hypermediacy and remediation as exemplified in *The Backrooms* phenomena, *NOC+10* and their VHS filters; and the final argument will then examine the ability of these constructs to incite empathetic engagement in the viewer, leading him/her towards creative exegesis. The conclusion then elaborates on how combine radio chatter and a found-footage video can foster our faculty of empathy (Bolter and Grusin 247) and attentiveness, and how immediacy and hypermediacy can empower us towards new ways of flexible yet reverential interpretation.

The first, and more straightforward characteristic of hypermedia, is their quest for the authenticity of experience (Bolter and Grusin 69), which manifests through their constant striving for immediacy of experience (Bolter and Grusin 54–55). The general turn towards immediacy can be also observed in modern and post-modern art styles in the 20th century, where, as in the case of abstract expressionism, the artist attempted to become one with the painting, abolishing the linear perspective altogether (*Britannica*). This deeply unmediated approach, where the medium attempts to hide itself (Bolter and Grusin 58), can be also seen in Frank O'Hara's "Personism: A Manifesto". The poem is here put "squarely between the poet and the person, Lucky Pierre style, and the poem is correspondingly gratified" (O'Hara 499), effectively disappearing as a medium and creating a seamless experience between the writer and the reader, fostering a powerful sense of immediacy, and enabling individual liberty of interpretation. But how did a point-and-click shooter achieve artistic immediacy, a novel medium completely different from a written poem? Other than for 2004 revolutionary graphics, an oft neglected, yet a very pervasive world-building detail is the combine radio chatter.

Half-Life 2 was published by Valve in the early 2000s. The company is known to release comparatively few games; yet the titles that do get released are known for their careful world-building, substantial narratives, and highly sophisticated environments. These detailed worlds create a unique feeling of immersion in the player, rarely present with other publishers; an example of such an original feature is the receiver chatter of combine soldiers in *Half-Life 2*. Not only is the communication authentic, but it also responds to players' actions *dynamically*, according to what the player does in the game, *and it does so even in the background*, irrespective of the fact that no player will ever experience the conversation that happens in the undercurrents of the program:

("Half-Life 2 – City 17 Civil Protection Radio" 00:01:18)

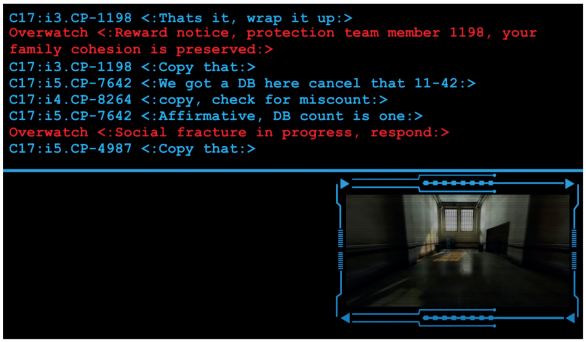


The text quoted in the video analysis of the police scanner "happens" in real time, as the player moves along through the narrative. During the gameplay, the player generally does hear somewhat inaudible voice lines of the combine guards, but most players rarely notice those very much; these sounds operate rather as an ambient element. They are, however, all but! The moment the protagonist (seen in the picture in the lower left corner) steps off the train at the beginning of the game, the announcement from the Overwatch AI can be caught chirping in the soldiers' head-mounted receivers, provided the player stands close enough to an officer: "Attention, all units at sector six non-citizen, please document". This line plays right after the protagonist, Gordon Freeman, gets photographed by the surveillance drone. The heavily militarized police respond accordingly, in real time, in a sense of subterraneous movement (Rancière, *Method of Equality* 30), an undercurrent of information exchange operating outside of the player's field of view. The soldiers, therefore, communicate with each other even though this reality is hidden most of the time from players; the feature is extremely detailed, yet it is also hidden away, in the social undercurrents of the game. Paradoxically, it works well, but only when it stays hidden and unappreciated. Good design is sometimes invisible.

Valve thus managed to create here a distribution of the sensible (Rancière, *Method of Equality* 22), a rich world with social and institutional undercurrents functioning in the background, allowing for a creation of a multiplicity of factors influencing the decisions and occurrences in the field of view of the player. (Rancière, *Method of Equality* 25). When the player gets photographed, the Overwatch AI informs the officers in a subtle, inconspicuous fashion "Attention, prepare visual download of non-citizen". Similarly, when the player enters the scripted passport area, the officers talk to each other "C17:i3. CP-1198 <:Affirmative, I've got suspect one here:>". Once he approaches the exit of the scripted area (moving towards the two stationary guards in the picture) the gate locks right in front of him and the officers inform each other, all the time only slightly audible to the player: "C17:i3. CP-1198 <: Ready to prosecute non-citizen:>". Consciously, the player is unaware of this; unconsciously the player might pick up the menacing, paranoia inducing undercurrent of the restrictive, authoritarian distribution of the sensible (what one is allowed to *see* and how one is allowed to *feel*, all depending on the *will* (Nietzsche, *Zarathustra* 147–149) of the police (Rancière, *Politics of Aesthetics* 89). Thought happens everywhere (Rancière, *The Method of Equality* 35).

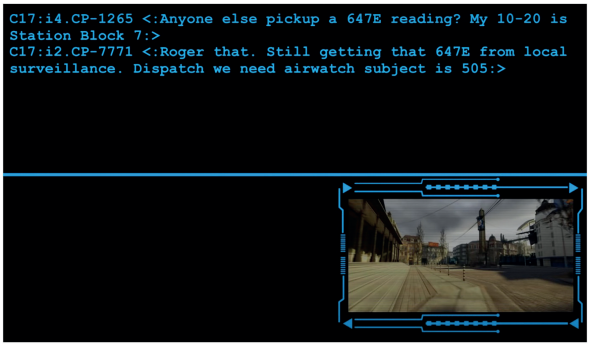
Once Gordon is processed by his secret ally, Barney Calhoun, who has infiltrated the combine police, he lets him escape through a back door of the interrogation room. While this is happening and Gordon is out of sight, the undercurrents of the radio chatter return momentarily to the business as usual– dealing with DBs (Dead Bodies) and "Social fractures":

("Half-Life 2 – City 17 Civil Protection Radio" 00:02:21)



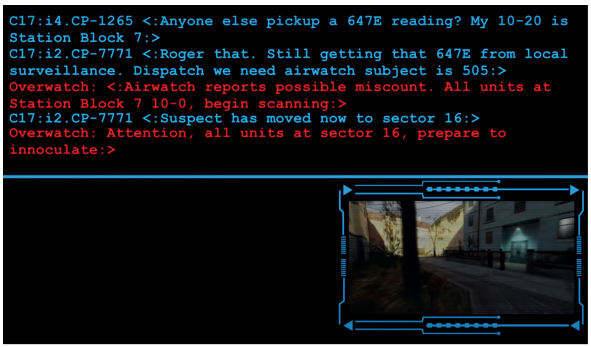
Upon leaving the dilapidated train station, the officers, having seen Gordon on surveillance cameras, immediately react:

("Half-Life 2 – City 17 Civil Protection Radio" 00:02:42)



And when the player moves to the next sector, the coordination of the police with the AI continues. Overwatch also takes advantage of highly metaphorical language; all units are told to "prepare to innoculate":

("Half-Life 2 – City 17 Civil Protection Radio," 00:02:58)

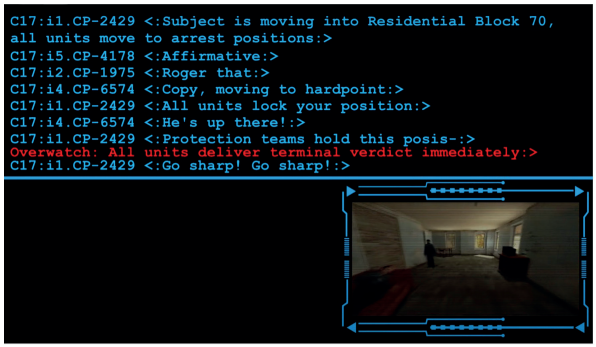


The surgical, hygiene-themed language and metaphors can be observed throughout the whole game—Overwatch often orders the officers to "cauterize" an "anti-citizen", "sweep", "deploy sterilizers"; they, in turn, notify the AI: "Overwatch, Sector Eight infected" ("Half-Life 2 – Ingame Combine Soldier Chatter" 00:06:36) etc.

The coordination finally reaches its apex when Gordon enters one of the local buildings and the combine coordinate in real time over their receivers until the Overwatch, once the player passes a scripted boundary, orders "All units deliver terminal verdict immediately". At this moment, a more dynamic music starts to play. The immersed player, with his unconscious that is at this point tense and conditioned

through the oppressing distribution of the sensible, begins to sense that the authorities are after him again.

("Half-Life 2 – City 17 Civil Protection Radio" 00:03:38)



All of this, along with the immersive graphics and physical engine, makes for a feeling of deep immersion, authentic flow of experience (Bolter and Grusin 251) and, ultimately, immediacy conveyed through the hypermedia (Bolter and Grusin 272). Immediacy is then one of the aspects of hypermedia, and its aim is to create a believable experience, through which the user should forget about the media itself and experience the authentic flow of alternate reality[1].

But immediacy, just as hypermediacy, also consists largely of the remediated (Bolter and Grusin 45) older and newer media. Remediation is a process that not only synthesizes visionary new media forms, such as computer graphics and its potentialities, but it absorbs older media forms as well (Bolter and Grusin 87). Hypermedia are, therefore, multifarious in nature and they are constituted from a motley of various media forms (Bloom xix and Barthes 146). In this case, Valve remediated the older media of voice receivers used by the police, along with their voice codes and their alphabets. Not only is the medium remediated, but the police language itself is *détourned* ("détournement" Ox. Ref.) and put into work in a faux Nazi dystopia, where it is synthesized with Hitler's vocabulary of purification and sterilization (Musolff 22). This is done to increase the immersion and immediacy for the player, who must navigate the dense and tense atmosphere of a highly authoritarian and repressive regime, an environment infested with constant surveillance and a sense of paranoia. To create an atmosphere this oppressive, Valve had to create a multifarious universe, which is powered by multifarious hypermedia, combining elements such as music, graphics, police command structure, dialogues, uncanny police sirens ("Half Life 2 Combine APC" 00:00:20)… in other words a hypermediated, dynamic, dystopian collage (Greenberg 6–7).

Titles of this era aimed for the sense of immersion and immediacy, as there was still a sense of novelty about computer gaming in the early 2000s. In the 2020s, however, the internet and hypermedia have arrived more closely towards their own post structuralism (Rorty 1989, 8–9 and Deleuze & Guattari xvii)[2], and began gradually questioning the nature of the media through which they operated. In the online space, media became much more aware of them being the message (McLuhan xii). This is reflected in the gradual increase in popularity of the found footage genre; the first highly notable example being *The Blair Witch Project* from 1999. In the mainstream, *REC* from 2007 marked the definite ascension of the VHS retro-revolution using the strategy of hypermediacy – open affirmation of the medium itself as an

element contributing to the meaning of the film (Bolter and Grusin 272). The second subsection of the essay will, therefore, focus on the implementation of these retrospective effects in 21st century online art, and on the ways we can approach these works, being aware of their deliberate use of a medium as the bearer of meaning.

On 7 January 2022, a 17-year-old VFX artist Kane Parsons published the first video from the series *Backrooms (Found Footage)*. The 10-minute video features a young person enjoying their day on September 23, 1996. The protagonist, as is usual for the found footage genre, videotapes everything from the first-person perspective. Suddenly, the ground disappears from under him, and he winds up in the backrooms. There begins the surreal exploration of a no man's land—a liminal space. Before we engage with *Backrooms* directly, a brief history of liminality in art would provide a useful background to the concept.

The notion of the liminal space is not completely novel, as this phenomenon is examined closely, for example, in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, which in some characteristics bears resemblance to the backrooms phenomenon (seen here as a larger cultural artefact) from the psychological point of view. As in an uncanny rite of passage in the liminal space,

> The liminal passenger thus 'loses' his identifying characteristics (name, roles, affiliations, even sex) only to be newly inscribed with a higher, more authoritative set of meanings. The liminal state is necessarily outside the ordinary classificatory systems, 'betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, conventions, and ceremonial. The passenger is metaphorically assigned a position prior to, transcending, or below the social structure. Temporarily freed from role-playing structural boundaries and bereft of group privileges and attributes, the typical condition of the passenger is that of passivity, powerlessness, humility…liminality generates or at least symbolizes a kind of undifferentiated creative energy. (Gilead 183)

In *Wuthering Heights,* Heathcliff is caught between his status of an outsider and his deep affection for Catherine. As he belongs to no one, his backrooms become the infinitely stretching moors, which serve as the backdrop for his transformation when he leaves for years, and which separate the manors (Vančura 1) in the novel. "The liminal state" is found "outside the ordinary classificatory systems", outside of *law,* outside of social institutions, "conventions and ceremonial". The "passenger" in the liminal space is alone, separated from the safety of civilization and ideologies. The condition of such a traveler is one of "passivity, powerlessness, humility" as this individual is thrown into an empty space (Melville 151) left to explore the vast expanse of the moors or the backrooms. While the emptiness of the backrooms (as contemporary liminal spaces) can have the effect of the uncanny, their emptiness also enables the potential Emersonian "bleak rocks" (Poirier, *Revival* 352), out of which new metaphorical flowers may bloom (Poirier, *Poetry and Pragmatism* 71). These liminal expanses, in other words, can serve us as blank canvas ready to be painted on by imagination, a type of neutral, liberal, open intellectual space.

The common denominator in all these cases is the plainness and emptiness of the liminal, creative space. The unsettling effect of the backrooms comes from their visual austerity, emptiness, loneliness, a certain type of un-creative yet creativity inciting nihilism, merely existing, and evoking the vacancy of "Say a body, where none … A place, where none." (Beckett, 7).

Having gone through several examples on liminality, let us see how exactly the backrooms phenomenon remediates all these art forms, media, and their instruments.

(Wikipedia contributors. „The Backrooms.")

If you're not careful and you noclip out of reality in the wrong areas, you'll end up in the Backrooms, where it's nothing but the stink of old moist carpet, the madness of mono-yellow, the endless background noise of fluorescent lights at maximum hum-buzz, and approximately six hundred million square miles of randomly segmented empty rooms to be trapped in

God save you if you hear something wandering around nearby, because it sure as hell has heard you

The original idea behind the backrooms comes from a *4chan* thread, which encouraged its users to "post disquieting images that just feel ‚off'" (Wikipedia contributors, ibid). The goal was to create a sense of the eerie in the users of the board. The original concept of the backrooms remediates, redescribes (Rorty 1989, 9–16) and creatively re-shapes the concept of the Victorian liminal space, a kind of conceptual no man's land from which the protagonist strives to emerge alive and simultaneously undergoes a transformation in a significant way. The image on the board, however, only contains an incitement (Proust 114) towards further development of a potential narrative, which was subsequently realized by Kane Parsons.

Parsons' protagonist no-clips („noclip." *Wiktionary*) out of our shared reality into the alternate, subterraneous space, where he is suddenly alone and confronted with an empty liminal room.

(Parsons, Backrooms 00:00:48)

Immediately obvious is the poor image quality of a VHS camcorder, typical for the period of 1990s. This remediation of older technology is made explicit in the very first seconds of the video, in which the viewer is made aware of the medium by the blue screen and electromagnetic interference typical for the format:

(Parsons, Backrooms 00:00:03)

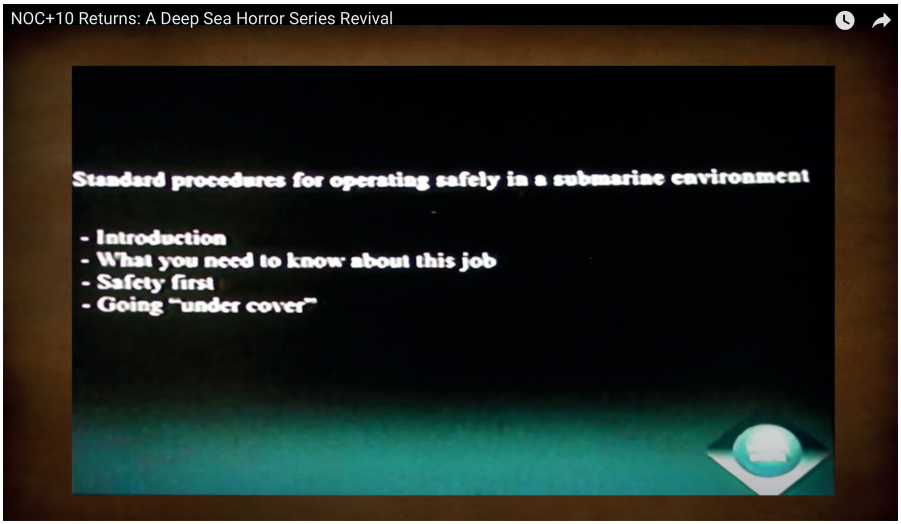
The film aims to make its audience aware of the medium as well as its constraints, relating directly to Bolter's idea of the paradoxical nature of hypermediacy (Bolter and Grusin 55). On the one hand, hypermediacy achieves its aesthetic effect by making the viewer aware of the medium. On the other

hand, it is precisely this awareness of medium that creates a stronger sense of immersion, and thus reinforces the immediacy of this hypermediated audiovisual collage. Viewers, therefore, perceive that what they are watching is not happening on a live feed, and this is suggested through the use of an old VHS format. Using this effect, Parsons, conversely, makes the whole narrative more believable, and the experience more immersive, as the viewer can imagine that they did find the tape and played it at home, only to find the horrific legacy it contains. And this increases, paradoxically, the engagement of empathy, stimulated by the mixture of immediate hypermediacy.

A similar strategy of remediation used as an instrument of hypermediacy and immediacy can be exemplified in the *Ring* from 2002, where the viewer experiences the possibility that they might one day get their hands on the cursed tape, and themselves watch the ill-fated footage. Similarly, in *Blair Witch*, the appeal of a found VHS tape was that the medium became aware of itself, and presented itself explicitly as a filmed account, no longer aiming at a complete immediacy of a camera eye (Fludernik 36). The marketing team used the medium to its fullest advantage by telling the viewers before the premiere that everything that transpired in the film was an authentic experience, and that the actors starring in the film were still missing. While remaining an artefact of its physical medium, the VHS can transform itself from a mere data container into generator of experience and ambience, reinforcing the illusion of immediacy (authenticity) and hypermediacy in the viewer concurrently, offering an insight into the distribution of the sensible operating in the space that the tape recorded; this will become more evident in the next example.

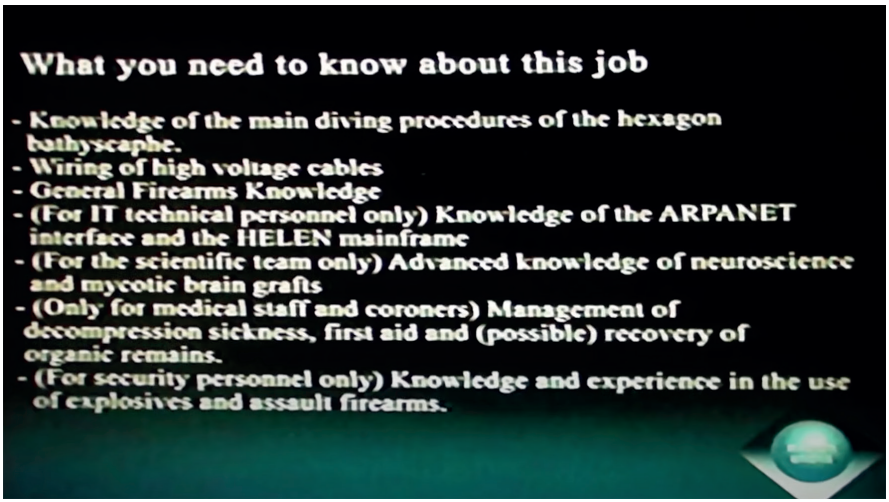
Another high-quality instance of VHS powered remediation can be seen in the ARG (alternate reality game) *NOC+10*, where the players are confronted with a series of coded messages, which they must decipher in the real time in order to reach the next step in the narrative and unlock more story-related information. One of the videos providing the players with more details about the deep-sea AI presents a VHS tape containing bland corporate PowerPoint presentation:

("NOC+10 Returns" 00:18:58)



The presentation is accompanied by distorted and optimistic music from the 1980s, appearing alongside with heavy electromagnetic tape distortion (synchronized with audio distortion). The slides themselves are filled with corporate euphemisms and jargon, both of which hint towards the more sinister nature of the underwater research project (Ranciére, *Method of Equality* 30). *NOC+10* manages to remediate not only the PowerPoint presentation, but also makes use and redeploys the predatory corporate language in a completely new setting.

("NOC+10 Returns" 00:19:18)



All of these ingredients make for a multifarious, complex experience. Many of these elements that create the feeling of the uncanny, tension, and their signs that generate dense and heavy atmosphere often rely on unconscious cues and symbolic language. To understand how these complex collages of hypermediated and immediate material operate on our perception, we must, finally, observe the effects of symbolic language and unconscious stimulus on the human mind.

Literature can make us more empathetic (Bergland). Our minds tend to be more intellectually and emotionally engaged in experiences that tie somehow into older/authentic experiences that we as individuals went through. In the case of adaptive combine receivers, the effect can be traced to the unconscious social pressures of deindividuation (Hayes 152–153). The unconscious perception processes the few phrases from the police receiver it can decode, which subsequently adds to the authenticity of the experience; in real life, we cannot hear everything clearly. And it is this fidelity to the method of shared human experience, reinforced by immediacy, that engages our empathetic drive.

In the case of *Backrooms*, the inability of human brain to decisively process the liminal space and its conceptual categories creates for a feeling of cognitive dissonance, which in turn is experienced as a sensation of something being 'off' a sense of uncanny, seen for instance in *It Follows* (2014).

(Clamshell phone from It Follows: <https://i.redd.it/t0w73feygr731.jpg>)

A phone like this does not exist anywhere, and according to the director it was "made up for the movie to keep things feeling like a dream or something outside of time" ("5 Things"). The eerie feeling comes from the inability of empathy to affix itself on a known environment. The film contains a multitude of out-of-place props that make it much harder for the viewer's mind to apply its usual conceptual categories and order things in one's usual cognitive map (Gottfredson 184).

The liminal spaces in *Backrooms* operate on the very same "outside of time" principle. The viewer experiences a cognitive dissonance stemming from an exposure to a completely uncategorizable environment. But the familiarity of the VHS tape still makes for a sense of empathy and immersion in the film. While hypermediacy works directly against the incitement of empathy in the viewer, its paradoxical, contrastive side of immediacy encourages precisely this type of emotional engagement. The ultimate effect is one of strangeness, fascination, ambiguity, and novelty. And might that not be good art? It might, at the very least, be a sign of innovative, creative activity.

In the conclusion of *Remediation,* Bolter and Grusin present the reader with a short account of William James' pragmatic idea of the "spiritual self." The "spiritual self" is a "sort of innermost center within the circle, of sanctuary… constituted by the subjective life as a whole… as the *active* element of all consciousness" (Bolter and Grusin 233). According to the authors, the "spiritual self" is akin to the "networked self", which "actively makes affiliations and associations" and works "through various media." This

"networked self" is, furthermore, manifested through "affiliations it makes among digital media" and these affiliations and cognitive imprints take form accordingly to the media which carried the information to the "networked self" (Bolter and Grusin 233). The media, therefore, become a part of us, they influence and shape our perspective and our metaphorical drive (Rorty 1991, 35–36). In this way they operate within the network of our cognitive associations and within our cognitive map, effectively influencing the way we interpret art and life.

This essay has aimed to offer an insight into how hypermediated artworks function in order to engage our unconscious, our metaphorical, and our empathetic cognition. The first part of the essay examined how the immersive combine radio chatter can stimulate the unconscious faculties and create an atmosphere of oppressive surveillance. This effect was achieved via the immediacy of a graphical medium, but also through remediation of the police receiver language and the receiver technology itself. The second argument observed how *The Backrooms* remediated not only the VHS media format, but also the concept of liminality as seen in Victorian literature. Remediation, therefore, always comes hand in hand with creative re-description and re-invention in the realm of metaphorical language. The re-description and re-purposing of language could be also observed in combine metaphors, which took over the Nazi Germany rhetoric of purity and extermination. Finally, the last section summarized the processes transpiring in the unconscious and observed the cognitive dissonance that occurs when the mind is faced with a hypermedium—a mélange of immediacy and hypermediacy—suggesting both immersion and awareness of the medium, resulting in the feeling of out of time, the uncanny, strangeness and tension.

The combination and collage methods of the 20th century have made clear Cartesian categorizations hard, if not impossible (Bolter and Grusin 248–251). The categorical imperative became highly subjective (Ameriks 464), and the resulting mélange of forms, media, languages, vocabularies, and perspectives made for a composite viewing experience (Deleuze, *Bergsonism* 20). The 21st century artist is not only a philosopher, but also a creative exegete. The aim of creativity is to rearrange the existing forms and create something new out of them (Bolter and Grusin 39); the creative exegesis, however, will differ for every viewer, interpreting conscious and unconscious hints (Mitchell 168–173) from the spiritual and networked self. Interpreting a computer game, YouTube video, and other novel art forms utilizing hypermedia requires not only flexible changes of focus within one's perception, but also a certain reverential, exegetical *Otium* (Nietzsche, *Fröhliche Wissenschaft* 556–557), allowing for a cow-like digestion (Nietzsche, *Zur Genealogie der Moral* 255–256) of interlacing, multifarious stimuli.

How then shall we interpret hypermediated artworks? How can they help us interpret art and life? To mind comes the method of Frank O'Hara, who lived his whole life at the heart of the fugacious but also perceptive fast company (Chiasson). For him, making sense of the heterogeneity of modern art and its media was not a question of definite answer; in a highly pragmatic fashion, he pointed towards a method of thinking (Nietzsche, *eKGWB* 2737). This he aptly summarized in his "Larry Rivers: A Memoir", where he, above all, recommends sharp *observation*. The substance of interpretation in the information-saturated world is not to know, but to *look* and *think*. A postmodern artist and writer is in the position of a creative exegete. And it is precisely this respectful, intuitive perceptiveness that is required to fully understand and appreciate works like *Half-Life 2* or *The Backrooms*. Frank O'Hara would surely suggest Larry Rivers' approach that rests on the following principles:

> As with his friends, as with cigarette and cigar boxes, maps, and animals, he is always engaged in an esthetic athleticism which sharpens the eye, hand and arm in order to beat the bugaboos of

banality and boredom, deliberately invited into the painting and then triumphed over. What his work has always had to say to me, I guess, is to be more keenly interested while I'm still alive. And perhaps this is the most important thing art can say. (O'Hara 515)

What remediation tells us nowadays is that we may not do with superficial interpretations— "this means that". The aim should be rather to look at the contemporary proliferation of media and modern art with a critical eye of a philosopher, but at the same time with a perceptive affection of an artist (Poirier, *Ralph Waldo Emerson* 455)[3]. And this might be an important message of remediation—a recommendation towards reverent, considering, thoughtful way of approaching art and life.

Notes

(1) This tendency can also be seen in *Half-Life: Alyx*, where the combine soldiers attempt to talk to the player or retract their weapons if the player grabs after them. The subterraneous operation of the distribution of the sensible can also be observed in the details such as degree of robotization of vocal cords of higher-ranking officers. The higher the rank, the more lifeless the voice. ("Half-Life: Alyx – Intro Elevator Combine Reactions")

(2) The latter referenced on Kafka and ruptures/re-descriptions: "Expression must break forms, encourage ruptures and new sproutings. When a form is broken, one must reconstruct the content that will necessarily be part of a rupture in the order of things." See also Rancière and his *Le tort* – rupture in the distribution of the sensible through increased subjectivization of an individual.

(3) "Poetry is the *gai science.* The trait and test of the poet is that he builds, adds, and affirms. The critic destroys: to poet says nothing but what helps somebody; let others be distracted with cares, he is exempt. All their pleasures are tinged with pain. All his pains are edged with pleasure. The gladness he imparts he shares."

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The Voyage of the Man with the Blue Glasses

Abstract: *James Sanua or Ya'qub Rafa'il Sannu' (1839–1912) was the eldest son of his Italian Jewish father and his Egyptian Jewish mother. He became a playwright in 1870 and established Egypt's first Arabic national theater. Consequently, he was entitled the Egyptian Moliere. The subject matter of his plays and satirical journals became gradually critical of Egyptian elite society for emulating the West artificially and perpetuating regressive traditions such as patriarchy and polygamy. In March 1878, James Sanua authored and published two papers in Cairo, The Egyptian Gossip, a multilingual paper, and The Man with the Blue Glasses. The latter led to Sanua's exile to Paris due to criticizing the regime of Khedive Isma'il. The main objective of this article is to analyze three interconnected aspects of James Sanua's career: the nexus between politics and lived experience, the creation of nascent Egyptian identity through his plays and satirical journals, and the transformation of exile into a creative vigor and political thrust. Thus, it aims to make sense of the complexities of Sanua's political position and attitudes.*

Introduction

James Sanua or Ya'qub Rafa'il Sannu' (1839–1912) was the eldest son of his Italian Jewish father and Egyptian Jewish mother. The Egyptian-Italian family belonged to the social elite among the Jews of Cairo. Sanua was trained from an early age to be able to read the New Testament in English, the Torah in Hebrew, and the Qur'an in Arabic. He also mastered Turkish, Italian, and seven other languages (Gendzier 16). Prince Ahmad, the employer of Sanua's father, was impressed by Sanua's talents and assertiveness. He sponsored him to study abroad in Leghorn from 1852 to 1855. At Leghorn, Sanua took courses in political economy, international law, fine arts, and natural science. James Sanua became a playwright in 1870, and with the financial support of Khedive Isma'il (r. 1863–1879), he established Egypt's first Arabic national theater. Sanua's plays were performed in colloquial Egyptian and centered thematically around nationalism and social criticism. After some of his plays were performed on the Khedive's private stage at Quasr Al Nil, Sanua was entitled the Egyptian Moliere by Khedive Isma'il. The subject matter of his plays became gradually critical of Egyptian elite society for emulating the West artificially and perpetuating regressive traditional structures such as the patriarchy and polygamy. As a consequence, his theatrical activities were banned in 1872. Sanua published his first satirical journal in 1874. In March 1878 he authored and published two papers in Cairo, *The Egyptian Gossip,* a multilingual paper, and *The Man with the Blue Glasses.* The latter, due to its criticism of the regime of Khedive Isma'il, led to Sanua's exile to France. He lived in Paris from 1878 until he died in 1912.

The modernization of Egypt gave rise to a radical social, economic, and political transformation with the reforms of Khedive Isma'il's regime. His aim was not only to modernize and 'civilize' Egypt but also to make it officially part of Europe. "Khedive Isma'il (r.1863–1879) had a simple motto, 'Egypt is no longer part of Africa; it has become part of Europe'" (Reynolds 62). Isma'il allocated most of the resources of the country to this purpose. He privatized the economy, modernized his army and public institutions, and built majestic theaters and opera houses to be exhibited to European audiences to display how Egypt was progressing not only in the economic, social, and political realm but also in the domain of culture and aesthetics. He hired European playwrights, actors, and artists to dominate the cultural industry in order to please the European spectator and the elite class of Egypt. In addition, the expensive opening of the Suez Canal was a pivotal moment for Isma'il. However, his extravagant financial management and policies led to bankruptcy and, ultimately, to the British occupation of Egypt in 1882.

James Sanua began his career on the stage and with his writings during these turbulent social, economic, and political reconfigurations. He anticipated the British occupation a decade before its realization. He played a significant role in the establishment of the Egyptian national theater in 1870. It was at this juncture, before falling out of favor with the political establishment, that he was given the title of 'Egyptian Moliere' by Khedive Isma'il. Nonetheless, his career on the stage lasted only two years. The reasons for his expulsion from the theater are not unequivocal. However, there is a high probability that Sanua's play, *The Two Rival Wives*, which proffers a critique of polygamy, riled Khedive Isma'il. Sanua's attitude and language in his journals toward Isma'il turned from exalting admiration, crowning him as the true emancipatory leader fighting for progress, liberty, and justice, into an acerbic style of ridicule and displacement, which labeled Isma'il as the inner-enemy of Egypt. Consequently, his artistic, literary, and political activities were banned throughout the country. The regime imposed severe punishments on people who were caught reading his journals secretly, and there were two unsuccessful attempts to assassinate him. He anticipated his exile to France and in preparation, he received financial aid from secret societies in which he was involved. Without losing time, Sanua continued publishing *The Man with the Blue Glasses* in Paris. With the help of his connections in Egypt, he was continuously informed by various secret societies. In Paris, he also included French translations in the journal which were strategically adjusted and modified to enhance their appeal to the French audience and gain public support. He smuggled his journals into Egypt with the support of his compatriots as well.

This biographical input stresses the nexus between Sanua's lived experience and his works, political position and attitudes, manifested in his artistic, literary, and intellectual endeavors. In his plays, lectures, and journals, Sanua exploited satire and the public sphere by designating and attacking the inner and outer enemies (Isma'il, his successors, and Britain) in order to reinforce nascent Egyptian national consciousness. The thrust of this endeavor was toward strategically creating and solidifying a collective consciousness and bolstering the nationalistic ideology and sentiments for liberation. This was often accomplished by instigating collective behavioral responses and experiences such as laughing together or creating an imagined community whose identity and logic derive fundamentally from the binary mechanism, 'us versus them'. In Paris, he transformed his exile into a creative vigor and became adamantly radical. His efforts aimed to mimic, mock, and subvert the dogmatic images of thought endemic to dominant discourses around colonialism, Orientalism, and religious fanaticism. In this respect, he employed satire creatively and effectively for his revolutionary efforts as a resistance strategy against the status quo. The main objective of this article is to analyze three main points that are interconnected in James Sanua's career: the nexus between politics and lived experience, the imagination and reinforcement of nascent Egyptian consciousness through his plays and satirical journals, and the transformation of exile into a creative vigor and political mission. By doing so it aims at laying bare and making sense of the complexities of Sanua's political position and attitudes.

A Voyage into the Metropole

> Exile is a dream of a glorious return. Exile is a vision of revolution: Elba not St Helena. It is an endless paradox: looking forward by always looking back. The exile is a ball hurled high into the air.
>
> Salman Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses*

Having established James Sanua's historical background, it is now possible to explore his political position and attitudes in tandem with his exile to France. Sanua's hybridity raises the question: how did such a hybrid individual become a fervent Egyptian patriot? In my opinion, part of the answer lies in his active

participation in secret societies. Sanua was a Freemason since 1875, furthermore, he founded his own secret societies called *The Circle of Progress* and *The Society of Lovers of Knowledge*. These secret societies had diverse members who came from different social and economic domains of society: "students, priests, and rabbis took part in our meetings, and by their speeches exulted wisdom and inspired fraternity among men, without distinction as to race or creed" (Khadduri 162). At the core of Sanua's political agenda is the promulgation of the universal ideals of enlightenment and Egypt's right to self-determination. Devoting his life to the Egyptian cause of sovereignty, liberty, and progress concurrently served the universal ideals to which he adhered. His hybridity, social and economic privileges, and education had a crucial influence on Sanua for affiliating himself with what he saw as a universal cause. Gendzier argues that the historical narratives of Italy and France played a significant role in Sanua's political position and epistemological convictions. France was the intellectual base of Egypt, the center of anti-British propaganda and alliance for the Egyptian cause. Italy, on the other hand, was a role model for the nationalistic project; Sanua referred often to Garibaldi and Mazzini in his works (Gendzier 43).

Freemasonry appeared in Egypt in 1798 by officers of the French army, "from the turn of the century to the end of Isma'il's reign, French, Italian, and British lodges were to be found in Cairo, Alexandria, Mansura, as well as in other smaller cities" (Gendzier 46). Freemason lodges admit influential people regardless of their religion insofar as they believe in a 'supreme being'. Freemasons in the West tend to abstain from political activity and focus chiefly on philanthropy, promoting fraternity, educational programs, and charities. Otherwise, they would be criticized, censored, and put under surveillance by the State. Yet Freemasonry had different characteristics in Egypt. Kedourie succinctly explains the avant-garde leanings of Freemasonry in Egypt:

Freemasonry and freethinking seem to have been closely linked at that time in the Near East. To be a freemason was to show one's dislike of orthodox, traditional religion, the power it gave to Ecclesiastes, and the hatreds and divisions it promoted and perpetuated in society. Malkam Khan was a freemason, Adib Ishaq was one, James Sanua likewise (Kedourie 20).

Contrary to the apolitical stance of European Freemasonry, Kudsi-Zadeh argues that in Egypt Freemasonry created an outlet for activists for insurgency and subversive activities against Khedive Isma'il (26). The avant-garde secret societies in which Sanua, Afghani, and al-Halim were involved were actively engaged in politics. Afghani, who influenced Sanua, was against the apolitical position and attitudes of European Freemasons. He not only promoted the ideals of enlightenment and self-determination of Egypt but also rooted for a Pan-Islamist ideal quite unusual for Freemasonry. He was exiled and eventually moved to Paris as well. Afghani thought that Paris provided the best conditions for conducting a campaign against the British. He met there with Egyptian exiles and disseminated his views and propaganda among French political and literary circles, as his views were given attention in the European press (Zadeh 34). He also met with Sanua as they shared a similar cause and views apart from Pan-Islamism, even though Sanua later exploited Pan-Islamism strategically to provoke Egyptians toward his cause when Franco-Egyptian solidarity was gradually waning. Sanua was wielding the religious discourse strategically to gain support for his cause against Khedive Isma'il and British intervention. He had a profound knowledge of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. He was interested in the social and cultural function of religions, especially how they are exploited to create community belonging and solidarity. In Paris, he realized that Europeans had pervasive, dogmatic, and reductive views of Islam. Therefore, in his public lectures, he emphasized the similarity of the most widely practiced religions in the world. He attempted to subvert the stereotype of Islam as the religion of barbarism perceived commonly by Europeans by stressing the significance of tolerance in Islam while opposing the regressive and repressive social practices of religion in society.

With regard to the clandestine activities of secret societies, in *A Thousand Plateaus,* Deleuze & Guattari assert that "A secret society always acts in society as a war machine"; every secret society has the universal project of "permeating all of society," displacing its segmentation and hierarchy, however, it needs the support of the society. There are two laws behind the movement: firstly, every secret society has a "hind-society" that maintains the secret and applies enforcement for its revelation. Secondly, every secret society has its own mode of existence and action which is a secret (335). Sanua acted as a war machine in a Deleuzian sense due to his involvement in avant-garde secret societies and the way he exploited satire, theater, and journalism to penetrate and manipulate the public sphere to push his political agenda. A powerful threat against the regime ensued from the exteriority of Sanua's actions to the State apparatus. Therefore, Khedive Isma'il foreclosed any possibility of free speech and compelled his exile in the aftermath of his subversive actions. Sanua conducted his political aspirations in oblique, opaque, and strategic ways even more so as an exile in Paris. This granted him a secure base and popularity to fight for his cause, allowing him to engage in critical practice freely and effectively without worrying about censorship, threats, or state enforcement. Rather than merely speaking truth to power, he resorted to strategies, tactics, and performativity. He aspired to set ablaze ossified structures and ignite radical social transformations via art, which he regarded primarily as a powerful means to an end preceding any aesthetic quality. Satire, theater, and journalism were effective outlets and medialities for educating the public and obtaining public support for his cause strategically. His exile to Paris provided him with the 'blue glasses' enveloped in the privileged critical distance and creative vigor that strongly influenced his artistic, intellectual, and political endeavors. He looked at Egypt and Europe through the eyes of a familiar stranger that bestowed on him a clear double-vision and critical distance of exilic consciousness. Thus, he managed to turn the tragic experience of exile into a positive and creative mission.

James Sanua's transgressions as an exile in Paris operate from the third space in the process of translation, displacement, and indeterminate space of splitting. Sanua's revolutionary energies channeled for social transformations were steeped in deterritorialization if not the perpetual movement. In *The Location of Culture*, Homi K. Bhabha describes the third space as the location of negotiation rather than negation: "it is the 'inter' – the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the inbetween space – that carries the burden of the meaning of culture" (Bhabha 56). Inbetween there is a performative writing within the cultural and historical intertextuality of translocations rather than the mere expression or communication between so-called totalized and monolithic cultures and identities. There is hybridity, a time and space in which categories of the binary logic split, blend in, or collapse into one another by passing through the third space to go 'beyond'. The ambivalence of the discursive process is marked by difference in which meaning is not mimetic or transparent but engages in performance. Sanua engaged in discursive performativity for his political commitment to liberation as a famous spokesperson in Paris. Ziad Fahmy claims that "...Sannu' became an icon of Parisian journalistic and social circles. Until the arrival of Kamil on the European scene in the mid-1890s, Sannu' was the sole "for hire" native Oriental expert in Parisian circles" (114). He informed the French about the situation in Egypt and extolled the virtues of French civilization at any given chance to gain political support.

Sanua subtly and obliquely exploited, mimicked, and mocked the Orientalist discourse that refers to "the knowledge of the Orient that places things Oriental in class, court, prison, or manual for scrutiny, judgement, discipline, or governing", conceptualized by Edward Said (41). In his public lectures in Paris, Sanua wore excessive traditional garments to mimic an Oriental persona and to create an image of a spokesperson of Egypt in the eyes of Parisians.

Whereas in Egypt he emphasized his identity as a non-muslim resident and land-owner, in France he increasingly Orientalized himself. By doing so, he highlighted his position as the exotic other at the

edge of both societies. He, therefore, turned himself into a symbol, a personification and an ambassador of this otherness and at the same time a mirror and advisor of the self (Etmüller 290).

Bhabha refers to Orientalism as "a static system of 'synchronic essentialism', a knowledge of 'signifiers of stability' such as the lexicographic and the encyclopaedic. However, this site is continually under threat from diachronic forms of history and narrative, signs of instability" (102). Even though Sanua performs a strategic balancing act that aims at gaining the support of the French against the British, by returning the gaze back to the eye of power and reflecting the mirror image of the psychic projection of colonizers, his public performances obliquely and opaquely resist dominant ways of seeing and knowing. As a 'speaking subject', "linguistic changes constitute changes in the *status of the subject*…" (Kristeva 15–16), Sanua enunciates transgressive counter-lies and truths as a corollary, that is, making truth claims by lying back; by mimicking and mocking the lies, illusions, and hypocrisies of Orientalist discourse. In *Transgressive Truths and Flattering Lies: The Poetics and Ethics of Anglophone Arab Representations,* Markus Schmitz argues that "The strategic decision to counter hegemonic lies by lying back not only destabilizes the principal Eurocentric hierarchy of cross-cultural inquiry confined by the constitutive strategies of othering and selving but ultimately gains an epistemological and moral component" (262). The public performance unfolds the performativity of identity as a speaking subject in process by opening up a space of splitting that exceeds the totalizing frame of stereotypical and transparent image arising from the demand of colonizers to know and control the Other. Homi K. Bhabha wrote "It is from this area between mimicry and mockery, where the reforming, civilizing mission is threatened by the displacing gaze of its disciplinary double, that my instances of colonial imitation come" (Bhabha 122). His narrated, performative, and temporal identifications in his journals, plays, or public lectures demonstrate how rewriting the self via difference and repetition was significant for Sanua's resistance strategies in the contested space of narrative. He created alter egos and changed positions as "…the question of identification is never the affirmation of a pre-given identity, never a self-fulfilling prophecy – it is always the production of an image of an identity and the transformation of the subject assuming that image" (Bhabha 64). Along with Afghani, his voyage-in and performativity in a Western metropole are one of the first documents of resistance within Europe against Orientalist discourse underpinning the atmospheric and epistemic violence of colonialism – ironically through ingratiating and placating self-orientalization, which can be observed in many modern Anglo-Arab writings and representations as well.

Constructing National Consciousness through the Art of Political Satire

> Under this ritual act of decrowning a king lies the very core of the carnival sense of the world – the pathos of shifts and changes, of death and renewal.
>
> Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetic*

This chapter presents a brief analysis of narrative resistance regarding formative reinforcement of Egyptian national consciousness in James Sanua's satirical journals. In *the Construct of Egypt's National-Self in James Sanua's Early Satire and Caricature*, Etmüller claims that Sanua's satire and caricatures in *The Man with the Blue Glasses* had the objective of reinforcing the nascent 'imagined community'. By engineering and singling out the *socius* and *hostis*, Etmüller argues that Sanua creates a dichotomy by attacking the inner and outer *hostis,* – Khedive Isma'il and British – to solidify the dichotomy between 'us vs them' (271). For this purpose, Sanua published eight journal series and eighty-seven issues in total. His satirical journals functioned as constructing an imagined community within homogeneous time and space in which the

readers developed a sense of community bond via laughing together. Even though most of the readers did not know each other, they were virtually positioned in the same imagined community drawing its identity from its binary opposition, as well as shared values and similar social positionality. In Egypt, it was very common to gather in coffee shops and turn reading into a public event, so it was easier to transmute the fictional belonging into a real community. Sanua used colloquial Arabic and delineated characters from different layers of society to give the impression that his readers represented the nascent Egyptian nation as whole fighting against the inner and outer enemies for independence and progress of Egypt (see figures 1 and 2). In Etmüller's own words:

> Dramatically performed and written satire, as well as caricature, have been abundantly exploited in the European and Arab cultural context to exaggerate asymmetries with the intention of promoting diverse political agendas. These genres have been especially useful to highlight the absurd of a situation or to clearly stigmatize one's adversary in the public space. At the same time they further enhance the feeling of belonging to a community…. (Etmüller 271)

While satirizing Khedive Is'mail as the inner enemy of the nascent nation, Sanua illustrated the British repeatedly in a grotesque fashion in his caricatures. The British were referred to as "the Reds", implying the redness of their faces due to exposure to the sun in Egypt (Fahmy 114). The image of a bull often appeared in his caricatures as a metonymy for John Bull.

Figure 1. Sanua, James. *Abu Nazzara Zarqa Paris.* Issue 4. 1881.

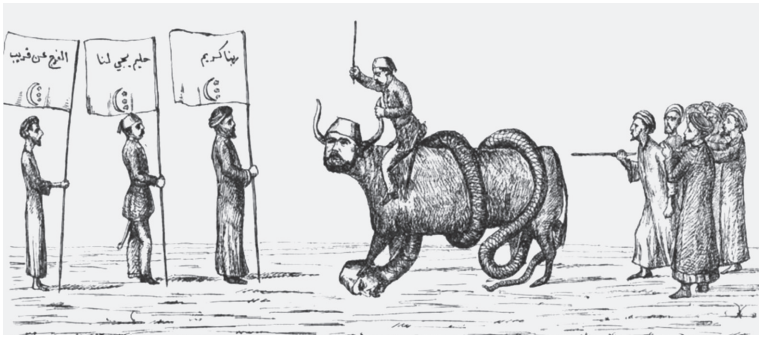

Figure 2. Sanua, James. *Abu Nazzara Zarqa Paris.* Issue 29. 1879.

In *Popular Culture and Political Satire as Counter-Hegemony*, Efharis Mascha defines political satire as a form of cultural resistance which brings about a constant process that alters the perceptions, common sense, and stereotypes of 'the people', along with assuaging the concerns and fears of the public against its oppressor (202). By deploying humor, irony, and many other techniques to deform and defamiliarize reality, satirists create a space in which the readers can be critically engaged with that reality without succumbing to despair or nihilism. Besides, satire is a medium that has the power of seeping into the public discourse relatively easily as a form of impersonal and intellectual criticism. Sanua adopted multiple alter egos along with many fictional characters in his journals to be detached as a person from his work. While presenting a fun, fictional, and 'harmless' experience to his readers on the surface, he set the groundwork for promulgating a consistent political agenda. The amusing aspect of satire grips and engages the common readers much more easily than in a traditional or academic journal. In that respect, Sanua's journals were quite populist.

Figure 3. Sanua, James. *Abu Nazzara Zarqa Paris.* Issue 9. 1880.

The figure above ridicules the regime of Khedive Isma'il for their complicit subordination to the British crown. Mascha refers to Gramsci's notion regarding the function and operation of satire as a "war of position," which disparages the hegemonic discourse without effectuating physical resistance confronting the regime (Mascha 196). Sanua's satirical journals, mainly *The Man with the Blue Glasses,* in conjunction with his play entitled *The Two Rival Wives,* led to his exile. At the beginning of his career, he praised and honored Khedive Isma'il. However, his attitude towards him progressively became more sardonic, cynical, and violent. "Sanua aims to expose the tyrant to public laughter. Undoubtedly, his desire for revenge must have been great after the despot had forced him into exile. However, it was also part of his political strategy to make the Egyptians lose their respect and fear of the Khedive" (Etmüller 108). For this purpose, he used different techniques of travesty and deformation with great finesse to condescend, ridicule, and deprive the Khedive of dignity and respect. He lampooned the Khedive for having multiple wives, being the puppet

of the 'brute' British, his corrupt financial management that led the country to bankruptcy, cruel treatment of peasants by the tax collectors, and the doomsday of ultimate British occupation. The distorted and burlesque representations tinged with castigation in his caricatures are overtly aggressive and outspoken. They engender dramatic shifts in the perception of people in power who are labeled as enemies and, thus, elicit emotional response and approval from the readers. "Caricatures were very important genre, Sanua undisputedly was the very first modern Egyptian who introduced this art into his satirical magazines" (Etmüller 79).

Figure 4. Sanua, James. *Abu Nazzara Zarqa Paris.* Issue 6. 1879.

Figure 5. Sanua, James. *Abu Nazzara Zarqa Paris.* Issue 2. 1883.

Conclusion

All in all, the main objective of this article was to analyze the nexus between politics and lived experience, imagination and reinforcement of nascent Egyptian consciousness through theater and satirical journals, and the transformation of exile into a positive mission in James Sanua's career. By doing so it aimed at making sense of Sanua's complex political position and attitudes with a focus on his voyage-in and performative intervention into the hegemonic discourses. Sanua as an activist satirist undermined not only the prestige and dignity of corrupt politicians in the eyes of the public, but also aimed at subverting the dogmatic images of thought and hegemonic discourses around Orientalism, colonialism, and religious fanaticism which he rendered harmful and regressive to the welfare and future of the nascent Egyptian nation. Sanua's journals are replete with sardonic, grotesque, and subversive images of inner and outer enemies to strip them of their power, dignity, and respect. In turn, he constructs a nascent imagined community of particular formation, bringing forth resistance and solidarity. Therefore, satire, theater, and journalism were not only powerful medialities in resisting the puppet regime of Khedive Is'mail and his successors, but also subverted colonialism and Orientalism to cement the national consciousness and vision of independent Egypt.

James Sanua spoke from an ambivalent cross-cultural space. His hybridity, performativity, and exilic consciousness opened up a space of splitting and created a critical distance which became a privilege for practicing humanism as a purveyor of transgressive truths. Even though he was a fervent patriot, adamant satirist, and agitator devoting his life to the independence of Egypt, he propagated tolerance and liberty of all the nations regardless of their differences. He was under the influence of enlightenment ideals but he did not have the foreboding in his time that it would have turned into scientific racism, brutal exploitation of nature and human beings, and non-stop accumulation of capital and its instrument of spectacle for so-called progress. However, it is unequivocal that he used his privileges for a humanist cause and employed his art to uplift and educate the public, – i.e. by using colloquial Arabic – he consciously decided to affiliate himself with Egypt and subverted hegemonic discourses by resorting to strategies of narrative resistance and performativity. Given the main arguments made in this article, under the chameleon guise of James Sanua's complexities, fluxional positionalities, oblique and opaque resistance strategies, and fluid identifications, his consistent political agenda can be found.

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Helena Polehlová

All Roads Lead to Rome

Abstract: *Rome, as the heart of the medieval Christian world, the site of numerous shrines, and the centre of Church administration, was a frequent destination for the Anglo-Saxon clerics as well as medieval travellers under the Norman rule. Based on primary sources – The Venerable Bede's* Historia Ecclesiastica*, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and William of Malmesbury's* Gesta Pontificum Anglorum*, the present paper attempts to map the busy travels, focusing on the travellers' motivation as well as the obstacles they had to overcome. The paper addresses the question of how the Roman travels reflected Britain's relationship to the Papal see, which was to become the bone of contention during the English Reformation.*

Living in the seventh century AD, dying in 709, Anglo-Saxon bishop Wilfrid made three journeys to Rome during his lifetime, and thus became one of the most travelled men in the Anglo-Saxon times. His reasons seem to have been two: the first journey made in his youth (at the age of twenty) was motivated by his effort to learn the Scriptures, and be taught the Roman rite and liturgical and devotional practices of the Roman Church; the following two journeys, at the age of 46 and 70, Wilfrid made as a bishop, unlawfully deprived of his episcopal office at York, and his goal was to appeal to the pope and his council, and justify himself from the charges raised by the Northumbrian king and also the English Archbishop Theodore. His appeal was successful and he managed to defend the integrity of his diocese. It follows that one of the prominent features of Bishop Wilfrid was his deep concern for the Roman Church, represented by the pope. In the light of his Roman travels, the present article attempts to delve into the phenomenon of English travels to Rome in the Anglo-Saxon and Norman times, and to analyse what incentives there were that drove the English to the eternal city. Another research question concerns the relationship of the Anglo-Saxons and the English during the Norman rule to Rome and the papacy, namely the impact of the travels on the links.

The historical sources shedding light on these topics include primarily The Venerable Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica,* completed in 731 (further abbreviated as *HE*), the amalgam of entries of *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, recording history up to the year 1154 (abbreviated as *ASC*), and William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum* and *Gesta Regum* Anglorum, written in the twelfth century and covering the history of individual Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and dioceses from their beginning to William's lifetime (referred to as *GP* and *GR* respectively). The article presents the results of research based on these primary sources. This set of sources is by no means complete; of course, Roman travels are mirrored in hagiographies and minor histories, too. Some partial evidence was also searched for in hagiographies of individual Roman pilgrims.

Rome has traditionally played the role of the centre of Christianity in Europe. Since the times of Apostles Peter and Paul, it has become the seat of the pope, the living successor of St Peter, the supreme visible authority of the Christian Church, and later, after the secession of the Eastern Orthodox Church, the head of the Western – Roman Catholic Church. The Anglo-Saxon Christians were greatly attracted to Rome following the mission of St Augustine, the missionary sent to Britain by Pope Gregory the Great. Northern regions of Britain had experienced Christianity thanks to the activity of Irish missionaries, e.g. St Columba or St Aidan, however, it is St Augustine who initiated the Christian conversion of royal courts and commenced disseminating the Roman practices of liturgy or the Roman way of counting the date of

Easter. The synod of Whitby, where the above-mentioned bishop Wilfrid advocated the shift of the Anglo-Saxon churches towards Roman discipline, confirmed Britain's bonds with Rome in the seventh century.

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle explicitly names about 60 travellers between the years 656-1140. Apparently, this number refers to the most significant travellers that represent higher numbers of nameless individuals and assistants. Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* names roughly 20 travellers during the seventh and at the very beginning of the eighth centuries. Clearly, the highest number of pilgrims and other travellers is mentioned by William of Malmesbury whose history covers the longest span of time.

Rome, as the heart of medieval Christian Europe, and the second pilgrimage site after Jerusalem was the site of numerous shrines of saints, and thus had become a frequent destination for Anglo-Saxon pilgrims by the early eighth century (Barefoot 18). Obviously, pilgrimage cannot be perceived as solely spiritual experience, cut off from the physical activity of travelling. It often meant transgressing one's safe zone. This is aptly expressed by J. D. Davies, quoted by Judith Champ: "To go to Rome (…) is to deny daily routine, to leave known structures and to discover how divisions can be broken down and a sense of wholeness encouraged" (Champ 3). By accepting the burden of a pilgrimage, pilgrims hoped to find encouragement, consolation, atonement of their sins. Pilgrimage was also conducted as thanksgiving, when someone had been healed from injuries or illnesses, or fulfilment of a vow, when someone's prayers had been answered and an important achievement had been made, e.g. a battle had been won, an enemy had been defeated, or revenged. Last but not least, pilgrimage was imposed on sinners as a punishment for serious offences, theft or murder. In later Middle Ages from the fourteenth century on, pilgrimage to Rome was a means of obtaining indulgencies, releasing the debt of temporal punishment. Major offences could be forgiven solely by the pope and a Roman pilgrimage was the only possible way to receive forgiveness.

William of Malmesbury reports on several penitents travelling to Rome. Aware of his sins committed in his youth, bishop Ecgwine decided to make a truly penitent pilgrimage to Rome at the end of the seventh century, hoping to be freed of his wrong-doings (*GP* 160. 3–4). In preparation for the journey, he shackled his feet and threw the key into a river, which was identified as Avon by Michael Lapidge (*Vita S. Ecgwini* 1.13., note 73). Another penitent pilgrim is Herbert Losinga who in 1094 "went to Rome while older and wiser, laid down there the staff and ring he had obtained by simony, and was found worthy by the indulgence of a merciful pope to receive them back again" (*GP* 74. 15). Indulgencies were granted to sinners on condition that they made a prayer tour around Roman basilicas and spent required time at Rome.

Rome proved to be a destination more easily accessible than Jerusalem, where the pilgrims were able to witness genuine places connected with the life of Jesus Christ. Yet Rome was not a place easily reached by everyone. Whether the pilgrims were physically not fit enough to travel the distance, or whether they could not afford the journey or were not given the permission to go to Rome, the Mercian King Wulfhere granted an opportunity for them to make a quasi-Roman pilgrimage. As reported by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (46), in 656 he secured the consecration of Medhamsted Minster of St. Peter, later renamed Peterborough Minster, which was granted papal privileges, i.e. it was not subject to English administration but directly to papal administration. In 675 Pope Agatho declared that "whatever man may have made a vow to go to Rome, and cannot perform it, either from infirmity, or for his lord's need, or from poverty, or from any other necessity of any kind whatever,… be he of England, or of whatever other island he be, he may come to that minster of Medhamsted, and have the same forgiveness of Christ and St. Peter, and of the abbot, and of the monks, that he should have if he went to Rome" (*ASC* 51). This is a very powerful statement, attesting to the significance of Rome as a place of pilgrimage, but at

the same admitting that the journey may be impossible for the ill, for the busy, and for the poor. Thus, an alternative place of veneration of St. Peter was established in England, holding the same privileges as Rome itself.

While at Rome, English pilgrims found lodgings in the Saxon quarter of the city named *burh* (borough) very close to St. Peter's basilica. First founded by King Ine of Wessex in the 720s, as reported by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the hospice served the purpose of accommodating and providing care to English travellers; a church was built on its premises where services were said for the English pilgrims and a burial site was provided to those who died at Rome during their stay in the close vicinity from St Peter's. Matthew of Paris interprets the *schola Saxonum* as an educational institution in the "proper" Roman way of devotion and considers its foundation crucial for the travellers: "the kings of England and the royal family with the bishops, priests and clergy might come to it to be instructed in learning and in the Catholic faith, lest anything might be taught in the English Church which was heterodox or opposed to Catholic unity. Thus they would return home thoroughly strengthened in the faith" (quoted in Champ 25). Nevertheless, as other sources indicate, it served solely as an institution providing accommodation and spiritual solace. In 816 a fire destroyed the buildings of the hospice (*ASC* 71), which was later to be renewed by King Ethelwulf and his son Alfred in the early 850s (Champ 25). *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* reports that King Burhgred was buried in the church of Santa Maria in the Saxon school in 874 (*ASC* 80).

Being one of the earliest national hospices at Rome, *schola Saxonum* was exempted from taxation by Pope Marinus in 883-884, probably thanks to generous donations by King Ethelwulf and Alfred (Champ 19). St Peter's Pence, which is going to be mentioned later, was introduced as a legal tax to be paid by every English family by King Offa at the end of the eighth century. As mentioned by Judith Champ, the community of pilgrims living in the English hospice in the eleventh century developed into a quasi-monastic community. Unfortunately, the *schola* fell into poverty and disrepair during the period of fighting at Rome until in 1201 the property was taken over by Pope Innocent III (Champ 27).

To conclude the section on the pilgrimage, let us mention the busiest Anglo-Saxon pilgrim to Rome. Benedict Bishop, the founder and abbot of Monkwearmouth and Jarrow – a double monastery between Sunderland and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, travelled to Rome as many as six times for manifold reasons: to be instructed in the Roman discipline and rite, or to furnish his newly founded monastery with relics of saints, with fashionable artefacts such as manuscripts, precious liturgical cloths and vessels. He also brought European artisans with him, e.g. glaziers; he also brought teachers of church music to instruct Wearmouth singers in the proper chanting, as we know from several sources (*HE* IV.18; *Historia abbatum* 2, 4–6, *GP* 186.8). So, besides satisfying his spiritual longing he enhanced links between his monasteries and Rome, adopting particular liturgical practices that were approved of in Rome. Last but not least, his travels had a profound effect on architecture of Northumbrian churches and monasteries, as he introduced contemporary trends in architecture and church vestments.

Importantly, Rome has also been the centre of Roman Church administration, which means that it has been the venue of Church administrative acts, such as consecrations of archbishops and presenting them with the pallium, visitations of the bishops and archbishops *ad limina apostolorum*, and Church councils. Every archbishop of Canterbury and later that of York was obliged to receive a pallium – an ecclesiastical vestment in the Roman Catholic Church, bestowed by the Holy See upon metropolitan archbishops. It was usually handed over to the appointed archbishop by the pope himself, although the Venerable Bede mentions an exception when the pallium was sent to England to prevent the archbishop-to-be from making "a toilsome journey to Rome, over great distances of land and sea" (*HE* II.18). This ritual came to be rather expensive as the archbishop had to expend a lot of money for the perilous journey

and his stay in Rome (Loyn 4–5), and what is more, the archbishop had to pay a special fee for the pallium. Despite the expenses, nineteen out of twenty-four archbishops in the Anglo-Saxon period and fourteen out of twenty-six Norman archbishops before 1294 went to Rome for this purpose (Barefoot 21; 30).

In fact, receiving a pallium is by far the most frequent reason for travelling to Rome mentioned by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Numerous entries are limited to a brief statement: "He went to Rome to receive the pall" (*ASC* 59 nn.) The more extraordinary is a story mentioned by William of Malmesbury. Archbishop of Canterbury Lanfranc, one of the Norman archbishops and a protégé of William the Conqueror, enjoyed such a great respect and devotion at the papal court that, besides the ordinary pallium, "Pope Alexander gave him, with his own hand and as a token of his affection, a second, in which he was accustomed to celebrate mass" (*GP* 25.6). A unique experience documented solely by William of Malmesbury, it also informs on Lanfranc's busy political negotiations in the presence of Pope Alexander. It follows that receiving a pallium clearly was the most frequent goal of medieval English archbishops' travels to Rome, however, such a long and strenuous journey also was utilized for other, especially political, reasons such as appeals to the pope. Travelling to Rome with a political and administrative purpose may be exemplified by Bishop Wilfrid who went to Rome to appeal to the pope and defend his case twice (*Vita Wilfridi* 29–32; 50–54).

A representative of a completely different group of travellers is King Caedwalla, a representative of the royal travellers. Having arrived at Rome in 688, he was baptised on Holy Saturday 689 (10th April), accepting the Christian name Peter. He was clothed in a white baptismal robe that the newly baptised were used to wearing for eight days. Since it was apparent that he would die soon, he had not been deprived of his white robe when he died ten days after his Christening (*ASC* 54, *HE* IV/12 and V/7). Kings and their spouses longed to travel to holy places to prepare their souls for the departure from the earthly life, praying for forgiveness of their past sins and crimes, starting off a fashionable habit of the seventh and eighth centuries. Kings that followed Caedwalla's example were e.g. Ine, King of Wessex, Caedwalla's successor, in 728, who spent the rest of his life in Rome. Cenred and Offa, Mercian kings, travelled to Rome in 709 to accept tonsure and a white robe, and to turn to a monastery life. (*HE* 5, 7; 5, 13; 5. 18–19). Bishop Forthhere accompanying Queen Frithogitha reached Rome in 737 (*ASC* 59). King Oswiu had intended to travel to Rome to find solace and forgiving of his sins committed against Bishop Wilfrid, but he died shortly before leaving Northumbria (*HE* IV, 5).

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle also reports on King Alfred being sent to Rome at the age of five by his father King Ethelwulf to receive education at the papal court of Leo IV. Confusion arises when the entry for 854 reads that "when the pope heard say that (Ethelbald, Ethelwulf's elder son and Alfred's brother) was dead, he consecrated Alfred king, and held him under spiritual hands, as his father Ethelwulf had desired, and for which purpose he had sent him thither" (*ASC* 74). William of Malmesbury's report agrees with that of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, stating that Alfred was "honourably received and anointed as king" by Pope Leo IV (*GR* I. 99). As Alfred had another two living brothers, Wessex was ruled by Ethelberht and Ethelred successively and Alfred was called *secundarius* – a king-to-be.

A detailed record of King Cnut's visit to Rome is recorded by William of Malmesbury in *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, saying that King Cnut expressed humble thanks for being able to see and venerate all sacred places within Rome in 1027 or 1031, praying for forgiveness of his sins and crimes, trying to right his wrongs, also attending the coronation ceremony of German King Conrad II. In his Epistle to his people he encourages them to travel to Rome, whether they are traders or pious viators. He informs them that he has negotiated easier and safer journeys to Rome, and grants that they "should not be impeded by so many barriers on the road, nor harassed with unjust exactions" (*GR* II. 11). On the other hand, he

adjures "all his bishops, and governors, throughout (his) kingdom, by the fidelity they owe to God and me, to take care that, before I come to England, all dues owing by ancient custom be discharged: that is to say, plough alms, the tenth of animals born in the current year, and the pence owing to Rome for St. Peter, whether from cities or villages: and in the middle of August, the tenth of the produce of the earth: and on the festival of St. Martin, the first fruits of seeds, to the church of the parish where each one resides, which is called in English Circscet" (*GR* II. 11).

This lengthy quotation brings us to the last group of travellers worth mentioning: those who were in charge of regular fees to the papal see. Interestingly, most records of conducting the regular payments are to be found in *the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* during the reign of King Alfred. In fact, according to William of Malmesbury, Ethelwulf is mentioned as the initiator of the financial contribution, later known as *Rome-scot* (*GR* I. 98). This payment or tax was "ordained throughout the whole kingdom of the West Saxons, (…) that a penny should be sent by every family to the blessed Peter and the Roman church, (…) in order that the English, who abode there, might have a means of support from that source" (Matthew of Westminster 352).

For years 883, 887, 888, and 890 we know the exact names of ealdormen, i.e. free lay men, who were responsible for leading the alms and Rom-scot to Rome. Another similar entry is to be found in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* much later after the lapse of nearly 200 years, when it was the pope's legate who had to travel to England to collect the payments on his own: "The English sent Rome-scot after many years" (*ASC* 224).

The sources indicate that the pilgrims and travellers had to face many difficulties and overcome serious obstacles both on their way to and from Rome. Whether the narratives are based on real events or not, they helped build up the pilgrims' image of persistent travellers and emphasized the perils of the journey and the value of the arduous pilgrimage.[1] The areas of Gaul, Lombardy and Piedmont are often described as dangerous regions where English pilgrims are prone to being robbed. A terrifying experience on the one hand, the pilgrims and later saints are given a chance to prove their extraordinary powers by making miracles. William of Malmesbury names archbishop of York and bishop of Worcester, Ealdred, robbed on his way back to England in 1061. The fact that he had to flee back to Rome "stripped of everything to the last penny" gave him a chance to regain the prestige and confidence that he had been deprived of by the previous decision of Pope Nicholas (*GP* 115. 15–16). William also gives an account of St Anselm's journey when, crossing the Alps in ca 1093, he was attacked by a Burgundian duke, attempting to rob him. Anselm's "pleasant look, gentle face, and benign grey hairs" softened the duke's heart, so he gave up all his deceitful plans and received Anselm's blessing (*GP* 51.6). In a similar vein, having crossed the Alps to get the pallium at Rome, the newly elected Bishop of Winchester, Ælfheah, in the mid-tenth century (Loyn 11–12) was robbed by "a mob of country folk" (*GP* 76.5–6). Suddenly a fire broke out and threatened to destroy the town. The robbers slowly realized that they were being revenged for their wrongs and begged the English traveller to forgive them. After Ælfheah made a sign of the cross, the fire miraculously died down.

Except for robberies, there are other perils mentioned in the sources, ranging from adverse weather on the pilgrims' sail across the English Channel to the unhealthy air of Rome, its summer heat and contagion (e.g. *GP* 52.3). Alcuin also warns English travellers from enjoying too much food and wine (Barefoot 19).

Contrary to the negative image of the regions on the way to and from Rome, William of Malmesbury situates a miraculous story of bishop Ecgwine to the English Channel. Having taken a penitent pilgrimage to Rome in shackles, Ecgwine, mentioned above, experienced true forgiveness of his sins and was freed

both physically off his shackles and spiritually off his sins on his way back to England. While crossing the strait, a fish leapt into his ship. Later the sailors realized that it carried the key that finally unlocked Ecgwine's fetters (*GP* 160.3–4).[(2)]

Conclusion

As has been pointed earlier, English pilgrimage to Rome had been established as a religious and social phenomenon by the beginning of the eighth century. The busy traffic continued during the whole Anglo-Saxon period and it got intensified due to the tight bonds of the Norman kings to Rome. During the unstable phase of the papacy prior to the Great Schism in 1054, travels to Rome became more dangerous as the pilgrims were obliged to defend the Papal see in the skirmishes; however, the popularity of pilgrimage was rising, especially due to the practice of indulgences and later due to the introduction of the Holy Years (Barefoot 35–37). Despite being rather costly and sometimes dangerous (especially nuns and women in general were warned of them), they were popular with medieval English pilgrims. A habit of blessing the pilgrims before leaving England developed and guilds often provided alms for the pilgrims' journey (Champ 40).

Close ties with Rome may be demonstrated by the consecration of several significant churches and abbeys to St Peter, e.g. St Peter's at Canterbury, Peterborough Minster, or the double monastery of St Peter and Paul in Monkwearmouth and Jarrow. Although the relationship to Roman popes had not always been warm before Henry VIII, both English kings and clergy treated papacy with respect and honour. It may seem paradoxical that the intensity of "English pilgrimage traffic" reached its peak in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, right before Henry VIII's breach from Rome (Champ 7). Although attempts were made by ambassadors of the English king to keep a strong bond between England and Rome, Henry's remarriage to Anne Boleyn, disapproved by Pope Clement VII, was the bone of contention in 1533 that finally separated England from Rome. With the religious value of Roman pilgrimage declining, travels to Rome have never ceased completely. Humanist ideas added a new dimension to pilgrimage, thus turning it into an educational enterprise.

Notes

[1] The depiction of Gaul as a region of temptations was discussed by Helena Polehlová in "Journeys of Bishop Wilfrid - a Restless Pilgrim and Traveller of Anglo-Saxon Times", in Hradec Králové Journal of Anglophone Studies, vol. 7, no. 2. Hradec Králové: University of Hradec Králové, 2020, p. 58–62.

(2) Byrhtferth of Ramsay, Ecgwine's hagiographer, situates this same miracle to the city of Rome itself. Here, the key is found in the stomach of a salmon caught by Ecgwine's companions in the river Tiber (*VSE* 1.14).

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Michala Rusňáková

Be a man, be a warrior: enforcement of masculinity by the army in Owen Sheers' *Pink Mist* and *The Two Worlds of Charlie F.* and Gregory Burke's *Black Watch*

Abstract: *The article examines the enforcement of masculinity by the army in the selected contemporary British war theatre plays. The plays chosen to be analyzed through the lens of masculinity studies are* Pink Mist *and* The Two Worlds of Charlie F. *by Owen Sheers and* Black Watch *by Gregory Burke. The paper, specifically, concentrates on the stereotypes that are perpetuated by the army in order to encourage men to join the army and fight in wars. The perception of warriors or fighters as real men and the representation of the strategies and methods that are used in recruitment, training or during actual combat in the chosen plays are examined.*

Introduction

The most frequently occurring and the most important characters of the war theatre plays have always been the soldiers. Despite the shift in casualties in contemporary wars from soldiers to civilians and involvement of other participants, such as, for example, terrorists, soldiers remain in the focus of contemporary British war theatre. This article, therefore, focuses on the analysis of the soldier characters from the perspective of masculinity, more specifically, it concentrates on the representation of strategies used by the army to enforce the stereotypical characteristics of masculinity on men. For this purpose, the following theatre plays were selected: *Pink Mist* and *The Two Worlds of Charlie F.* (*TWCF)* by Owen Sheers and *Black Watch* by Gregory Burke. These plays were selected because, unlike many other contemporary war theatre plays that were examined, they openly and explicitly address the issue. Surprisingly, despite the crucial position of the characters of soldiers in contemporary war theatre plays, the themes that are related to gender studies and masculinity are not always central. Moreover, in those plays where such themes occur, these are often presented in connection with the influence on men by the entire society, communities, individual families, partners, and friends, and their perception of the soldiers. The themes that are relevant within the given framework of masculinity and the army are mainly represented in the military recruitment and training techniques, and the perception of the soldiers among themselves in the selected plays. The paper, therefore, investigates how the authors work with these themes and present them, and whether they were able to fulfil the potential of the theatre plays to criticize such practices or at least raise awareness among the audience of the dangers of the enforcement of masculinity, especially in connection with the army and war.

Masculinity

Masculinity studies, as a subfield of gender studies, are for obvious reasons a fairly new area of interest. As Beasley states, it is an "emerging rather than long-established academic arena" (190). After a brief period of theory of "sex roles" in the middle of the 20th century (Connell et al. 5), came an emergence of masculinity politics in the 1970s. The Men's liberation movement stated that sex roles are oppressive and hurtful to both women and men (Beasley 179) and was followed by "media interest and public debate about boys and men" in the late 1980s and 1990s (Connell et al. 6) and "male identity crisis literature" in the early 1990s (Goldstein 286).

As a consequence of its abovementioned novelty and lack of research dedicated to Men's Studies, caused by "concern that a focus on men will result in resources being diverted from women – from particularly disadvantaged women, at that" (Connell *Masculinities* xvii), there are ongoing issues with appropriate research methods and a rather limited scope of approaches to the definition of masculinity. Despite occasional disagreement on some details, on the whole, most contemporary writers on the topic are in a rare consensus about the key elements of masculinity.

One of the crucial points of interest in masculinity studies is a notion that masculinity is a social construct rather than a biological determination. Fausto-Sterling, among others, states that "men are made, not born. We construct masculinity through social discourse" (127). This construction takes place from early childhood, when boys are already influenced by the concept of masculinity. Attention is paid specifically to approaches by which images and ideals of femininity and masculinity are introduced and represented to children. In addition, attention is also paid to the people and institutions that socialize them and are in charge of their learning, such as families, specifically their mothers, at home, teachers and peers at schools, but also media, social networks, and popular culture (Connell *Gender and Power* 49). In fact, with reference to other writers Connell states that masculinities "are constructed within specific institutional settings (…) and are shaped by the major institutions of modern society," namely the workplace, the media, and education (Connell et. al. 8).

It is generally understood and accepted that boys have to go through all kinds of initiation rituals to prove their masculinity and be considered real men. Their maturity and transition must be marked and only those who prove they are worthy can be welcomed among men because men are made, not born. As Goldstein suggests, even though there are some differences, "the passages to manhood are surprisingly similar across cultures in terms of passing harsh tests bravely" (264). Furthermore, these quests for manhood are continuous experiences of men's lives. As Ducat describes, masculinity seems "so unstable an aspect of identity that men must constantly prove it" (24). Therefore, men not only need to deserve their place among others but have to endlessly and relentlessly fight in order to keep it.

Masculinity is often perceived, studied, and defined in relation to femininity. In fact, in modern Western cultures men and masculinity are often considered direct opposites to women and femininity as binary oppositions are the preferred tool of organization and categorization. Therefore, as Kimmel describes, the "notion of anti-femininity lies at the heart of contemporary and historical conception of manhood" and "whatever the variations by race, class, age, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, being a man means 'not being like women'" (126). In other words, the one thing men have in common despite their differences is that they clearly define themselves as not women.

Masculinity is traditionally considered to equal domination. Therefore, in patriarchal cultures women are not only seen as the opposite but also the subordinate and lesser to superior men. Intriguingly, the dominance is not practiced only over women and children but, according to Connell, at least in the case of hegemonic masculinity, also over other, subordinated or marginalized, men (Beasley 224). Although such a position might be considered a desired one by many, Easthope explains that these men who "live in the dominant version of masculinity," however, not only "benefit from being installed (…) in a position of power" but also "are themselves trapped in structures that fix and limit masculine identity" (7).

Connell's notion is that there are multiple masculinities and that men learn to be a man differently, enact their manhood differently, and perceive themselves and their bodies differently and those differences can be traced not only among different communities but also within each one of them (Beasley 224). Nevertheless, there is also a general understanding and agreement among the writers that societies established stereotypical traits of masculine behavior and what these are. Besides

dominance, which was already mentioned above, these include assertiveness, success and achievement orientation, determination, confidence, self-reliance, independence, risk-taking, aggression, violence, toughness, emotional flatness, and competitiveness. For many of the experts in the field the crucial aspect of male identity is sexuality. Specifically, the stereotypical perspective sees a real man as heterosexual, sexually very active, and competent.

Soldier masculinity

According to Goldstein, the embodiment of masculinity is a warrior, in fact, he uses the description "a central component of manhood" (58). Although Higate and Hopton state that an image of a real man as a fighter, warrior or soldier is often presented not only by popular culture, i.e., in movies and TV shows, but also by academics, for instance, by historians, there is a lack of attention given to the topic theoretically. They claim that scholars neglect the gender, specifically masculinity, dimension of war and the army (432). Goldstein criticizes the fact that the few writers dealing with masculinity rarely pay any attention to war or to the connection between war and masculinity and their works often do not include such terms as army, military, weapons, war, fight, etc. (14). Such neglect is surprising not only because, as Morgan states, war and the military are some of the areas most obviously connected with masculinity construction (165) but, more importantly, when the impacts and dangers of such influence are taken into consideration.

A warrior masculinity, just like masculinity in general, is enforced on men from their early childhood. Cultures and societies use all kinds of means in order to create male soldiers and warriors. For instance, Carlsson-Paige and Levin describe how teachers and parents often apprehensively observe boys engaging in war play. According to them, parents claim it is not possible to "turn on television, visit other children, or go to a supermarket, toy store, or playground with their children without encountering some reminder of war and weapons play" (qtd. in Goldstein 296). They also explain that war characters are so attractive for boys because they are "clearly defined male models with which to identify" (qtd. in Goldstein 298). Dawson draws attention to the fact that boys are traditionally motivated to play with toy guns and other military equipment, toy tanks, warplanes, ships, and last but not least solder figures (qtd. in Higate and Hopton 434) most famous even nowadays, of course, being G. I. Joe.

The enforcement, of course, continues through men's adolescence and adulthood. As Goldstein describes, "cultures mold males into warriors by attaching to 'manhood' or 'masculinity' those qualities that make good warriors" (252), such as toughness, aggressiveness, physical strength, confidence, independence, bravery, endurance, and ability to be emotionally detached, even ruthless or merciless. Such enforcement can be seen as a typical use of some biological tendencies among members of a given gender to determine requirements on the whole group. It is important to mention that some of the abovementioned qualities are not, in fact, very useful in some of the contemporary wars as they are fought in the way that does not require the soldiers to be physically strong or even in great physical condition due to technological development which enables soldiers to fight over great distance.

The binary division mentioned in the previous part is crucial also for the soldier's masculinity. Interestingly, there are three groups that real men can be defined in contrast to, and which are used as a tool to shame men into joining the army. These are, obviously, women, however, it is important to mention that even some groups of men are perceived as opposing and at the same time subordinate to the warrior masculinity, i.e., homosexual men, and pacifist men, who are also presented as effeminate. As Phillips describes, "societies which arbitrarily label a number of purely human traits 'feminine' possess a tactic useful to war-making, for men are bound to detect some of these human traits in themselves–and then worry that they have strayed into a feminine inferior realm" and if, in addition, "the society also

convinces its citizens that men love to fight and women hate to fight (or cannot fight), then the society can manipulate men to go to war, simply to verify that they are not women" (2). Furthermore, the man himself can, under the influence of such a society, consider such emotions effeminate and feel an urge to compensate for them with highly masculine behavior.

Besides shaming, other means of influence include religion, influence of a family, such as family tradition and pride, especially of male family members, and finally patriotism. Nevertheless, none of the mentioned ways are as often discussed as the systematic pressure via ideology based on binary division between soldiers on one side and women, gay men, or men who oppose war on the other. Moreover, this ideological vicious circle is shown to be more successful than repressive state pressure (Phillips 2) despite its paradoxical nature, where men try to prove their manhood and that they are real, i.e., *fearless* men out of the *fear* that they might be perceived as cowardly.

The combatant masculinity is also enforced on men, in this case specifically on soldiers within the military environment, and with the narrowing of the group in focus, rather naturally, the intensity of the enforcement grows. As Goldstein describes, the soldiers must be coaxed or even coerced into fighting itself. He names numerous means of persuasion, such as brainwashing, disciplining, promises of rewards, honor and prestige, death penalty for desertion, religious beliefs, alcohol and other drugs, or war dances (Goldstein 253).

Obviously, the most coercion takes place in military training. As Morgan describes, the "training involves the disciplining, controlling, and occasional mortification of the body. The individual body and the self that is identified with that body are shaped into the collective body of men" (167). Even though Higate and Hopton claim that there are some currently happening changes within the system, such as "decreasing tolerance of physical brutality directed towards military recruits by their training instructors" (440) the infamous strategy of "make you or break you" remains crucial to military training. Goldstein points out that the training may be perceived as modern societies' initiation ritual and perceives it, therefore, as passage from boyhood to manhood (265). Additionally, in the perspective of multiple masculinities, it can be perceived also as a transition from the civilian to soldier or warrior masculinity.

The abovementioned unity, termed as the collective body of men, is a very important part of one of the soldier or combatant masculinity aspects. Even though the traits that are considered characteristic of these masculinities are independence, self-reliance, self-esteem, or risk-taking, at the same time, paradoxically, these are not exactly desirable and might be rather dangerous. In fact, armies are well known for their reliance on discipline and obedience.

A suitable and efficient tool for such restriction in the military is bonding. As Morgan points out, "traditionally there have been two contrasting models of heroism, one focusing on the warrior, the heroic individual, and the other focusing on 'brothers in arms. It has also been noted that one of the long-term trends has been in favor of the latter at the expense of the former" (174). Thus, the military creates a feeling of community and unity which makes the disciplining of individuals much easier as the groups' well-being is a great motivator. Bonding is important because it helps to create a "collective identity and 'we-ness'" and marks "clear distinctions between 'us' and 'them'" (Morgan 168). Additionally, as Easthope explains, "in the dominant versions of men at war, men are permitted to behave towards each other in ways that would not be allowed elsewhere, caressing and holding each other, comforting, and weeping together, admitting their love" (66). In other words, in war men are allowed to behave in a way that would in civilian life be considered effeminate and thus inappropriate.

Enforcement of masculinity by the army

As explained in the previous part, enforcement of masculinity is beneficial to cultures which transform males due to the omnipresent threat or possibility of war into fighters and enforce "manhood, an artificial status that must be won individually, (which) is typically constructed around a culture's need for brave and disciplined soldiers" (Goldstein 283). The military further enforces masculinity through intensive recruitment. Despite promises of a great future, recruits are often humiliated, brainwashed, and occasionally driven to the edge during training. At the same time, the soldiers are encouraged to create strong bonds among each other which functions as a great encouragement to continue fighting. The analytical part of this paper, therefore, examines how the enforcement of masculinity by the army is presented in the selected theatre plays.

Recruitment

Recruitment often relies on the notion of soldiers as the embodiment of masculinity. The characters of the three selected theatre plays, which are all based on interviews with actual servicemen, address this issue. The reason seems rather obvious as it is perfectly natural to ask them why they joined the army when the interviews start. However, the fact that it is used in these plays might mean that the authors want to draw attention to the way the army recruits new soldiers or that they felt the soldiers themselves wanted to emphasize it. It does not necessarily mean that there is some kind of warning against a hidden threat but, at the same time, it seems plausible, considering the dangerous nature of the job, that the authors or even the soldiers would like others to better understand the latent powers that might influence their decisions.

In *Black Watch,* Gregory Burke used an interesting technique of imagined conversation between Lord Elgin, a Scottish noble man and great recruiter, who lived in the second half of the 18th and first half of the 19th century, and two of the main characters, Cammy and Rosco, the soldiers who served on Operation TELIC in Iraq in 2004. In this conversation, Lord Elgin tries to convince Cammy and Rosco to join the army and uses very similar arguments to the contemporary recruiters. When they ask for payment, he answers "come on, it's no just the money. There's the travel" and continues with the description of France: "the fresh air, the meadows, the rivers. The Somme region's fucking beautiful this time ay year" (Burke 27). However, the turning point for the potential soldiers is the guns and killing of enemies:

LORD ELGIN. What more do you want? Three square meals a day, games of football way your mates, guns…
ROSSCO. We get guns?
LORD ELGIN. Big fucking guns.
ROSSCO. Guns are fucking magic.
LORD ELGIN. Guns and football and drink and exotic poontang and that.
Beat.
Shoot a few Germans.
Beat.
You'll have a fucking hoot (Burke 28).

Therefore, the gun, a necessary equipment of every soldier, functions as an embodiment of dominant male power, the soldier power. The gun is seen as a transforming talisman, a magical tool that enables the transformation from civilian to a soldier and symbolizes the transformation from a man to a real man. And it is in fact this aggressive, violent power that attracts the two of them and motivates them to join the army.

In *Pink Mist* and *TWCF*, the temptations that recruiters mention to attract new members are very similar to those used by Lord Elgin in *Black Watch*. In *TWCF*, the fourth scene is dedicated to the dialogues with recruiters. These show that the prospective soldiers are promised to travel the world, scuba-dive, water-ski, skydive. Leroy, the main recruiter and at the same time a war veteran who lost both his legs in combat, promises to Charlie that if he joins, he will be irresistible to women: "And that stuff you hear about women and the uniform? All fucking true. You get your green beret, women all over your cock" (Sheers *TWCF* 25). More importantly, Leroy states, among soldiers Charlie will find friends for life: "When you join the corps, you join a family. You'll make friends who'll be closer to you than brothers" (Sheers *TWCF* 25), which indicates that their desire to bond is actually strong even before the men join the army and it is not only supported later on during the fight itself, but its importance is emphasized already during the recruitment.

In both plays by Sheers, attention is also paid to the military advertisement. In *Pink Mist*, first the main character, Arthur, and later his best friend, Hads, are strongly attracted by the slogans which say: 'Be the best' and 'Rise your sights' (Sheers 13, 7). In fact, the advert 'Be the best' followed by 'Join the British army' is also mentioned by one of the characters in *TWCF* (Sheers 23). More importantly, in Arthur's mind there is a clear and straightforward link between the image of a real man and a soldier from the recruiting brochures. As he explains that he did not want to continue living the way he and his peers did but wanted to achieve something in life, he states: "I wanted something else – him. The *man* looking back at me, the one with the uniform, the gun. The one going somewhere, getting something done (Sheers *Pink Mist* 8 emphasis added). Even though Arthur does not describe the details of his interview, he remembers the feeling and explains: "the recruiter, he'd treated me like a *man*. Like what I could be, not what I am" (Sheers *Pink Mist* 14 emphasis added). It is obvious from these quotes that Arthur does not perceive himself as a man and believes becoming a soldier is the way he will become one.

It is worth noticing that despite the fact that the recruitment is based on masculinity, it does not use the shaming mentioned in the previous part. The recruiters and ads do not aim to make men feel less masculine in case they do not join, as Phillips explains: "Military services can more easily recruit (or prevent resistance to the draft) among self-identified heterosexuals and homosexuals alike, as long as men can be made to fear some version of supposed effeminacy in themselves" (185). Although her idea is correct, the enforcement she describes takes place within the society in general as well as individual families, groups of friends, colleagues, partners etc. In the abovementioned plays, the army's approach is different and recruiters use positive motivation, convince the young men that they will become real men if they join and tempt with attractive promises of traveling, doing adrenaline sports, or becoming more attractive for women, which are all considered supportive of the prototypical image of manliness as adventurous, brave, heroic, and sexually competent.

Training of body and mind

Training only appears in the two plays written by Owen Sheers, *Pink Mist* and *TWCF*. Despite the fact that they are both written by the same author, and he claims he used the same material, i.e., interviews with former soldiers, a different approach to this theme can be found. In *Pink Mist*, the military training seems more idealized, at least by Taff, one of the three main characters, the best friend of Arthur and Hads mentioned above, who absolutely loves it. He is fascinated by the growth of muscles and physical strength. He expresses his feelings as follows: "we could see ourselves reflected, the three of us in line, bigger at the shoulder and the chest, thicker in the neck, an ache in our arms and our thighs. Just over a month since we'd left, and we'd changed" (Sheers *Pink Mist* 44). Arthur, however, is more critical of the training techniques, when he replies: "Yeah, they built us up alright. Built up the muscle layer by layer,

just as they took us away, layer by layer" (Sheers *Pink Mist* 44) and explains that they, in fact, handed in their bodies and gave away what was left of their mind (Sheers *Pink Mist* 45).

The idea of handing in one's body and mind is even more prominent in *TWCF.* For instance, the training song (Sheers *TWCF* 27), which requires complete obedience, reminds one of brainwashing techniques. Later, during medical briefings, one of the soldiers, John, is used as a puppet by David, the medic, who draws lines with red markers on his body to show the consequences of different attacks. There is an ironic twist to the funny moment when David introduces him, actually calls him a puppet and tells him: "Say hello, John" to which John replies "(h)ello, John" (Sheers *TWCF* 30). After the briefing, however, John "*pats his own chest*" (Sheers *TWCF* 33) and explains with all seriousness that "this is where the fight happens. This is where the speeches end. The resolutions. This is where victory or defeat happens. The politics. This is where war happens. Here. On the bodies of men. Boys" (Sheers *TWCF* 33).

It must be mentioned that the notion of soldiers as obedient components of the war machine that are not allowed to think is mentioned in every single one of the selected plays. Most usually, it is connected to the fact that they should not ask the question "why?", mainly in connection to the purpose of their deployment in either Iraq or Afghanistan. The representation of a soldier as a puppet also takes place in *Black Watch*, where the main character, Cammy, is used as a mannequin. Such an idea corresponds to Phillips' description that "(f)or the vast majority of soldiers (…) war permits no active initiative, only docile obedience to a superior's orders" (178). Such passive obedience is, of course, in clear contradiction with the stereotypical assumption that a real man should be independent and self-reliant. This contradiction is solved by the enforcement of bonding that creates the feeling of responsibility for the others and guarantees obedience and conformity to military hierarchy.

Bonding and brotherhood

The bonding already described in the part dealing with recruitment by Leroy from *TWCF*, is a common theme among all the selected plays. The brotherhood of the soldiers is crucial not only as a tool for control over them and guarantee of their obedience but also as a motivation to fight either to protect and look after each other or to avenge the injured and killed friends. As Agostino explains, "bonding is associated with men becoming mates and a willingness to lay down one's life for a mate" (67). In fact, Leroy also describes in that conversation that he lost both his legs, but at the same time he was able to save his best friend's life (Sheers *TWCF* 25).

Brown calls it a "regimental system" in which "they do not fight for government (…), but for their regiment, company, platoon, section, mates" (140), nevertheless, Wierzoch particularizes it and states that common soldiers "rarely grasp or endorse the alleged sense and purpose of the war (…). War often has no meaning to them beyond 'fighting for their mates,' and its grand objective is obscure" (235). An almost identical expression to the Wierzoch's appears in all three theatre plays and thus supports her idea. In *Pink Mist,* Arthur says: "forget queen or country, the mission or belief. It's more about keeping your mates alive. Or avenging the ones who've already died. Cause that's what fuels war, though no one will say it" (Sheers 55). In the last scene of *TWCF,* Charlie describes continuation of this bond after the soldiers come back injured and calls them "the regiment of wounded" (Sheers 78). In *Black Watch*, moreover, the brotherhood is not only described but also enacted in the last scene, where some of the soldiers fall during the parade and "each time one falls they are helped back onto their feet by the others" (Burke 73). In addition, as Billen aptly points out, in *Black Watch*, "Burke does not succeed in making individuals out of these soldiers, whose assumptions, speech and ambitions seem almost identical.

Indeed, this may be his point – that the army delivers a regimented and regimental identity" (44). Therefore, the idea of bonding and brotherhood is also expressed in this creation of collective identity.

A slightly different, but also very intensive, point of view on bonding is seen in *Pink Mist*, where the main character, Arthur, as well as his best friend, Taff, describe that if a soldier cannot protect his mate or mates, he can at least avenge him or them. So, when the third member of their group of friends gets injured and loses both legs, Arthur claims: "It wasn't just doing a job anymore. It was about killing them" (Sheers *Pink Mist* 34) and Taff says fighting was "a chance to pay them back, for Hads and what they'd done to him" (Sheers *Pink Mist* 48). It must be added here that both attitudes, i.e., fighting for each other as well as fighting to avenge each other, also greatly fuel the war. Last but not least, it must be mentioned that the described bonding or brotherhood is typically considered a private thing of those involved. As Cull describes in his review on the plays, the Black Watch is "an essentially closed group" and explains that the main reason Burke succeeded and was allowed to interview them is the "advantage of being from the same place" (5). However, a similar idea is presented by Herman, who claims that "(t)he war story is closely kept among men of a particular era, disconnected from the broader society" (qtd. in Goldstein 410). Therefore, it can be concluded that it is not only one specific regiment, i.e., the Black Watch, which keeps their secrets to themselves, but that it is also common among other soldiers.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to analyze how the authors work with the themes of masculinity enforcement by the army in their theatre plays, how these themes are presented and whether the authors were able to fulfil the potential of the theatre plays to criticize such military practices, or at least raise awareness among the audience of the dangers of the enforcement of masculinity especially in connection with the army and war. The fact that only three out of the more than thirty contemporary British and American theatre war plays that focus on wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that were studied in this research address the issue at all is striking but might be explained by the lack of attention paid to masculinity among scholars as well as the public. Even though gender issues are frequently discussed in the public space of western countries, the matters related to femininity and feminism distinctly predominate in the discussion. Therefore, the rather obvious issue of masculinity may be omitted in the other plays because it might be seen as irrelevant or unattractive for the audience.

The three plays analyzed in this paper, nevertheless, reflect the issues related to masculinity and specifically soldier masculinity. In all three of them hints to many different techniques and strategies the army uses to enforce the stereotypical image of a real man as a warrior can be found. The plays show that recruitment relies on the perception of masculine qualities as those of good soldiers. In interviews, recruiters convince the potential applicants with promises of adventure which corresponds with the image of real men as risk-taking, promises of guns that relate to aggressiveness and violence, and increased attractiveness for women that relates with sexual activity and competence. Interestingly, none of the plays describes shaming as a recruiting or advertising technique. The perspective of those who do not join as effeminate, weak, or cowardly is not reflected in the selected plays. Therefore, it might be concluded that the positive motivation and enforcement of those who join the army as real men is either considered sufficient or the shaming is perceived as counterproductive in contemporary western societies where a general tendency towards open-mindedness and inclusion can be observed.

On the other hand, the training techniques seem to be in clear opposition to self-reliance and independence, the qualities that are also stereotypically considered masculine, as they aim to discipline the soldiers. In fact, with the use of manipulative techniques and demanding conditions, soldiers are

transformed into obedient puppets. This discrepancy is solved by the partially imposed brotherhood among the soldiers. The created regiment identity is useful not only as a tool of control and power over them but also as fuel for war because it encourages them to fight to protect or avenge the others.

All the above-mentioned points show that both authors, Owen Sheers and Gregory Burke, were able to raise awareness among their audience about the soldiers' motivation to join the army and to fight in war. Nevertheless, it must be mentioned that their approach is not critical of the enforcement of the stereotypical image of a real man and implementation of its characteristics and qualities by the army on men. They both tend to draw attention to them by addressing them repeatedly either in the dialogues, monologues, thoughts, or behavior of the characters but they both let the audience to form their own opinion on the matter.

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Alice Tihelková

An Heir to Disraeli or Cameron? A Critical Look at Boris Johnson's Rhetoric of One Nation Conservatism

Abstract: *For almost three decades, Britain's Conservatives struggled to shed the image of a socially divisive party, spawned by the legacy of Thatcherism. When Boris Johnson became the Party's leader in 2019, he offered a different vision: that of One Nation Conservatism, a paternalistic and inclusive form of Conservatism that had enjoyed considerable popularity in the 1930s and the post-war era. The article presents an analysis Johnson's One Nation rhetoric against the historical and political background and contrasts his pledges with his actual performance as leader of a Conservative government to determine whether his claims to One Nation Conservatism can be considered genuine. It concludes that while some temporary measures adopted by his Cabinet conform to the One Nation tradition, others, more long-term ones, strongly contradict it. Rather than with Disraeli, Baldwin, or Macmillan, parallels can be found with David Cameron, whose initial embrace of compassionate Conservatism soon turned into politics of neoliberalism and austerity.*

Introduction

In December 2019, Britain's Conservatives won a landslide victory in which they gained the largest parliamentary majority since the 1980s. Extending their appeal well beyond their heartlands, they took thirty so-called Red Wall constituencies – areas in the Midlands, Northern England, and North East Wales that had historically supported the Labour Party. To woo the economically left-leaning but socially conservative working-class voters, the Tory leader and Prime Minister Boris Johnson went to great lengths to market himself as a One Nation Conservative, i.e. a follower of a tradition of an inclusive and conciliatory form of Conservatism envisioned by Benjamin Disraeli. "We can focus our hearts and minds on the priorities of the British people because this is one nation Tory Party," he declared in a speech that launched his 2019 election campaign ("Boris Johnson – 2019 Speech").

Using historical and political context, as well as elements of critical discourse analysis, the article aims to examine Boris Johnson's pre- and post-election rhetoric to reveal how he constructs his image of a One-Nation Conservative. Furthermore, Johnson's political self-branding is contrasted with the real policies implemented by his Cabinet to answer the question of whether his embrace of One Nation Conservatism can be regarded as a realistic political plan or a mere vote-winning strategy.

Historical context: What is One-Nation Conservatism?

Despite being a rather malleable concept that has been continuously re-interpreted to suit the agendas of individual Conservative governments, One Nation Conservatism can be broadly viewed as a paternalistic ideology that upholds the natural ties between different societal groups and prizes social cohesion. Its constituting element is the duty of the privileged to look out for the less privileged in order to achieve a social unity that will help to maintain the established institutions. There is an emphasis on the role of the government, civic bonds and affiliation to the community and nation (Pask 2020).

The origins of One Nation Conservatism can be traced to the writings and policies of nineteenth-century Conservative Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, who developed the concept (without actually using the term) in response to the crisis of the 1840s when the impact of rapid industrialization opened

a gulf between the rich and the poor, famously referred to by Disraeli in his novel *Sibyl* as the "two nations". Disraeli rejected the view, widespread among the elites at the time, that workers would always naturally gravitate towards socialism. Instead, he maintained that they shared some beliefs with conservatives, especially patriotism, which caused them to support established institutions such as the monarchy, the church, or the Empire. This common ground, he maintained, represented an opportunity for the Conservative Party to win their loyalty by crafting legislation that catered to their needs (Glazerbrook 2017). Viewing the Tories as a national party, Disraeli emphasized the connection between the party and the people.

The transformation of the concept of One-Nation Conservatism into a full-fledged political programme was accomplished by inter-war Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin, who sought to establish social stability through a combination of welfare programmes and tax increases for the wealthy. Speaking in December 1924, Baldwin proclaimed, "We stand for the union of those two nations of which Disraeli spoke two generations ago: union among our own people to make one nation of our own people at home" (Lexden 2019). Furthermore, in the wake of the financial crash of 1929, Baldwin used the One Nation concept to justify the abandonment of the laissez-faire approach to the economy in favour of an increased role of the state to deal with the economic and social fallout of the crisis. With Baldwin at the helm, the inter-war Conservative governments implemented over twenty pieces of progressive legislation covering areas such as housing, health, national insurance, pensions or women's vote (Lexden 2019).

Following a spell of Labour rule in the late 1940s, One Nation Conservatism made a comeback in the early 1950s with the foundation of the One Nation Group, an association of freshly elected backbench MPs, including Enoch Powell, Iain Macleod, Edward Heath, and Robert Carr, who sought to define a Conservative social policy that could rival that of Attlee's Labour. After their publication *One Nation: a Tory Approach to Social Problems* became a national bestseller, the Group found itself at the epicentre of the resurgence of a moderate and inclusive branch of Conservatism that felt itself to be in touch with the spirit of the times. (Walsha 2008, 72). The booklet emphasized a principal disagreement between Conservative and Labour attitudes to social policy, with the Conservatives prioritizing economic stability and administrative efficiency as opposed to Labour's universalism in welfare provision. The point relevant for the present analysis is that the One Nation Group was not a homogeneous body; a variety of positions were taken on different issues, and a part of the Group (centred around the meritocratic intellectual Enoch Powell) emphasized the importance of free trade and an efficient state, marking a transition between the Disraeli-style paternalism and Thatcherism. Under the premiership of Anthony Eden (1955–7), Harold Macmillan (1957–1963), and Alec Douglas-Home (1963-4), the Conservatives continued to pursue One Nation-style policies, attempting to strike a balance between economic efficiency and social concerns such as full employment and support for the welfare state. These were the years of the consensus politics, which came to an end with the Winter of Discontent of 1978-79, followed by the ascendancy of Thatcherism. The socially inclusive, paternalistic aspect of One Nation Conservatism, had little place in Margaret Thatcher's political vision, although she co-opted its patriotic element for her own purposes. From the 1980s the One Nation concept seemed to be in decline, replaced instead with a market-driven ideology seeking to roll back the frontiers of the state.

In the years following Thatcher' political departure, the Conservative Party struggled to shake off the image of the "nasty party" (Eror 2018), leading to a series of election losses while Labour surged under the leadership of Tony Blair. Elected Conservative leader in 2015, David Cameron sought to detoxify the Tory brand and broaden the Party's electoral appeal by announcing a programme of "compassionate Conservatism", which involved a more centrist position on social issues such as social mobility, inequality, and the NHS. One of the most notable manifestations of the modernized Conservatism was Cameron's

agenda of the "Big Society", officially an attempt to redefine the social contract between state and society by devolving control over and responsibility for public services to local communities and volunteer groups. Speaking in Leeds in 2010, Cameron declared:

The Big Society is about a huge culture change (…) where people, in their everyday lives, in their homes, in their neighbourhoods, in their workplace (…) don't always turn to officials, local authorities or central government for answers to the problems they face (…) but instead feel both free and powerful enough to help themselves and their own communities ("Election 2015").

However, Cameron's appeals to public spiritedness and volunteering ethos failed to generate the expected response, as experts as well as the general public came to regard the agenda as a mere fig leaf for public sector cuts and attempts to relieve the state of its duties (McSmith 2010). Despite presenting itself as a modernizing progressive force (and even laying claim, yet again, to One Nation Conservatism), Cameron's government left a legacy of austerity, poverty increase, skyrocketing food bank dependency, and local services collapsing under the weight of frontline service cuts (Tihelková 2015, 39). Cameron's successor Theresa May went to some lengths to steer the government's course away from austerity, announcing, among others, an ambitious plan to build affordable homes, yet her brief time in office, heavily overshadowed by Brexit, prevented her from delivering on her plans. The task of satisfying the growing public demand for a more socially sensitive form of Conservatism was left to her successor Boris Johnson.

Analysis of Boris Johnson's One Nation rhetoric

The corpus and methodology

As noted above, an openly declared identification with the values of One Nation Conservatism formed a key component of Boris Johnson's vote-winning strategy during the 2019 general election campaign and beyond. In this section of the paper, Johnson's rhetoric is subjected to critical examination with regard to his claims to the One Nation tradition. To undertake such a task, a corpus of ten speeches from the period of 2018-2022 was collected using a range of websites archiving political content (such as *gov.uk*, *PoliticsHome, ukpol.co.uk*, and others). When selecting the speeches from the plethora of Johnson's public pronouncements on various issues, preference was given to those delivered on significant occasions, such as becoming the Party's leader, achieving election victory, or assuming the office of the Prime Minister. In addition, an auxiliary set of 20 newspaper articles was collected to record any other relevant statements by Johnson not contained in the corpus speeches.

Methodologically, the examination uses the principles of critical discourse analysis (CDA). An interdisciplinary research method that regards language as a form of social practice, CDA is concerned with investigating hidden power relations and ideologies embedded in discourse, with CDA scholars often focusing on examining the social and material consequences of discourse (see van Dijk 2001). The analysis presented here is purely qualitative, intending to uncover the persuasive strategies used by the Tory leader to garner voter support with the help of the generally popular concept of One Nation Conservatism.

Two different approaches to One Nation Conservatism

As argued above, One Nation Conservatism is not a uniform concept and allows for some variation of interpretation. The first significant observation yielded by corpus is that Johnson deliberately uses the concept's multi-facetedness and even certain vagueness to make different, sometimes contradictory, arguments as he finds expedient. In particular, he oscillates between taking the paternalistic (Disraelian)

approach, emphasizing social cohesion, protection of the welfare state and direct government action, and the more recent, market-oriented (Powellite) angle, calling for economic efficiency, deregulation and market-driven solutions. Below, each of these standpoints is examined, exemplified and provided with the necessary context.

The Disraelian approach

A key constituent of One Nation Conservatism as envisioned by Disraeli and Baldwin was the belief in the essential unity of the country. This can be understood both horizontally, as the geographical unity of Britain, and vertically, as unity across Britain's social spectrum. Disraeli's vision was to bridge the gap between the "two nations", the rich and the poor. In the same vein, Baldwin spoke about the "union among our own people to make one nation of our own people which, if secured, nothing else matters in the worlds" (Lexden 2019). Essentially, One Nation Conservatism is based on a view of society as an organic, complex whole, in direct opposition to the idea of class conflict found in the rhetoric of some Labour politicians (e.g. Aneurin Bevan, or, more recently, Jeremy Corbyn). Indeed, one of its principal aims is to prevent class conflict and stave off revolutionary tendencies that could undermine the status quo.

In his public statements, Johnson makes an effort to present himself as a cohesive force. In his 2019 election victory speech, he carefully constructs the image of the party under his leadership as a unifier of regions and classes, emphasizing his popular mandate:

We must recognise the incredible reality that we now speak as a One Nation Conservative party literally for everyone from Woking to Workington; from Kensington, I'm proud to say, to Clwyd South; from Surrey Heath to Sedgefield; from Wimbledon to Wolverhampton. As the nation hands us this historic mandate, we must rise to the challenge and to the level of expectations. Parliament must change so that we in parliament are working for you, the British people. That is what we will now do, isn't it? That is what we will now do. Let's get out and get on with it. Let's unite this country ("Election Results 2019").

Though not averse to taking an occasional swipe at his political opponents, e.g. when accusing Jeremy Corbyn of siding with Russia or calling for "Corbyn-neutral Christmas" ("Boris Johnson – 2019 Speech"), Johnson painstakingly avoids using the "them and us" rhetoric in relation to British society as such. This contrasts with Corbyn's "the many versus the few" position that pits the unprivileged majority against a small privileged elite:

Labour will put wealth and power in the hands of the many Boris Johnson's Conservatives, who think they're born to rule, will only look after the privileged few. So we're going after the tax dodgers. We're going after the dodgy landlords. We're going after the bad bosses. We're going after the big polluters. Because we know whose side we're on – your side!" ("Labour Manifesto for London").

There are two groups that Johnson makes a particular effort to persuade, neither of them representing his core voters. The first includes residents of the poorer parts of the UK, such as the Red Wall constituencies, where lack of job opportunities, wage stagnation, and infrastructure deficiencies have been long-standing problems. These regions traditionally represented a solid Labour-voting base. However, Labour's endorsement of the Remain vote (with working-class communities more likely to support Leave), as well as the growing sense that Labour was essentially becoming a middle-class party (Rentoul 2021), presented the Conservatives with a chance to extend their electoral appeal. Johnson's choice of words reveals his acute awareness of the opportunity, as evident from a comparison between his election victory speech and an equivalent speech by David Cameron from 2015. While both Johnson and Cameron speak of One Nation Conservatism and pledge to unite the country, Cameron is more focused on his agenda of motivating people to work and ending benefits dependency. Describing the Tory manifesto

as a "manifesto for working people" and emphasizing expressions such as *training*, *opportunities,* and *transforming life chances* ("Election 2015"), he addresses mainly the aspirational segments of society, the *strivers.* Johnson, on the other hand, goes to greater lengths to persuade those left behind amidst the growing inequalities. Rather than getting people into jobs, he speaks of his job to reconnect society:

> And I will tell you something else about my job.
> It is to be Prime Minister of the whole United Kingdom
> and that means uniting our country
> answering at last the plea of the forgotten people
> and the left behind towns
> by physically and literally renewing the ties that bind us together ("Boris Johnson – 2019 Speech").

It may be argued that the Disraelian term "two nations" gained a new dimension with the Brexit referendum, newly expressing the chasm between the Remainers and Leavers. In his effort to project an image of the country's conciliator, Johnson makes special effort to address another group: the disaffected Leave voters. In his maiden speech outside 10 Downing Street, which he opens with declaring his One Nation affiliation, he urges Leave voters them "to find closure and to let the healing begin" ("Boris Johnson – 2019 Statement"). Rather implausibly, he depicts Brexit itself as a unifying process, referring to it as "a project that over time can unite this whole country" ("Boris Johnson – 2019 Statement").

On the policy level, the Disrealian approach to One Nation Conservatism has traditionally involved measures to improve people's lives and provide them with a safety net. In Disreali's era, this meant, among others, legislation concerning public health, housing and working conditions. In post-war Conservative governments, the commitment to One Nation Conservatism primarily consisted in the willingness to uphold and maintain the elements of the Welfare State introduced by Attlee's government (the NHS, free secondary education, council housing, etc.), contributing to over three decades of consensus politics.

Well-aware of the popularity of the pillars of post-war welfare state, Johnson declares his support of them, placing particular emphasis on the NHS as his election priority:

"And, at the same time, this one-nation Conservative government will massively increase our investment in the NHS, the health service that represents the very best of our country, with a single, beautiful idea that whoever we are – rich, poor, young, old - the NHS is there for us when we are sick, and every day that service performs miracles. And that is why the NHS is this one-nation Conservative Government's top priority" ("Election Results 2019").

A significant part of Johnson's pledges to effect economic and social improvement is the "levelling-up" agenda, laid out in detail in the government's 2021White Paper. Presenting itself as a "moral, social and economic programme that will spread opportunity more equally across the UK", it includes among its priorities things such as public investment in poorer areas, fixing the education gap, rise in wellbeing, skills training, increased pay or improved public transport connectivity ("Levelling Up the United Kingdom"). "Levelling up" appears to be Johnson's favourite catchphrase, used across his speeches to promise voters from the more deprived regions of the UK improvement in a wide range of areas, as apparent from the following quotes:

1) we *level up* across Britain
   with higher wages, and a higher living wage, and higher productivity
   we close the opportunity gap (Boris Johnson's First Speech)

2) and in this manifesto there is a vision for the future of this country in which we unite and *level up* with infrastructure, education and technology ("Boris Johnson – 2019 Speech at the Conservative Manifesto Launch")
3) I will tell you that is what we are going to do we are going to unite and *level up* – unite and level up bringing together the whole of this incredible United Kingdom England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland together ("Boris Johnson – 2019 Statement")

Simultaneously, however, Johnson extends reassurance to the wealthier and more aspirational parts of Britain, arguing that the reduction of inequalities will not amount to levelling down for them, unlike the outcomes produced by Labour policies. He speaks of his refusal to "decapitate the tall poppies" by making the rich parts of the country poorer (Bradley 2021). Again, his ambition to appear electable to all parts of the social spectrum and sustain the message of unity is apparent.

The Powellite approach

To maintain a single narrative despite making contradictory claims, Johnson attaches the One Nation label to policies that are much more Thatcherist in nature. This is enabled by the existence of the Powellite wing of the One Nation Group, which, as argued above, represented a kind of transition between the consensual Conservatism and Thatcherism. Masterminded by Powell, the Group's second major publication *Change is Our Ally* (1954) questioned the role of government and central planning in Britain's economy, calling for a greater emphasis upon market forces, with more competition, risk-taking, investment by the private sector, as well as higher flexibility and adaptability of the labour force (Walsha 2008, 87). Such an approach sits well with Johnson's economic sentiments, and he devotes extensive parts of his speeches to elaborating and defending it. As a case in point, let us examine an extract from a speech Johnson delivered at the launch of his 2019 election campaign:

> And we have the confidence as one nation conservatives to make those investments not despite our belief in a strong private sector.
> But precisely because we champion this enterprise economy in the UK.
> And when people get up at five am to get their businesses ready.
> When they risk their own money or mortgage their own homes to develop a new product or a new venture,
> When they have the guts to find a new market at home or abroad.
> We don't sneer at them.
> We cheer for them and do what we can to help.
> Because we understand that it is only by having a dynamic free market economy that we can deliver on our programme of uniting this country and levelling up with infrastructure, education and technology ("Boris Johnson – 2019 Speech").

Johnson 's argument is that the objectives of One Nation Conservatism, i.e. the unity of the country and the bridging of social divides, are best served by reinforcing free-market principles and opening Britain up to global economic forces. In expressing his support for "Global Britain", Johnson finds himself at odds with the older strand of One Nation Conservatism, which showed caution towards unbridled laissez-faire and focused on the protection of local producers and jobs. The One Nation Group, however, with Enoch Powell being its most visible member, took a more liberal economic stance. Powell believed

that free market and free trade made Britain a rich country, while Keynesianism and the post-war consensus politics were crippling the economy ("Why 'Powellism'"). In addition, Powell's aversion to European integration dovetails with Johnson's drive to deliver Brexit, while his notorious opposition to mass migration into Britain is echoed in Johnson's pledges to "take back control of our borders" ("Boris Johnson – 2019 Speech").

To summarize, although some solutions proposed by Johnson appear solidly Thatcherite, the awareness of the somewhat toxic brand of Thatcherism keeps Johnson from crediting it in any manner. Instead, he firmly places his plans within the One Nation tradition, which is enabled by the One Nation Group line of thought. This helps Johnson sustain his image of a "One Nation man" and disguise any potential Thatcherite leanings.

Rhetoric versus reality

The answer to the question of whether or not Boris Johnson is a true One Nation Conservative is a complex one, as One Nation Conservatism is not a uniform concept. However, a tentative assessment can be attempted to ascertain how Johnson's proclamations correspond to reality.

On the plus side, the response of Johnson's Cabinet to the COVID-19 crisis can be seen as an example of a major shift towards state-driven redistributive action, much closer to the policies of the Labour Party or European social democratic parties than to the rolling back of the State championed by the Conservatives since Thatcher. Among the measures adopted, in particular, the furlough scheme stands out, a programme of job retention to protect companies and their workers (see Zundel 2021). In addition, the increase ("uplift") of the Universal Credit, UK's social security payment, by £20 a week, is an example of a socially considerate policy that proved a lifeline to struggling families. Thirdly, the levelling-up agenda, designed to alleviate economic, social, demographic, and educational disparities across the UK, clearly conforms to the broad concept of One Nation Conservatism.

On the minus side, several aspects of Johnson's political performance clearly fail to live up to his One Nation claim. First and foremost, his housing policy is problematic in this regard. Both Disraeli, Baldwin, and Macmillan understood the importance of affordable housing for improving the population's quality of life. Several Conservative governments in the twentieth century (most notably those headed by Baldwin and Macmillan) presided over the expansion of the council housing sector that lifted individuals and families from the precarity and squalor of the private rental sector. Johnson's predecessor Theresa May was conscious of the dire lack of affordable homes and pledged to renew the construction of council houses, thus breaking the long-term Tory inactivity in the sphere of public housing. Although Johnson has declared his commitment to increased housebuilding across the country, pledging to "build, build, build" up to 300,000 houses a year ("PM: Build, Build, Build"), his housing policy is largely rooted in the ideals of property-owning democracy as championed by Margaret Thatcher and continued by David Cameron. As a result, Johnson prioritizes private home-ownership and helping first-time buyers rather than the expansion of affordable rental homes for a generation of home-seekers, who are increasingly unable to afford both mortgages and rents in the largely unregulated private rental sector. Thus, given the current soaring property prices, the benefits of Johnson' housing policies are likely to remain unavailable to swathes of the population, including middle-class individuals and families.

Secondly, despite its general acceptance as a long-overdue plan, the levelling-up agenda has so far delivered less than expected, thus becoming the focus of criticism by economists and social commentators. In addition to insufficient funding of the individual targets and the excessively centralized character of the plan, one point of criticism stands out: the levelling up scheme has a limited ability to

alleviate social inequalities as it is primarily focused on infrastructure rather than people and in effect does little to tackle the cost-of-living crisis of deprived families. As noted by Dr. Miatta Fahnbulleh of the New Economics Foundation:

> There are a number of reasons why economic activity and local living standards can become disconnected. Firstly, money made by businesses does not always flow into the local community, as it is used to pay shareholders and workers that do not live in the surrounding area. As the UK faces a cost of living crisis, it is also important to realise that levelling-up need is not just dependent on local jobs and businesses. Rising energy and housing costs are squeezing household budgets across the UK. In places like Sunderland, where real wages are stagnating, many people are struggling to pay bills and put food on the table ("Why Boris Johnson's Levelling Up Agenda").

On closer inspection, the programme is revealed to contain numerous opportunities for private business to make money in the regions, without necessarily translating into an improved quality of life of the residents. The entrenched inequalities, which affect not only living standards but also educational attainment or physical and mental health, may well remain intact.

Another area where Johnson appears to be diverging from One Nation Conservatism is his long-term attitude to welfare provision. When David Cameron assumed his premiership in 2010, his plans to pursue compassionate Conservatism were quickly replaced with a long line of austerity policies that did nothing to assuage social inequalities; in fact, these became even more acute as a result. Despite Johnson's reassurances and visions of unity, the government's current trajectory seems to be heading down the Cameronite path in many ways. One of the most striking examples is Boris Johnson's refusal to extend the Universal Credit uplift, the provision of which proved crucial for struggling families during the COVID-19 crisis. Despite calls by Tory MPs to make the uplift permanent in the face of the current cost of living crisis, Johnson has refused to comply, arguing that the nation now needs to have a "different emphasis" that "has got to be on getting people into work" (Maidment 2021). This rhetoric closely resembles David Cameron's justification of public cuts in the 2010–2016 period, whereby he was framing austerity measures as "help to get people back to work," choosing to ignore the fact that benefit many benefit claimants were either unable to work (e.g. due to ill health or child-rearing duties) or were already working, but their income was too low to cover their living costs (Stewart 2011).

To add some more context, Cameron's austerity policies were accompanied by a renewed discourse on the so-called deserving and undeserving poor, a dichotomy dating back to the Tudor era, with moral judgments being made about the lifestyle choices of benefit claimants in order to assess their eligibility for welfare relief (Tihelková 2015, 37). Rather than the outcome of poverty and inequality, certain patterns were seen as results of personal deficiency and treated as an obstacle to the government's main goal: getting people into work. For all his proclamations about healing and unity, some of Johnson's statements reveal an uncannily similar view of benefit claimants:

> We won't succeed in levelling up when so many people are off work because they're sick or stressed or because they suffer from obesity or problems with their mental health. And that's why we're tackling those problems, tackling the problems of junk food, we're rewarding exercise (Murgia and Bounds 2021).

Rather than a Disraeli or a Macmillan, therefore, Boris Johnson comes across as a thinly disguised David Cameron on such occasions; showing a patronizing attitude instead of paternalism.

Conclusion

Despite the modest size of the corpus and the pilot character of this research, with more texts and the inclusion of quantitative methods needed to hone the results, the article has offered some critical points concerning Boris Johnson's claims to One Nation Conservatism. Overall, it can be summarized that a number of the policies adopted by his Cabinet do conform to the broad One Nation concept, such as the short-term redistributive measures taken during the COVID-19 crisis, or, despite its shortcomings, the levelling-up agenda to alleviate regional inequalities. On the other hand, other policies are in clear contrast with One Nation Conservatism, particularly its paternalistic form. These include, among others, the over-reliance on the private sector to deal with social issues, especially apparent in the market-driven approach to housing, the reluctance to extend welfare provision at a time of a dire cost of living crisis, as well as the all-too-familiar welfare-to-work mantra that ignores the financial and social complexities of life in low-income Britain. This, compounded by the fact that several members of Johnson's cabinet, most notably the Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak, are avowed Thatcherites (Smith 2022), makes it rather difficult to translate One Nation ideas into long-term policies. For all Johnson's words of unity and levelling up, it is highly uncertain whether his premiership will result in any sustainable improvement of the living standards of the left-behind Britons so frequently invoked in his speeches. Eventually, in terms of social impact, Boris Johnson may turn out to be another David Cameron and his One Nation Conservatism merely a temporary vote-winning scheme.

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Agata Walek

Encircled in circles? Only Revolutions as the Way to Liberate Ourselves from Language, Text, and Fragments.

Abstract: *The aim of the paper is to analyze the sound potential of words used in the novel* Only Revolutions *(2006) by Mark Z. Danielewski, when applying the concepts of phenomenology, as specified in the paper. This offers an alternative to the approaches which view the text as postmodern work. The intention is to manifest that the text does not have to be interpreted as something which nourishes the postmodern view of the subject as being a decentred and fragmented existence, or the structuralist concept of a sign as something which is a matter of convention, but on the contrary. The text might be analysed in a way to demonstrate that re-establishing stronger and more stable sense of self is possible through physical, direct experiencing of the materiality of a word (sonic, visual) when uttering every single letter. By means of the physicality of the word we can restore the relationship with ourselves and thus to the other, which might give rise to new self-understanding and overcome the feeling of disconnection. Despite the structuralist view claiming that language prevents us from being in a direct contact with reality, leaving us in a semiotic seclusion, the analysis attempts to demonstrate that the language of the protagonists, namely its sonic level, has the potential to take part in reality or even reflect it, imitate it either at the onomatopoeic or iconic level.*

Introduction

Numerous critics (e.g. S. Pöhlmann, 2012; B. Félix, 2010; M. Portela, 2012) accentuate in their studies that *Only Revolutions* (2006) by Mark Z. Danielewski echoes the postmodern situation – a continual rereading generates endless interpretations, produces meanings as a looping path from sign to sign, making the reader sometimes insecure and lost in the chaos of varieties.[1] Also the heroes of the novel are captured by the abstractness of sign and culture, and experience their life as a random pile of ephemeral moments.

The main intention of the analysis below, however, is to apply a novel analytical tool, i.e. the perspective of phenomenology, in order to find out how phenomenological approach can alter the way of examining a human in the fiction. It will attempt to reconfigure some facets of postmodern subjectivity, mainly the quality of being solipsistic decentred, elusive, or fragmented. While offering the possibility of a more physical, experiential access to the self and the world, phenomenology views the subject as the one having strong potential for authentic expression, greater sincerity. As explained later, phenomenological understanding might provide a different manner of approaching the protagonists Sam and Hailey and their way of thinking about themselves and their identity, guiding them (and the reader) towards deeper integrity and more stable sense of self.

Another purpose is to manifest that the text does not have to be perceived mainly as an interaction of chained words without any extra-linguistic connection, but as the interplay of phonemes which have a capacity for fusing with the signified in the process of speaking. In this manner the phonemes (the sounds) can escape a semiotic independence, an enclosed sign system, since they give us direct experience of the real situation (e.g. of a storm, an intimate situation) out of the interchange of signification, out of the *Only Revolutions* of the text.

Phenomenological premises used in the analysis

Since phenomenology is a broad area, let me outline its selected assumptions used in the analysis which might help to overcome the postmodern bricolage. The crucial feature the phenomenology is based on and what the following analysis takes advantage of is the subject and his/her experience of the world, the way s/he attends to experience. The essential aspect then is the focus on the subject's ability to experience the way objects appear to him/her. This directs the observer to explore the correlation between intentional objects and the way they manifest themselves to consciousness, which reveals an exclusive facet of experience, namely *intentionality*.

The intentionality is a salient point which Edmund Husserl, the founder of phenomenology, brings to the forefront in his work (e.g. *Logical Investigations*, 1900; *Ding und Raum*, 1907; an essay *Philosophy as Rigorous Science*, 1911; *Ideas*, 1952) and by which he claims that every experience is always the experience *of* or *about* something directed towards the other. This opposes the Lockean and Cartesian view that we are caught in egocentric predicament, i.e. in our isolated subjectivity, being cut off from the body and the world. Phenomenology then does not keep the self in solipsism, but tries to liberate it from isolation and make it public, while restoring for the self the world outside. Subject is not the one who fragments and divides, but the one who unites oneself with the other. Husserl accentuates that a perceived object reveals itself to the perceiver in temporary different profiles and aspects, and by its inner structure directs him/her towards a gradual constitution of its meaning. His guiding observation is that the structure of object's manifestation is neither arbitrary nor idiosyncratic, and through the conscious experience one can gradually reveal its inner essential structure independent of the empirical particulars s/he might encounter. As he asserts, however, the experience of any object is never apodictic, it will never be clearly and unchangingly established. The analysis below, when following this assumption, attempts to demonstrate that all these diverse profiles, and aspects are not a pile of unrelated fragments, but belong to one object, to a whole, which manifests itself continually through the variety of layers. Contrasted to the postmodern understanding, in phenomenology parts are constituted as the background of an appropriate whole, letting the perceiver disclose a more profound continuity among fragments and objects. Since it is impossible to capture the object in its entirety beyond dispute, this creates space for endless curiosity and playful exploration.

When enquiring into the fact that one's experience is not a chaotic play of images, Husserl introduces another vital concept helpful for the analysis, namely *successiveness*. The structure of experience, as he emphasizes, is naturally *retentional*, i.e. it is perceived as something which is currently happening in different 'nows' and actively remembered. There is also a *protentional* dimension of experience during which one expects what is about to come next (1893-1917/1991: 25, 26). Although Danielewski's text does not abound in syntactically complete sentences, which typically reflect the retentional and protentional (temporal) structure of experience, isolated expressions too, as demonstrated below, have a great potential to manifest the process of deliberate succession.

Just as the sentence or the text is not understood all at once, also the object is disclosed through *adumbration*, if we are to use Husserl's terminology (1913/1983: 9, 74, 87). It means that every sensuous quality, every spatial shape manifests itself by continuous multiplicities (87) which the observer reveals gradually and which contribute to the overall horizon of the experience. It must be emphasized again that contrary to the postmodern fragmentariness (as the way to liberate oneself from ordering and totalising concepts), the adumbrations have nothing to do with disconnected elements of experience. Through the process of synthesizing (called *noesis,* 1950/1960: 70, 142) the diverse layers of the object,

the observer is able to unite the various moments of his/her experience and constitute the object as a meaningful whole. The constitution of this meaningful whole is also illustrated later in the analysis.

In Husserl's conception, the primary structural aspects of experience are not only *noesis* and *noema* (the content experienced, synthetic unities, the meanings of the stretches of experience, 1950/1960: 36), but also the person who perceives – the ego as a constitutive factor of experience (1950/1960). This is a crucial observation, since through the work of synthesis when approaching the world, s/he has a unique chance to build up his/her own identity which accumulates with the pathway of time. The analysis exploits also this assumption and shows that through the specific way the perceiver uncovers and connects the aspects of objects with the aid of language, s/he can reveal his/her own identity as a responsible agent of intentionality.

Another philosopher whose postulations are applied in the analysis is Maurice Merleau-Ponty, a French phenomenologist, who turned his attention mainly to embodiment. He expanded on Husserl's claim about an essential role of bodily self-experience in order to encounter and locate a spatiotemporal object which determines the way it will be perceived (Husserl, 1952/1989). The flesh of the word (its auditory and visual dimension) along with the articulatory capabilities of the protagonists and the reader play in the analysis an indispensable role when constituting the experience of an object or a situation as well as self-experience or self-identification. Merleau-Ponty repeatedly accentuates that the role of phenomenology is to awake our sensitivity to phenomena which will give us the experience of the world coming into being, the very world which precedes knowledge (1945/2005: ix) That is the reason why I focused mainly on sonic/visual aspect of words, since by careful and focused articulation, the reader and the protagonists might taste their own subjectivity and the situation (the object), being at the level of primordial, pre-objective perceptual experience.

A very frequent phenomenological assumption elaborated on by Merleau-Ponty (which might be considered as an alternative tendency to the postmodern aesthetics of disintegration) is that the object never appears in isolation, but always as a part of background (1945/2005: 4). When perceiving a particular object or shape, we do not experience unrelated features via unrelated sensations, but all the components constantly inform and impregnate each other, seeking connection to the whole they gradually constitute (1945/2005: 21-22). Applying the findings of Gestalt psychology, Merleau-Ponty insists that there are internal connections among different perceptual modalities which, during a perceptual experience, constantly pervade each other, giving us a meaningful unit (1945/2005: 52). This integrity of perception is again illustrated in the analysis, when pointing to the way certain features (e.g. phonetic properties of words echoing the situation at an onomatopoeic or iconic level, synonymic series, etc.) are grouped together, forming a meaningful, united situation.

The founding father of phenomenological aesthetics, a Polish philosopher Roman Ingarden, completes the circle of phenomenologists, whose concepts are applied in the paper. In his texts *The Literary Work of Art* (1931) and *The Cognition of the Literary Work of Art* (1937) he observes that even a work of art is a phenomenological object, a phenomenon, which manifests itself in myriads of aspects and invites the reader to set together its parts to constitute a meaningful, solid whole. He argues that every work of art is a stratified formation formed by four heterogeneous layers. They are 1) the stratum of sound formations (word sounds, phonetic formations of a higher order; 2) the stratum of meaning units (words, phrases, sentences); 3) the stratum of represented objects/objectivities (the building blocks of the represented world, e.g. people, events, things, atmosphere of the world; 4) the stratum of schematized aspects (imagery of the text) (1937/1973). Although all of them are deeply interconnected and contribute

to the constitution of the final meaning significantly, Ingarden considers the stratum of meaning units to be of the utmost importance, since it "provides the structural framework for the whole work" (1931/1973: 29).

The stratum of sound formations lies at the bottom of all the layers, and represents the most vital level for this analysis, since it focuses on the 'flesh', i. e. phonic material, through which the meaning might be carried out. Ingarden emphasizes that "the meaning is essentially bound to the word sounds" (1931/1973: 59), and the *phonetic stratum* participates in the constitution of the other strata and enriches the artwork "by a particularly formed material and by particularly aesthetic value qualities" (1931/1973: 56). He continues that the meaning needs an external shell to find its 'expression', without which it would not exist. The aim of this paper, however, is to demonstrate that the sound layer offers a lot more than being an external shell and deserves substantially more attention. Not only does it 'enrich' the other strata modifying their polyphony, but it might be necessary the same way as the stratum of meaning units.

Maddening power of words

The narrative of *Only Revolutions* is presented from two perspectives, Sam's and Hailey's, each starting from the opposite side of the book and meeting in the middle. What is more, every single page is divided into two halves, containing also two perspectives, making the reader choose different reading trajectories. The main organizing principle then is the circle enriched by the Möbius strip, which means that circularity and mirror symmetry influence the structure of the text, language and narrative constantly and at the same time. As Manuel Portela (2012), a Portuguese literary scholar, claims, Danielewski managed to establish an intricate relationship between the graphical/material form of the book, linguistic space and narrative space. Once the reader hits the end of either Sam's or Hailey's story and yields to the temptation to begin a new cycle, s/he will be again entangled and controlled by formal, linguistic and thematic complexities of the work. Only afterwards is s/he able to discover how elaborate the novel's system is and how skilfully it manages to manipulate him/her into different reading trajectories, chasing the endless variations of meaning. *Only Revolutions* is like a symphony altering between fast allegro movement and slower meditative moments making the reader spin around in a mad circle of words passing him/her like a ball from one to the other, multiplying, and echoing themselves endlessly. Not only does the text clutch the reader by the semiotic circle of words, but also by a recursive circularity of chapters, pages and the physical rotation of the book which pushes him/her into the abyss of infinite possibilities.

At the beginning of reading experience then one feels entangled in the fixed form of the text. Endless constraints of the circular form drag the reader deeper into the guts of the text where s/he meets two teenage lovers, Sam and Hailey, who are chained the same way as the reader. When giving an interview to Kiki Benzon, Danielewski explains that he wanted to portray his protagonists as constrained by their egos, by absolute love attachment, by history, society, work, nature, road systems, time.... which they constantly try to overcome and reach the state of full liberation. Katherine Hayles directs this view in a slightly different way by stating that we live in the age of information explosion which is seemingly impossible to halt, however, "*Only Revolutions* puts information excess into tension with an elaborate set of constraints" (Hayles 161). She believes that the power of information multiplicity might be successfully reduced by the interplay with constraints as experienced in the text. Manuel Portela (2012), on the other hand, emphasises that there is almost hypnotic and unceasing potential of language to construct, re-construct and de-construct our reality when claiming that "the text shows the abstractness of signs and culture, specifically, the combinatorial nature of discourse and representation. Those features enable us to investigate the connectivity and the physicality of the form's language and writing as producers of

meaning" (Portela 22). He continues his observations by suggesting that words "direct the reader's attention to the dictionary and the grammar of language, but also to cultural patterns and abstract concepts as human constructs for making sense. Their circular and elliptical shape is an echo of the reading motions that are required for the production of meaning as a recursive path from sign to sign" (36). Rotation itself then locks the reader inside the language and the narrative of the book making him/her orbit infinitely the un-embodied (not experienced physically) linguistic and graphic signifiers and enhance the permutations of their meanings. The protagonists the same way as the reader are captured by "the probabilistic, even hallucinatory or chaotic nature of permutations of signifiers", as Portela summarizes (59), experiencing and using language as a random creator of the world.

Only Revolutions Being an Infinite Collage – 'Allone' as Many in One and One in Many

Similar to Danielewski's *House of Leaves* (2000) or a 2005 novella *The Fifty Year Sword*, also *Only Revolutions* is by no means the work which gravitates towards the realist mode of depiction, but manifests itself as highly experimental in its materiality and content. This opens the gate to endless interpretations, making the critics enchanted by the narrative persistently configured by typographical and visual facets. This multilayered text lets them explore and enjoy the literary and cultural possibilities in the digital age. When magnifying diverse aspects of the text, they are able to construct the world not as an enclosed container, but as an open network of multiple perspectives exemplified by 'allone', the expression widely scattered throughout the text, which does not mean 'alone', but 'all' in 'one' (book).

Let us direct the attention towards other critical approaches, each of them completing the spots of indeterminacy in their unique manner. Sascha Pöhlmann (2012), a German literary scholar, takes advantage of the subtitle *Democracy of Two*, trying to draw a parallel between the political potential of the narrative and a Whitmanian politics of radical democracy and individualism. He emphasizes in his article that *Only Revolutions* is a democratic text "since it espouses a multiplicity of voices, viewpoints and identities on the levels of content, form, typography, layout, visuality, and materiality" (29). The novel is political in taking the reader out of his/her single perspective and dip him/her into the world which should be engaged in its full complexity. The aim of this sub-chapter then is to give space to the imagination of diverse critics who enriched Danielewski's fiction by different insights and viewpoints. Some of them classified it into the electronic literature which requires novel critical modes of reading. Hans-Peter Söder (2012), a German Cultural History Professor, states in his essay 'Writing in an Electronic Age' that the new interpretation does not "resemble the poetics of the past, focusing less on notions of docere et probare than delectare" (2). Alison Gibbons (2012), a British literature scholar, claims that the novel is an ambiguous, multiple system, exhibiting a polychromic topography of time and space, where "the spatio-temporal planes in the novel appear to congregate and fragment, fuse and digress, to reveal the reader at the heart of this play" (4). Hanjo Berressem (2012), a German Professor, focuses on a haptic and gestural dynamics which are in his view the main organizers of the space of reading. As he points out, "reading is always embodied reading, in the same way that cognition is always embodied cognition, material objects are always also 'figures of thought' and vice versa" (203). The intention of his interpretation is to manifest that there is a deep resonance between actual space, conceptual space and writing space in the novel. A stimulating observation is made by Dirk Van Hulle (2011), a Belgian scholar, when stressing that the text makes us deeply aware of the dominance humans developed over nature, and explains that "Danielewski's book is an important Darwinian statement in that it questions the human species' self-importance and suggests that in a broader perspective all anthropocentric 'revolutions' are only revolutions" (138).

Let us return to Pöhlmann once again, who argues that "*Only Revolutions*, in form and content, espouses, adapts, and expands a Whitmanian politics of radical democracy and individualism" (5). He states that Whitman in all his writing tried to merge the concept of democracy and individualism, seeing the individual and the universal as intertwined. *Only Revolutions* is for Pöhlmann a captivating variation of Whitman's aesthetics and political dialects of democracy and individual. *Democracy of Two,* Sam and Hailey, do not appear to be solipsistic individuals, but they have always been entangled in and informed by a democratic community (of two). The thing which matters then is to realize that however contradictory or distant the individual and another individual or the universal might be, one grows out of the other and into the other. I would like to extend this view, later developed in the analysis, by including the phenomenological approach. One of its basic premises is that every act of consciousness we perform is essentially intentional which means that every experience is always an experience of something. Our consciousness then is all the time directed to another object which rather opposes the Cartesian tradition taking the consciousness as an egocentric, enclosed cabinet. This simply demonstrates that we are never enclosed in our subjectivity and our connection with the world is not a mere projection of our solipsistic minds. Phenomenology reminds us that the mind through its correlation with the world is a public thing in fact, and the world and the other person are not psychological but deeply ontological. *Only Revolutions* is a true road novel – it is a movement, a speed, a roundabout directing us all around from the secluded cabinet of our psyche, leaving slowly Sam's and Hailey's separated 'Is', and guiding us towards not an imagined world, but a perceived and lived one, the tangible world inhabited by 'Us', by the democracy of two, by "a mutual recognition and acceptance of dependency", as Sascha Pöhlmann concludes (21). It should be noted, however, that although every gap between the two is here to initiate the movement towards each other, we will never leave the state of metaxis. We will never escape our human condition of in-betweenness, since being too close to each other will always seek freedom and movement away.

Only Revolutions as highly decentred text – the thing left for the reader is the materiality of the book and the sound of language

Danielewski's text is by no means a linear narrative, but a collection of diverse ideas, observations, feelings, and comments spontaneously arising from the consciousness of the protagonists. Each page might be considered as an autonomous unit more or less independent from a narrative sequence, which generates a highly decentred text. It gives the impression of floating fragments whose detachment is reinforced even more by circular reading which makes them whirl and swirl like dust. Syntax is never sufficiently developed and there is very loose, almost none semantic continuity, since words very often act as isolated islands of meaning.

My argument is, however, that the text does not want the reader and the protagonists to be trapped by the mesmerism of revolutions and 'paranomastic association of multiple lexemes' (Portela 52) for good. Through the possibility of lived physical experience (e.g. when reading certain words out loud as shown later), it offers a loophole, the way out of the mad circulation of the language itself and of the text also. The paragraphs below point to different instances the text offers in order to approach it in a more somatic manner.

The first thing to notice is that the reader is exposed from the very beginning to the physical manipulation (rotation) of the book which s/he is able to charge with a distinct significance, thus fulfilling the main task of phenomenology – to make explicit the phenomenon of the world. The reader starts to be aware of all possible physical aspects of the book (its graphical design, the arrangement of pages

and chapters, the varying appearance of words and letters...) and realizes that this single volume does not hang in void but emerges from the background. It is placed in a certain physical environment, it is written by a postmodern author, it implies particular analytical routes... This adumbration, however, is not here to cause the subject to get lost in the pile of unrelated fragments perceived, but, as Husserl explains (1913, 1950), it is here to manifest object's diverse contours and profiles. Yet, no matter how diversified manifestations the book (or any other object) might provide, through the process of noesis (synthetizing) it directs the reader to constitute it as a book, a homogenous element, as something of a coherent structure. As he emphasizes, however, it is not only the object, but also the subject who plays an important role when unifying the manifold profiles. 'I' as a dative of the experience has the opportunity by means of noesis to unify different object's manifestations and additionally get involved palpably in a somatic self-awareness when holding and rotating the book. Physical manipulation allows the reader to recognize oneself not as yet another automatic object of perception, but as an agentive, constituting, personal 'I' who has an experience of being actively engaged with the world.

Another feature of the text already mentioned is that it does not consist of fully developed syntactical units – they are usually branched nominal phrases, simple sentences, or exclamations. This might serve as a great advantage for the analysis since the expressions are somewhat excluded from the semantic rotation. They are arranged to form self-sufficient, abbreviated wholes which are graphically and phonetically provocative, thereby causing the reader to stop, scrutinize them, experience their sound and rhythm at first. Suddenly, s/he can have the space not to glide from left to right automatically, but absorb a single expression thoroughly. As a great number of expressions are slang, deformed, or newly created, this might cause an extra problem for a non-English speaker to understand the meaning. The only thing left for the reader is very often the phonic material of a word, its sound as the simplest linguistic formation, and the way it mingles with and mirrors the phonic material of other neighbouring words. S/he can focus on the succession of individual word sounds – the way they inform and influence each other, which s/he might pick and develop. In the first place, the expression is offered to the reader not as a referring sign, but as an element which has the potential to turn him/her toward its physical properties. Through articulation the reader can reach one s̈ own physicality, leading him/her to the pre-predicative experience of the situation or the object. The perception of the materiality of the word allows one to notice its resonance with the object outside, thus finding the slit through which it is possible to withdraw from a circular, conceptual nature of a sign and the rotations of the text.

By more creative way of reading these words (using a particular intonation, rhythm, volume), the reader and the protagonists are invited to notice not merely their physical presence, but also musicality, playfulness, sensuality, theatricality even. The reader can be physically and actively involved with the text and develop the sonic potential of words (the external carrier of a word is not a random shell only, but might be linked with the meaning at the level of phonemes, syllables or tones), which opens him/her to a new dimension of experiencing the text – it allows him/her to participate in the fusion of the fictional and the real. This connection is possible since the focus on the phonemes articulation moves us to what phenomenology calls the actual world, actual objects. When uttering the expression '**Boooooooooomblastandruin**' (Danielewski 78, 79), the reader can reconcile its emotional essence (expressed by Sam or Hailey) with his/her own and with the destructive charge of the real situation. The emotion (or the destructive charge) contained in this word is displayed by single phonemes, by the way they are articulated, prolonged, highlighted, accenting speed, rush and noise while on the road. This affective, emotional potential of words is described by Maurice Merleau-Ponty, when developing his philosophy of language. He argues that signs do not appear to be arbitrary when we consider the emotional content

of the word. He explains that "the words, vowels and phonemes are so many ways of 'singing' the world, and that their function is to represent things not, as the naive onomatopoeic theory had it, by reason of an objective resemblance, but because they extract, and literally express, their emotional essence" (1945/2005: 217). The examples below illustrate this affective capacity of words in greater detail.

The fusion of the fictional and the real – the union of word meaning with the corresponding object or the situation gives us again the chance to slip from the grip of the text and of the language. This also gives us the chance to slip from the grip of the private, enclosed cabinet of our consciousness and move towards public inter-subjectivity. The sound then is the property I would like to take advantage of, since this might be a tool to get the reader to a primordial, unbiased perception of an object and remediate her/his experience. Let me illustrate this by the analysis of the selected expressions from the text which are very often arranged by their phonetic and suprasegmental properties – rhythm, rhyme, alliteration (assonance and consonance). The reader might be then spontaneously directed towards sound – the phonetic similarity of words semantically related. Each of the sounds has something important for us to say, every single sound is worth conscious articulating, since this shows the way the protagonists (and possibly the reader) might grasp the seductive energy of the object in the world or the situation and vocalize it by their unique manner. The sound is here to excite the feeling of wonder and curiosity because it makes us aware of so many ways the objects appear to us. It reminds us that the things are fascinating to explore, making us forever puzzled and lured by their inexhaustible aspects and profiles. This is demonstrated by analyzing the word **ThuuUuuuuuuuuuunder** uttered by Hailey (Danielewski 324, 353) when expressing her smashing, stormy emotions. What strikes us first about this expression is the abrupt rupture of silence magnified by the varying size of the letters. Thunder juts out violently from emptiness, bringing something new, authentic, which is indicated graphically by big initial letters influencing the intensity of pronunciation. Letters get smaller as thunder's strength diminishes, exactly mirroring the situation of a storm. A specific visual representation of the sings then is the first thing we experience, affecting our perception and explanation. Since the font of the letters changes, this lack of regularity immediately draws attention of the reader, who stops and focuses on the visual and almost immediately on the auditory aspect of the word. S/he naturally expects that the physical/graphical representation of the word reflects the actual mental state of Hailey, who absorbs the grandiosity of the storm and utters the word with a roaring energy. The storm is genuinely present in this word as long as Hailey's and reader's body attune to its power. As Roman Ingarden explains, "The phonetic and visual forms of the word seem almost to be merely two aspects of the same 'verbal body'"(Ingarden 21). Both the visual and auditory apprehension does not allow the reader to hurry through the word, but wrap him/her in a pre-linguistic dimension first, letting him/her experience physically a temporarily individuated manifestation of the situation. Its power is seen and heard in the expression itself. The focus on the phonic materiality of the word gives the reader space to escape from 'the-word-as-a-concept' and enjoy the dimension of the 'word-as-pre-predicative' experience. The violent aspect of the thunder resonates with the hot temper of the protagonists and possibly can echo the fierce capacity of the reader. Through the lived experience of the word sound, the reader can connect his/her own sensation with the possible emotional state of consciousness of the protagonists, inspired and supported by the actual storm. This fusion of the fictional and the real creates an opportunity to leave the semiotic seclusion of language and step out of a possible solipsism towards a greater whole. Furthermore, different adumbrations the 'thunder' offers, i.e. the sound of real thunder, the sound of phonemes, the visual manifestation of the letters, the clusters of the surrounding words of a similar rhyming sound (blunder, scrumble; 324) are by no means fragmentary units of one's experience. Through the work of noesis (synthesis) the subject is able to connect all diverse moments of his/her

experience and, as an agent of this situation, constitute it as a coherent, meaningful whole. Equally, as the situation is constituted by the reader/the protagonists, their identity is constituted the same way as being the subject of this experience. As Husserl emphasizes, the feeling of identity is not a result of a single moment, but it continuously cumulates with the passing time (1950/1960). The bare location of a subject in time, space and his/her body as the ground, while having the potential to constitute, is what helps one to find personal integrity.

Another example taken from the text is the cluster of synonyms reflecting intimacy between the protagonists (**console**, **slow**, **soft**, **subtly**, **patience**, **coochity**, **touch**, **gently**, **thumb**). There is one aspect which unifies most of them and that is the quality of being slow, as the sounds often contain resonants and sibilants whose pronunciation is longer.[2] Their delicate, caressing mode is heightened even more by the usage of sibilance. The sibilant /s/ is frequently described as slow, soft, small, feminine (Monaghan 249, 251), thereby creating a soothing, slow, fondling articulatory and acoustic quality of the phonemes. The combination of resonants and sibilants imitates very closely Sam's and Hailey's behaviour pattern during an intimate situation, while being overwhelmed and united by tender, relaxed attunement of their bodies. Offering Merleau-Ponty's observation, "the body converts a certain motor essence into vocal form, spreads out the articulatory style into audible phenomena..." (211). The acoustic flesh of the word intertwined with the outer context is perfectly sufficient to reveal the subtleties of the intimate situation, since this does not conceptualize it, but makes it present, affective. The word makes the reader not read it, but be touched and caressed. Interestingly, the quality of auditory phonemes experienced as 'soft' makes the tactile layer embedded in the auditory layer, letting us feel the overlap of two sensory perceptions. Merleau-Ponty extends the tactile experience for vision when saying that "vision is a palpation with the look", and continues by stating that

> Since the same body sees and touches, visible and tangible belong to the same world. It is a marvel too little noticed that every movement of my eyes — even more, every displacement of my body— has its place in the same visible universe that I itemize and explore with them, as, conversely, every vision takes place somewhere in the tactile space. There is double and crossed situating of the visible in the tangible and of the tangible in the visible; the two maps are complete, and yet they do not merge into one (1945/2005: 134).

The clusters of synonyms and the unifying quality of the selected phonemes (e.g. sibilants) along with synaesthesia used in the text are yet other manners of disclosing various profiles of the object, giving it richer and more diverse perspectives. The auditory experience informed by the tactile sensation causes the reader not to conceptualize the intimate situation, not to make it instrumental, but sense it more authentically, affectively, and become a lived-body, 'a localized field of sensation' (Husserl, 1952/1989). It should be reminded that all these phonemes and synonyms are not accidental, unrelated fragments. While taking into account Gestalt psychology and its emphasis on the holistic structure of experience in which the whole precedes and arches over the parts, we as a reader can disclose a continuity among these expressions, revealing different layers of an object in diverse manners. They serve as the background of one object, one situation, which, by its inner structure, guides the perceiver to discover its meaning.

History column and search for identity

The purpose of this chapter is to explore whether and how the text offers an opportunity to rediscover the self and answers the question to what extent a subject can experience agency (as the potential to

act freely with intent and awareness) over oneself. We turn again to phenomenological assumptions, and take advantage of the visual layers of the text, inviting the reader for a pre-linguistic perception first.

History column is one of visual idiosyncrasies found in the text and is always placed in the most inner part of the page. It looks very insignificant in fact – the font size is a lot smaller than the actual Sam's or Hailey's monologues, intensifying their presence in the present time. Visually it is distant and not very inviting, it might be then easily neglected by the reader. Such insignificance is very informative in fact, as it might be perceived as something which does not disturb the protagonists that much – the size of the sidebar might reflect the degree of their inattention and carelessness towards the past.

On the other hand, it persistently appears on every single page and is full of facts taken from world history; at a certain moment, therefore, it lures the reader to dive into it and explore. The more s/he pays attention to this sidebar which encircles Sam and Hailey monologues like an ocean from which they emerge, the deeper it soaks through the text, allowing the reader to notice more and more history echoes resonating in Sam and Hailey inner monologues. This is the reader who allows the collective dimension of the history sidebar to intertwine with the personal dimension of Sam and Hailey memories, perceptions, experiences. One of the examples might be a frequent topic of violence and death in the history sidebar – its historical level is entangled with the death of the protagonists giving it a feeling of something which is here and near.

Our (un)willingness to pay attention can alter our perception of the text – if we are attentive enough and make the effort to scrutinize the chronomosaics, history might be understood as something which is deeply imprinted in the characters' personal life, affects their present experience, and might shape their future deeds. But if we ignore the history column, history becomes something which is barely noticed, making the protagonists oblivious to the course of time. It is up to the reader to entangle (or not to entangle) history with the narrative, to loosen (or not to loosen) the grip on time. The attitude of the protagonists to time is expressed very laconically in the following manner, "Future breezes implore / me to stay / But I'm no future. I'm no past. / Only ever contemporary of this path" (Danielewski 358). There is no wonder that the history bar is so negligible.

No matter how oblivious the protagonists or the reader can be to the history column, it does play a role, however, since our lives are inevitably intertwined and connected with the past. Danielewski himself invited his fans to send him suggestions for important historical events. Since they were mainly born after the Kennedy's assassination, the time when Hailey's narrative starts, Danielewski made them an active part of the book, manifesting that their life-stories resonate and echo with the life of the protagonists through the shared history. As Mark Hansen, an American literature scholar, explains, the assassination might be perceived as "a privileged moment of collective-personal self-reference "which makes us aware of "living connection to the past – a sense that the past is not simply past, but remains part of our present" (185). This is very phenomenological in fact, since every single moment of experience is never isolated, but is always enveloped by the horizon of something we have experienced and something which is to come (Husserl, 1893-1917/1991).

However hard does the reader try to preserve the porosity of time, both Hailey and Sam repeatedly and resistantly want to keep themselves in the fractioned, intensified present. Their language is fragmented in the fashion of Lacan's schizophrenia described as a linguistic disorder where there is no signifying chain of meaning which creates a sentence. Signifiers then remain distinct and unrelated. A person who cannot link words to make a coherent whole is unable to unify the past, present and future of his/her biographical experience either and lives in unrelated, yet expressive presents. Paul Virilio, a French cultural theorist, in his text *The Lost Dimension* (1991) calls it a computer time which is a constantly

accelerating time constructing a permanent, intense and vivid present. Similarly, Mark Davis, a British sociologist, observes that "As consumers of new communications technology we now live a curiously 'hurried life' in which the perception of time has become so acutely accelerated that we live in a series of fleeting, episodic moments" and our lived'experience is "characterized by a series of seemingly disconnected intensities " (8-9). Unfortunately, it is not in the scope of this work to explore the above insights deeper, but if we were to follow them, it might seem that the protagonists do not have the experience of temporal continuity, since it is deprived of the past and with no future. This results in the loss of personal identity, because, as Frederic Jameson observes, "our feeling of identity depends on our sense of the persistence of the 'I' and the 'me' over time" (Jameson 8).[3] He strongly believes that we construct our personality on the basis of our own life history, supported by the sense of the historical past. Sam and Hailey then seem to follow the path of postmodern heroes whose hyperactive life is scattered into little fierce moments. They chase one activity right after another to kill the fear of void and boredom.[4] They like speed, use fast cars, swap cars, change the countryside in an accelerated mode, enjoy the present and ignore the past. As Hailey points, there is "No dillydallying for me. But / silly boy so impressed still gallops / after me…no one keeps up. / I'm that fast, man" (Danielewski 9), "Pedaltothe PasPasMetal, gassing it, / hitting it hard…Accelerating more until I'm / hardly touching the tar" (Danielewski 49). Living in such intensified present might destroy the possibility of a continuous narrative and subverts the ability to make sense of the experience. The protagonists fly over their lives in this accumulation-oriented hyper-present manner, passing this on the reader who is driven by the same overwhelming feeling.

It might be claimed, however, that the text invites the reader to escape the trap of the wild encircling while collecting the fragments, and switch from an accumulation-oriented hyper presence to a focus-oriented (phenomenological) 'absolute' presence. In our search for an exit it is necessary to introduce Galen Strawson, a British analytic philosopher, who quite contradicts Jameson's view and tries to question the widespread opinion that "human beings are naturally narrative and .. that narrativity is crucial to a good life" (Strawson 429). He juxtaposes the impression of diachronic continuity with episodic self-experience and claims that episodics do not perceive their lives in narrative terms. He admits that episodic life might be different from diachronic life in its emotional or ethical form, but it is definitely not less humane or vibrant. He also contradicts the opinion that the episodic person is "less informed by or responsible to the past" (432) and argues that the past is active in the present without being necessarily active *as* the past. He explains that the episodic person has absolutely no sense of his/her life as a narrative with or without form and s/he is not particularly interested in his/her past. The past, as Strawson emphasizes, is manifested by the way I am formed now. "Self-understanding does not have to take a narrative form..." (448), and the reason for that is that the narration based on memories is nothing but a construction or even fabrication-based process supported by our "coherence-seeking, unity-seeking, pattern-seeking ...form-finding tendency" (441). He adds then that "if one is narrative, one will also have a tendency to engage in invention... falsification... revisionism..", since our memory "deletes, abridges, edits..." (443). This clearly demonstrates that we cannot trust the way we restore our identity from the depths of our past. He concludes by saying that "Diachronicity is not a necessary condition of a properly moral existence, nor of a proper sense of responsibility" (450). What Strawson does is that he smashes the frequent view that our self-identity is naturally narrative and we need a coherent life history to make sense of our lives. He does not give the answer, however, if it is sufficient for a non-narrative episodic person to build one's identity or self-understanding on the fact that his/her present life is informed and shaped by the past. One way or another, Sam and Hailey are enveloped by the tiny historical sidebar

which carries an imprint in their lives, but they barely care for it, and they whizz through their lives fast, freely and easily. Yet, they are episodic heroes who do not wade aimlessly through the disconnected bits of their adventures, because they have passion, they have the potential to exploit and get fascinated by the actual moment, and make the best of it. Their passion for the objects or the situation, this intense agentive physical awareness, can serve as the key to their self-discovery, as explained below.

When trying to find the answer where to look for to restore the lost identity, we might turn again to phenomenology and its key notion of intentionality. The intentionality directs us towards the possibilities carried into effect only through the interaction of a person and an object or any outer situation or event. Robert Sokolowski, an American phenomenologist, elaborates on Husserl's findings and claims that "identity and intelligibility are available in things, and that we ourselves are defined as the ones to whom such identities and intelligibilities are given" (Sokolowski 4). He continues by saying that it is us who have the potential to disclose them and by doing so we are able to identify or recognize ourselves. "Phenomenology is precisely this sort of understanding: *phenomenology is reason's self-discovery in the presence of intelligible objects*" (4). Thus, it does not have to be a teller and the story of one's life which helps one to find oneself. This is the person's very capacity to make objects emerge from the uncertain fog of probabilities, while being able to capture in one's unique manner the typical aspects the object offers. The identification of a person is achieved every time s/he manages to articulate what s/he perceives and remembers. Sokolowski does not forget to stress that it is our felt corporeality (also mobile) through which a person is able to identify him/herself as being 'here' and perform all the intentionalities directed towards the world. Provided that the self-identification is brought about by physical awareness, it is the very sound we create, the way we move, we touch and arrange objects around us, which make us feel 'I exist this way', if performed attentively. It is a specific way Sam and Hailey pronounce the words, shout them out loud, stretch them, play with them, group them together, which helps to restore their selfhood, the feeling of uniqueness.

To summarize the above observations it might be stated that the situations in the narrative and the language might accelerate the protagonists, leaving them lost among fleeting, disconnected moments. Yet, there is another interpretation viewing the text as something which works the other way round against the fast lives of his heroes, trying to slow them down. On the one hand their lives are high-speed adventures, their language is highly elliptical and syntactically paratactical, reflecting the absence of single focus. This mental chaos, however, is constantly balanced by the simplicity and stability of the flesh – by the fullness of the physical presence of words – their appearance, size, rhythm, consonance, and assonance. Sam and Hailey are great enthusiasts, excited about the way they use and articulate words. There is such pleasure to stretch words to their breaking point and cry them out, as both of them frequently do (weeeeeee, whooopeeeeee, screeeaaaaams, booooooombblastandruin; Danielewski 19, 27, 33, 35, 78, 79). They are mesmerized by the power of rhythm strengthened by alliteration and rhyme (throws a tantrum temper pounding manure; Danielewski 16) during which they might feel a wonderful pleasure of losing control. There is something fascinating about disclosing inner emotions by words which resemble a roaring energy of thunder, or when using expressions of soothing sounds to show softness, delicacy and care. This is not only the sound which echoes mental states or objects, but also a graphical representation of words which draws the contours of emotion ready for actualization. Danielewski uses different typoghrapic styles and the words are often capitalized, highlighted, italicized, written in different sizes and colours.

It is somatic energy, auditory, visual and tactual representation, which Sam and Hailey use in order to disclose endless facets the emotion or a situation might be revealed by. Through the abundance of

synonyms and neologisms, varied graphical inventions, they try playfully, yet insistently, to capture the most typical aspects of their feelings or objects which, by being partially hidden and evasive, will always keep them engaged. Every single word then is the key to their recognition and self-identification. This demonstrates that the accumulation-oriented, fragmented present might be escaped any time. It does not have to be contradicted, but simply changed into the other mode, into the focus oriented perception and fully lived through the sound layer of language. So, there is always the freedom to oscillate between one mode and the other, and fully experience both manners. Sam and Hailey (and the reader) are free on their road along which they are capable of collecting the scattered fragments of their personalities through their passion, enthusiasm, joy. This is their very physicality whose nature is to turn to and attune to the world by which they can re-discover their identity.

Conclusion

The above analysis aimed at showing that the text, when approached by phenomenology, might be viewed and interpreted not in a traditional fashion as being elusive, decentred, locked in the system of signs and symbols, but as the one which offers the path toward more stable subjectivity and out of the grip of language. It helps to find the alternative to the postmodern 'dis-ease', while feeling ease and pleasure in the world perceived directly with our body. It guides the reader out of the fragments to the object and the ways it is able to manifest itself, disclosing in a fascinating manner its different aspects and modes, and revealing itself as a meaningful whole. When focusing on physical, namely auditory properties of the text, the role the sound plays in the analysis might be described in the following manner: (1) it has the capacity to structure and group the reality of the text into patterns, thereby serving as a remarkable organizer of the meaning in the labyrinth of fragments; (2) it helps crucially to unveil and constitute different aspects of an object, or a situation; (3) it opens the reader to deep attention, letting her/him focus on and live through every single word and its phonemes; (3) the more the reader is self-engaged, the more s/he can merge with the represented objectivities, closing the gap between the inner and the outer; (4) the sound gives the sense of agency or action – it strongly initiates active or performative reading, enabling the reader to experience the event or even the expression itself lively and intensely by which s/he gets into contact with a living word; (5) the sound opens the subject to the living word, while uniting him/her with the object, and through this unity the subject might experience 'one-self'.

The perspective of phenomenology and its focus on direct bodily experientiality manifest that a human in the fiction along with the reader have the means for discovering themselves as agentive, communal personalities. While being (self)attentive and absorbed by the moment, while finding the passion and the joyful ability to constitute a meaningful whole out of any possible fragments, one does not have to follow the imposed subjectivity given by socio-cultural constraints, but rediscover one's own, more authentic, spontaneous and sincere dimension of the self.

Notes

(1) *Only Revolutions* is an American road novel describing the journey of Sam and Hailey through the US. It is also their inner journey starting from separate, overblown egos towards greater maturation, union and liberation. The narrative is told from two perspectives, Sam's and Hailey', each beginning from the opposite side of the book.

(2) A sonorant or resonant is a speech sound that is produced with continuous, non-turbulent airflow in the vocal tract; they are most often voiced.

(3) The frequent observation of postmodern scholars, e.g. that of Frederic Jameson, is that the perpetual, intensified present weakens the ability to keep the connection between cause and effect. A person is not able to arrange the past and the future in a coherent narrative which might lead to the loss of the stable sense of identity on one hand, and also to the weakening of historical awareness on the other hand.

(4) Katherine Hayles, an American postmodern literary critic, in her article Hyper and Deep Attention describes the generational shift from deep attention style toward a hyper attention mode as a result of the increase in the variety of media. She explains that deep attention is concentrating on one object for a longer time while ignoring the outside. Hyper attention is described by changing focus quickly among various tasks, while preferring a high level of stimulation (187).

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REVIEWS

Jan Suk

William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*.

Translated by Filip Krajník, edited by Anna Mikyšková, illustrations by Kateřina Fürbachová; Filip Krajník, MUNI Press, 2022. 240 p. € 11.42. ISBN: 978-80-11-01890-0

In an interview with Lyn Gardner published in the Guardian on Monday 9 June 2008 under the title "Should Shakespeare be Barred?" Colin Teevan, a well-known Irish playwright and translator, confessed "I'd love to translate Shakespeare someday" (Gardner 1). This need to update the bard's text, according to Teevan, is to make the text more accessible not only to read but also to stage. In his critique of the "Shakey" cult, Teevan goes as far as to observe that "so many English productions are the theatrical equivalent of muesli – audiences struggling through them not because they taste good, but because they've been told they are good for them" (Gardner 2). By culturally digesting and tailoring Shakespeare, inevitably the works become more down-to-earth and, possibly, more easily commodifiable. Similar trends can be observed in the NoFearShakespeare project, which attempts to adjust and, in a way, anti-mueslify the original texts by translating them into contemporary English – an enterprise afore highlighted by Teevan, yet one guilty of arousing a great wave of controversy.[1]

As non-natives to English, other languages possess an advantage of updated and bespoke translations. *Hamlet*, arguably the most famous play by William Shakespeare, has seen countless translations throughout the centuries. In the Czech context, this play, so crucial to the entire literary canon, and arguably one of the most influential works ever written, appears in more than 20 translations, dating from 1791. The last staged translations of *Hamlet* appeared in 1999 (first by Martin Hilský; second by Jiří Josek), an observation marking the present translation to be a transition to a new generation of readers and spectators.

Filip Krajník's translation of *Hamlet* poses an original contribution to this canonical work. Firstly, the book is presented as a student edition, hence it features a fresh perspective mixing the updated version with an in-depth introduction followed by a meticulously devised study on *Hamlet* in the Czech(oslovak) milieu. Secondly, the book creates an original transversal between academia and theatre practitioners as its final version is a collaboration between a translator/historian/philologist and theatremakers; a venture ultimately resulting in the premiere of *Hamlet* on 22 April 2022 at South Bohemian Theatre directed by Jakub Čermák. Finally, the greatest contribution of the edition, which I will highlight below is the fact that the book does not necessarily attempt to provide a contemporary language translation/adaption; its aim appears to be to present the play in its entire complexity and with all the ambiguity of its original second quarto edition of 1604/5.

More particularly, the overall translation is based on all three Renaissance versions of the play. The quarto edition, out of all Hamlet's version is the longest one; the translator's concept of also including "the missing" parts from the first folio (the most translated one) in his translation underpins the complex nature of the tragedy. Furthermore, the translated dramatic text also features elements from the first quarto, as many other international editions do, e.g., the scene where Hamlet instructs actors how to perform, which in most versions appear only as stage directions. Thus, Krajník's Hamlet appears not only far more of an agent in the play within a play, but generally contributes to much more action-oriented reading of *Hamlet* than the traditional introspective rendering of the last 200 years of Hamlet adaptation tradition.

The language of the new edition reflects the situational nature of translation intention. From various examples, I will include the first dialogue between Claudius and Laertes, in the second scene, where

the language Claudius is using achieves a certain amoebic quality – from intimate first name address to overly formal, almost off-hand ignorance. Generally observed, Krajník's translation of Shakespeare's blankverse is rather loose, which enables it to achieve certain rhythmical nuances when it comes to differentiation of various speakers' abilities or intentions. Despite this breach, the language flows rhythmically, consisting usually of 10 or 11 syllables. One more example, regarding the rendering of the symptomatic monologue, "To be, or not to be" (III.1), Krajník summons an original solution which reads "Tak mám, nebo ne" (III.1.55), which curiously reflects its interpretative and contextual depth. On the other hand, I believe that such a radical turn away from the traditional translation tradition may result in its controversial reception.

Another innovative, yet challenging aspects lies in the formal design and layout of the volume. Firstly, its size (13x20 cm) reminds far more of the Arden edition than of the usual Czech *Hamlet* copies. The typeset is clear and corresponds with the overall intention – to address a young audience as well as to respect its vintage feel. Finally, when it comes to the formal aspect, the art nouveau-looking illustrations authored by Kateřina Fürbachová remind one of Alfons Mucha, or more particularly, John Archibald Austen, who happened to have famously illustrated *Hamlet* in 1922. I take this down to a centennial homage, although the actual feel of the illustrations' historicization with the minimalist design of the frontispiece may not cater to everyone's tastes.

Still, I believe both the content as well as the form of Filip Krajník's latest translation of *Hamlet* is a successful attempt to provide a fresh and well-researched perspective on the play, both for the students and the general public, as well as for Shakespeare scholars. Only time will show to what extent this new *Hamlet* will remain timeless, both on page, as well as on stage. That being said, however, I am convinced that the present translated version is far more than the theatrical equivalent of muesli, helping contemporary audiences and readers to consume the play at its utmost richness, texture, depth and timewithoutness.

Notes

(1) For a full account of the texts, please refer to https://www.sparknotes.com/shakespeare/

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The theme of the conference will be **ANGLOPHONE STUDIES** with an emphasis on concepts such as **endlessness, infinity, perpetuity, time(lessness), duration**. You are also invited to think more broadly. The inspiration for this year's conference was, in fact, Neil Gaiman's comic book series *The Sandman*, where one can find The Endless, anthropomorphic representations of powerful natural forces - Destiny, Death, Dream, Destruction, Desire, Despair, and Delirium. The topic is broad, so just be creative! The areas covered include, but are not limited to:

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[1] X.a.'s website is available at http://xa.ffzg.unizg.hr/en/ and X.a.'s Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/klubxa.

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