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## Sadržaj / Table of Contents

### ***Studije književnosti i kulture / Literature and Cultural Studies .....5***

Crnjanski i strana kultura – slika Nemačke između dva rata u putopisu Iris Berlina

**Aleksandra Lazić-Gavrilović .....7**

Negotiating Boundaries and Marking Contamination: the Trans-corporal Female Body in J. G. Ballard's Cocaine Nights

**Milena Škobo, Jovana Đukić .....23**

Exile and Loss in David Albahari's Novel Bait

**Miljana Lj. Đorović .....43**

The Many Turns of the Screw: The Inherent Ambiguity of Henry James's The Turn of the Screw

**Hossein Nazari, Sara Taghvaeishahroodi .....59**

An Eco-Critical Approach to Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms: A Study of Culture-Nature Nature Dichotomy

**Nozar Niazi .....75**

From Life to Text and Film: Pedro Amodóvar and Autobiographical Discourse

**Dejan Varga .....90**

Unreliable Narrative Strategy in Autobiographical Writing – The Case of Spare by Prince Harry

**Sanja Ignjatović .....112**

World Coffee Culture: Coffee Houses and Cafés Littéraires – Focus on Italy

**Nick Ceramella .....130**

**Studije o jeziku / Language Studies ..... 156**

Many Faces of a Chatbot: The Use of Positive and Negative Politeness Strategies in Argumentative Communication with a Chatbot

**Gordana Ivković .....158**

Концептуальная метафора в хорватском и русском юридическом дискурсе

**Irena Mikulaco .....178**

Between Intimacy and Alienation: The Prototypical Sense of Ksénos in Greek and ITS Literary Exploitation in Eiphanius' Sermon on Holy Saturday

**Georgios Ioannou .....204**

The Use of Persian Loanwords in Albanian: Focusing on the Registers of the Low Level of Formality

**Abdulla Rexhepi, Zeqije Xhafçe .....226**

What Makes for an Effective Grammar Presentation?: Peer, Self- and Teacher Trainer Evaluation of Micro-Teaching

**Ana Đorđević, Milica Vitaz.....246**

Students' Attitudes Towards the Use of ICT in English Class at Tertiary Level

**Vesna Lazović, Eva Jakupčević .....268**

A syntactic Error Analysis of EFL Arab Learners: The Case Study of Primary School Students in Saudi Arabia

**Wejdan Abdullah Altamimi, Haroon N. Alsager .....287**

**Recenzije / Reviews..... 307**

Ein aktueller Sammelband zur Ethnolinguistik, Onomastik und Etymologie

**Tigran Simyan.....309**

**Uputstvo autorima..... 313**

**Instructions for Contributors..... 315**

***Literature and Cultural Studies***

***Studije književnosti i kulture***



## **CRNJANSKI I STRANA KULTURA – SLIKA NEMAČKE IZMEĐU DVA RATA U PUTOPISU IRIS BERLINA**

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**Abstrakt:** U radu se, na primeru upečatljive slike Nemačke između dva rata dočarane u putopisnom tekstu *Iris Berlina*, analizira način na koji je Miloš Crnjanski pristupao stranoj kulturi. Kritika nemačkog sveta iz pera Miloša Crnjanskog nastoji da sagleda sve njegove osobenosti, da pronicljivo proceni društveno-istorijski kontekst, ne libeći se da osudi, ali i da ispravi ranije „nepravde“. Takođe, vidimo da je pored onoga što je uočio i razradio kao tipične odlike nemačkog naroda, Crnjanski vispreno procenio okolnosti i lucidno nagovestio u kom će se pravcu stvari u budućnosti kretati. Želeći da predoči sliku o drugima, pisac se istovremeno našao u prilici da sagleda sopstvenu kulturu iz vizure drugih naroda, kao i da se osvrne na odnos svojih sunarodnika prema vlastitoj kulturi. Uz kritiku kako strane tako i sopstvene kulture, Crnjanski se ujedno suprotstavlja dotadašnjoj praksi pisanja putopisne literature, predstavljajući jedan sasvim nov vid avangardnog štiva sa inovativnim pristupom ovom graničnom žanru, dragocen za analizu i preispitivanje njegovih estetičkih i kulturoloških stavova.

**Ključne reči:** Miloš Crnjanski, putopis, Nemačka, kultura, mentalitet

Život i književnu biografiju Miloša Crnjanskog bitno su odredila brojna putovanja i godine provedene u stranstvovanju. Iako se oprobao u svim žanrovima, među literarnim vrstama podesnim za istraživanje njegovog odnosa prema stranoj kulturi, od posebne važnosti su upravo brojni putopisi, živopisni i upečatljivi opisi zemalja koje je pisac posetio. Imajući u vidu njegovu biografiju, slobodno se može reći da je Milošu Crnjanskom sam život nametnuo žanr putopisa. A ova književna vrsta je u vreme krupnih previranja u srpskoj književnosti, u kojima je i Crnjanski uzeo učešća, sa književne margine dospela u središte interesovanja i doživela značajno prevrednovanje. Svojom otvorenom strukturom i rastegljivim granicama, putopis je avangardnim piscima omogućavao da u njega uvrste elemente drugih književnih vrsta – romana, pripovetke, pesme, eseja, ali i, što je Crnjanskom po svoj prilici najviše odgovaralo,

drugih graničnih žanrova – dnevnika, memoara, biografije i autobiografije.

Nemački putopisi Miloša Crnjanskog, nastali tokom njegovog prvog, relativno kratkog boravka u Berlinu (1928–1929), objavljeni su dve godine kasnije kao celovito izdanje pod naslovom *Knjiga o Nemačkoj*. U uvodnim redovima prvog izdanja iz 1931. godine Crnjanski je najavio: „Ova je knjiga prvi deo jednog dela o Nemačkoj, čiji će drugi deo biti objavljen uskoro“ (Crnjanski 1931, 4). Ovo obećanje pisac je samo delimično ispunio – drugi deo putopisne knjige nije napisao. Međutim, posthumno objavljeno delo *Embahade*, iako njegov boravak u Nemačkoj opisuje iz drugog ugla (u njima on pre svega daje sliku naše diplomatije uz samo nekoliko sporadičnih podataka o Nemačkoj), može se, prema rečima samoga autora, smatrati najavljenim drugim delom: „Kad ne moram u društvo, skitam se u noći po Berlinu. Spremam *Drugu Knjigu o Nemačkoj*. Za tu knjigu rekao sam, na koricama prve knjige, da će izići, uskoro. Ta knjiga, to je sad ovo što čitalac čita“ (Crnjanski 2010, 187).

Da se Miloš Crnjanski ne samo predano posvetio izučavanju nemačke kulture i nemačkih prilika, već i da je doista uspeo da prodre u njenu bit i saživi se s njom, potvrđuju brojne činjenice i tačne opservacije kojima obiluju njegovi nemački putopisi. Baveći se nemačkim temama, Crnjanski je ispoljio široku obaveštenost, zavidnu erudiciju i izrazitu misaonu konzistentnost, zbog čega se stiče utisak da je svesno nastojao da izbegne neprijatnosti sa kojima se suočio prilikom objavljivanja ranijih putopisa, kada se našao na meti kritičara zbog prekomernog prodora subjektivnosti i nepreciznog navođenja faktografskih podataka.<sup>1</sup> Naime, kako se pokazalo, naš pisac do uvida u civilizacijske tokove ne dolazi samo pomoću racionalnih, naučnih analiza i uz oslanjanje na uvrežene stereotipe, već poseže i za kreativnom strategijom koja predstavlja spoj interpretacije stvarnoga i „proizvodnje“ novih pristupa toj stvarnosti.<sup>2</sup> Pa

<sup>1</sup> Misli se na poznatu polemiku koja se tokom prvih meseci 1928. godine vodila između Miloša Crnjanskog i Marka Cara i drugih značajnih imena iz kulture toga vremena, a o čemu je iscrpno pisao Željko Đurić. Povod za javnu raspravu bila je negativna ocena Crnjanskih italijanskih putopisa koju je u svom izveštaju Književnom odboru Srpske književne zadruge izneo pisac i kritičar Marko Car. U isto vreme o ovim putopisima pišu se i izuzetno pozitivne kritike, a za to kao primer mogu poslužiti prikazi i ocene Milana Bogdanovića u *Srpskom književnom glasniku*, Desimira Maksimovića u *Pravdi*, Dragana Aleksića u *Vremenu*, Elija Fincija u *Pregledu*, Isidore Sekulić u SKG ili pak Novaka Simića u *Književniku*.

<sup>2</sup> Jedno od poznatih mesta na kojima Crnjanski nedvosmisleno potvrđuje svoj postupak dekonstrukcije žanra predstavljaju uvodne reči iz *Hiperborejaca*: „Sva lica pomenuta u ovoj knjizi žive, ili su živela, u stvarnosti. U ovoj knjizi, međutim,

tako Crnjanski u svom ogledu o Floberovom *Novembru* lucidno naglašava: „Memoari su uvek bili najbolji deo književnosti, osobito kad nisu doslovce verni“ (Crnjanski 1983, 240). Iz ove izjave jasno proizilazi da verodostojnost navedenih činjenica za njega nije nužno na primarnom mestu, već je to kombinovanje različitih postupaka, a potpuno u skladu sa načelima pesnikove poetike. Primenjeni postupak bi se tako mogao nazvati *trostrukim dijalogom*: to bi najpre bio dijalog različitih narativnih žanrova, zatim, dijalog realnog i fikcionalnog sveta i, najzad, svojevrsni dijalog civilizacijskih simbola, prepoznatljivih i u najsitnijim detaljima. A ono zbog čega je Crnjanski svojevremeno trpeo kritiku, iz današnje perspektive izgleda sasvim drugačije: lični doživaj, probuđene asocijacije i emocije, razmišljanja o sopstvenoj motivaciji na putu, taj svojevrsni prodor lirskog, prepoznati su kao dragoceni za analizu piščevih poetičkih stavova, kao i za razmatranje njegovog odnosa prema stranoj i sopstvenoj kulturi.

U susretu sa stranim kulturama Crnjanski nije samo upoznao druge kulturne modele i načine njihovog funkcionisanja, on se takođe našao u prilici da sagleda sopstvenu kulturu iz vizure drugih naroda i odnos svojih sunarodnika prema vlastitoj kulturi.<sup>3</sup> Naime, još u *Pismima iz Pariza* (1921), Crnjanski se suočio sa daleko „naprednijim“ kulturama od sopstvene. Iako tu ističe da su Nemačka i Francuska na daleko višem nivou u pogledu tehnološkog i kulturološkog razvoja, naš pisac oštro kritikuje sklonost malih, neravnopravnih naroda ka neobjektivnom sagledavanju kako strane tako i domaće kulture: „Ostavite se naše najnovije gluposti: germanofilstva [...] Ne slušajte nikog, i ostavite se, već jednom onog našeg, paorskog, lakoverja“ (1966a, 24). Ukazujući na problem balkanskog kompleksa i tumačenje Balkana u okviru Evrope kroz istoriju, Crnjanski se zalaže za nov, trezven pristup stranoj kulturi pa u četvrtom pismu iz Pariza poručuje: „Nek nestane ona životinjska 'slovenska' žeđ za obožavanjem [...] Našto to večito padanje iz ljubavi u ljubav“ (1966a, 24).

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sva njihova imena, karakteri, dela, i reči, pretvoreni su u literarne kreacije koje nemaju veze ni sa jednim licem u stvarnosti, nego predstavljaju iredne fikcije prema piščevoj potrebi za priču u prošlosti“ (1966b, 7).

<sup>3</sup> Problemom balkanskog kompleksa i tumačenjem pozicije Balkana u okviru Evrope kroz istoriju, temom koja se u današnje vreme čini nikad aktuelnijom, posvećeno se bavio Zoran Konstantinović: „Balkan je bio deo Evrope, koji je, braneći i odbranivši Evropu, prestao da bude njen deo. Ali, uvek je želeo da se vrati Evropi. No, Evropa kao da je želela da taj Balkan drži po strani. Još su Rimljani bili podigli svoj Limes, svoj odbrambeni bedem, pa su oni koji su ostali s one strane bedema sloveli kao varvari“ (Konstantinović 1997, 92).

Uz to, Crnjanski se istovremeno suprotstavlja dotadašnjoj praksi pisanja putopisne literature, predstavljajući jedan sasvim novi vid avangardnog štiva. No, i pored povremenih tvrdnji da je ovaj pisac u prostore književnosti uneo i neke elemente koji se nalaze „izvan svih konvencija i mimo svih izražajnih standarda“ (Džadžić 1993, 561), izvesno je da su brojni njegovi tekstovi, ispunjeni književnim asocijacijama i dati prepoznatljivim modernističkim tonom, nastali pod neposrednim uticajem tadašnjeg srednjoevropskog kulturnog kruga. Preciznija bi, svakako, bila ocena da Crnjanski piše inovativno, ekspresionistički zanosno, kombinujući različite stilske postupke, lirske i dramatično u isti mah. Borac protiv konvencija i pokretač osobenog stila na razvalinama „lenje i uštogljene naše književnosti“, Miloš Crnjanski je, nema sumnje, više i značajnije doprineo emancipaciji moderne srpske književne kulture od mnogih savremenika. Tu se misli kako na lirske tako i na prozne oblike njegovog književnog izražavanja, a pre svega, u okviru ovog rada, na putopise, koji su se kod Crnjanskog suočili sa asimilacijom drugih književnih žanrova i prodorom nauke i publicistike u literarno kazivanje. A takvi faktografski, „naučni“ delovi teksta, u vidu analiza, minijaturnih studija i tematski osmišljenih traktata o politici, ekonomiji ili umetnosti, od čitalaca su nesumnjivo iziskivali jedan poseban način razumevanja, vrednovanja i tumačenja. Avangardni pisac Crnjanski u svojim tekstovima slobodno manipuliše citatima iz različitih izvora, relativizujući kategoriju autorstva, zastupajući enciklopedijsku zamisao „totalne knjige“ – jednog izveštaja u kome se mogu naći gotovo svi oblici znanja i pisma (poezija i politika, priča i pouka, istorija i životna filozofija).<sup>4</sup>

Tvrdnja sociologa da biće jednoga grada najbolje i najpreciznije ocrtavaju njegovi stanovnici sa svojim strahovima i nadama, svojim

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<sup>4</sup> Prethodnik Miloša Crnjanskog u diplomatskoj službi Stanislav Vinaver dao je poput Crnjanskog sličnu mračnu viziju nemačke budućnosti u svojim putopisima. Ali i pored sličnosti u građenju putopisnih modela, Radovan Vučković ističe da se načini strukturiranja putopisnog teksta i stilski postupci dvojice autora bitno razlikuju. Oni su posledica poetičkih transformacija koje su krajem dvadesetih i početkom tridesetih godina zahvatile srpsku književnost, pri čemu su radikalne avangardne tehnike i poetsku intonaciju smenili neoimpresionistički impulsi i dokumentarno-žurnalističke forme: „Za razliku od Vinavera, međutim, koji svoj utisak o Berlinu, Nemačkoj i Nemicima saopštava u zbijenim ekspresionističkim vizijama, u kojima se sažimaju opažanja u karikaturnom i duhovitom pasažu, Crnjanski ga beleži u obliku literarne reportaže s kraja 20-ih godina, gomilajući izveštaje, podatke, cifre, kao objektivni istraživač i neposredni posmatrač onoga što se zbiva. Vinaverova slika je zato književnija i sugestivnija, iako manje tačna u objektivnom smislu“ (Vučković 2001, 294).

egzistencijalnim stavom i iskustvom, svoj puni izraz našla je u *Irisu Berlina*, najobimnijem tekstu u *Knjizi o Nemačkoj*, u kojem je kroz sveobuhvatnu sliku glavnog grada Nemačke i njegovih stanovnika, najpotpunije data karakterizacija Nemaca. Prvi piščev utisak u susretu sa nemačkom prestonicom jeste njeno moderno ustrojstvo i zavidan stepen industrijsko-tehnološkog razvoja, ali i užurbani „tempo“ života, zbog čega mu se čini da „sedamdeset miliona Nemaca radi u jednom novom, i zato grozničavom, preduzeću. Milione palih sahranili su i nisu ostali, nad njima, ni časa, u kontemplaciji.“ (1966a, 243). Pri takvom zahuktalom, grozničavom pulsus Berlina, i ostale nemačke zemlje prinuđene su da „preskaču vremena“ (237). Njihova jurnjava ka „novom, svetskom, veličanstvenom, gospodstvu“ (237) za posledicu ima potpuno izmenjenu sliku nemačkog pejzaža: „Glavna crta prvog utiska je: da su zemlja, polja, oranice, u nestajanju, a da su gradovi, dela ljudskih ruku, već toliko mnogobrojni i povezani saobraćajnim i industrijskim pojavama, da lik nemačke zemlje više nije po Božjoj volji sazdan, već po profilu rada“ (205). Takva izmenjena slika Nemačke u piscu budi vidljiv otpor i skepsu. Iako Berlin „u prvi mah, osobito došljaka, opija lažnim čarima“ (263), Crnjanski do kraja zadržava ambivalentan stav. I pored toga što mu se Nemačka čini „u svemu jedna očajna i prefarbana Amerika“ (221), on „iza sinteza i utvrđenih navika nemačkih i zala pruskih“ (224) pronicljivo naslućuje nagoveštaj „onih činitelja katastrofe“ (237) sa kojima će se u bliskoj budućnosti ponovo suočiti ne samo Nemačka i Evropa već i dobar deo sveta. Svet ne miruje, naprotiv, on je u pokretu, u brzom smeni, koja u isti mah čini legitimnim i letimičnost opažanja u savremenoj zbilji. Između berlinskih bulevara, na meandrima Špreje, na pločnicima i u kafeima, Crnjanski razvija svoju pseudohronikalnu priču koja na izrazito moderan način narativno prepliće najrazličitije pojave: hipermoderno ustrojstvo grada, besprekorno funkcionisanje raznih institucija, dostignuća u razvoju nauke i privrede, muzejske postavke i umetničke izložbe, ali i statističke podatke o kriminalu, o zločinima iz strasti, što ovoj prozi daje vrednost osobenog kulturno-istorijskog pregleda i svedočanstva o civilizacijskom nametanju novih vrednosti i fenomenu „novog sveta“ u povelju.

Poznato je da se odnos prema stranoj kulturi ne može posmatrati izvan društvenog i kulturnog konteksta, izvan prostora i vremena u kojem se kritika piše. Kako primećuje i Bojana Stojanović Pantović, „slika Nemačke i Nemaca u putopisnoj prozi Miloša Crnjanskog u svojim bitnim crtama potvrđuje ambivalentan odnos koji su srpski književnici, univerzitetski profesori i publicisti imali o ovom pitanju“ (Stojanović Pantović 2013, 63). Iako se, poput Ljubomira Nenadovića, Dragiše Vasića,

Stanislava Vinavera,<sup>5</sup> neosporno divi pojedinim odlikama nemačkog naroda, Crnjanski nastoji da sagleda sve osobenosti društveno-istorijskog konteksta, da pronicljivo proceni okolnosti, svestan da u proučavanju različitih mentaliteta i kulturnih modela treba zadržati u vidu da svaka pojava ima svoje lice i naličje, kao što medalja ima svoju drugu stranu. Sjajna strana medalje u ovom slučaju simbol je drevnog viteštva, još od vremena Svetog rimskog carstva nemačke nacije, ali i simbol nemačkog duha zbog kojeg je ova germanska nacija od početka 19. veka važila za zemlju pesnika i filozofa. Crnjanski, međutim, samo može da konstatuje da ta davno stečena medalja tamni, da sada pokazuje svoje naličje, pretvarajući se sve više u pečat nemoralna i obmane. O toj njenoj drugoj strani Crnjanski između ostalog govori kada primećuje potrebu za obnovom etičkih vrednosti i na svakom koraku uočljiv američki uticaj: „Amerikanizacija Nemačke i Berlina, glavni je utisak što ga stranac može imati“ (1966a, 241), a posledica toga jeste da „Berlin misli snovima što obuhvataju kontinente, obuzet groznicom između naslaga čelika, kamena i asfalta, bez momenta kakvog budizma, kontemplacije“ (238–239). Proročki naslućujući i one „sablasi“ što ne dolaze iz prošlosti nego iz budućnosti, Crnjanski u međuratnom Berlinu već uočava jedan od najmarkantnijih civilizacijskih izazova, koji će, danas više nego ikada, rezultirati potpunom inverzijom opštih ljudskih vrednosti:

Izmučeni u želji napretka, u borbi sa onim slojevima koji su Nemačku upropastili, oni što provode besane noći nad Berlinom, u rotaciji električnoj, gumenoj, asfaltskoj, punoj vesti, radiograma, možda ne primećuju, uz šapat iskrenog divljenja, tihi glas razuma, da je reklama Berlina prešla stvarnost i postala providna. Da je momenat potrebe odmora. Celoj Nemačkoj (237).

Interesantno je da Crnjanski nije bio usamljen u svojoj kritici amerikanizacije Nemačke. Čini se da su i pojedini Nemci rano spoznali opasnost po sopstvenu kulturu, koja je pretila s one strane Atlantika. Tako se u jednom izveštaju Stanislava Vinavera može pročitati da je nekadašnji poslanik Rajha u Beogradu, te neumorni poznavalac i tumač jugoslovenske kulturne istorije, (Herman) Vendel govorio da se Nemci moraju spasavati amerikanizacije i tempa, protiv koga postoje izvrsni melemi, među kojima i orijentaliski javašluk i ljubav za slatki život i mnogo mudrosti

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<sup>5</sup> O tome više u zborniku *Srbi o Nemcima*, prir. M. Sofronijević i M. Maksimović, DBR International Publishing, Beograd 1996.

koja se ne žuri nego čeka da stvari najpre sazru (Bulajić 2002, 8).

Vidimo da Crnjanski u slici neuništivog nemačkog Feniksa, u slici „te nove fantastične i grandiozne radinosti“ (1966a, 252) Nemačke, zapravo daje temeljnu osnovu za procenu „grozničavog“ mentaliteta savremenog sveta, anticipirajući istorijske tokove i sada već poznate konsekvence po evropsko društvo i civilizaciju uopšte. Kuda ide Nemačka, šta je to što je čini tako posebnom, uvek brzantnom i za ostatak sveta tako opasnom, jer, „kada je 'nemački' svet [...] tako prazan, nakrivljen, bezuman, besmislen, čemu se onda nadati drugde“ (264) – to su pitanja na koja se, po Crnjanskom, može odgovoriti samo: „ko to zna“ (265).

U trećoj deceniji dvadesetog veka Nemci su se, po Crnjanskom, ponovo našli na jednom od vrhunaca svoje civilizacije u kojoj su „stoletnom disciplinom i vekovnom pedagogijom uspeali da stvore državu, društvo, zaštitu od gorčina, nemaštine, život za svakog lak i prijatan, rezultate na kojima im treba zavideti“ (263). Međutim, protiveći se tome da je i njihova nacija samo „prah i sujeta, i pepeo na kraju, kao i mi“ (223), Nemci, koji uvek imaju „osećaj divljenja sebi samima“ (259), greše, jer nema „ništa gore, nego što se (Nemci) prikazuju uvek zasebni, naročiti, perfektni, u Evropi. Onakvi kakvi su, sa bedama, patnjama i manama svojim, kojih, i sami znaju, imaju dosta, bili bi svima mnogo bliži. Trebali bi da se ostave te lude navike, da sve što je razborito, uspešno, nazivaju 'nemačkim'“ (242).

Ipak, i sam Crnjanski priznaje da se Nemci nalaze u evropskom okruženju donekle „nižih“ ili još nerazvijenih, nedoraslih kultura, od kojih se razlikuju po genetici, navikama i osećanjima, oduhovljenosti i kulturi, što ih je kroz istoriju izdvajalo od ostalih evropskih naroda: „Najposle, da su, donekle različiti od ostalih u Evropi, treba im priznati. Primeti se to, pri prelasku granice, ma s koje strane sveta stranac došao. Kompaktnu masu naročitih glava, likova, trupova (...) 70 miliona Nemaca i svi slični. Večni i prosto, već zato, brutalno vitalni“ (242).

Budući da Crnjanski ipak poriče da je makar i privremeno moguće zaustaviti proces duhovnog propadanja germanskog „sveta u raspadu“, on se daje u potragu za trajnim vrednostima, za tačkama „velike kohezije“ koje se, u nekada hvale vrednoj nemačkoj civilizaciji, napre ogledaju u „odsustvu svega besciljnog“. Zahuktali ritam savremenog života, međutim, u kome je „ritam tvornice norma za sve događaje i doživljaje“, sve je brži, te mu kao stilsko sredstvo i tehnika nije dorasla ni inovativna i dinamična montaža koja automatski odslikava velegrad fragmentarno, haotično. U odnosu na previranja i napetosti trenutka, svaki takav pokušaj nužno kasni. U isti mah, međutim, ne bi trebalo

izgubiti iz vida i okolnost da je Berlin, ta metropola „što ne žudi za prošlošću, već za budućnošću“ (212) za Crnjanskog primer na kome se može razraditi *paradigma zavičaja*:

Ljubav što se krije na dnu duše svakog čoveka, prema zavičaju, uzima oblik sulude nostalgije, kod stanovnika današnjih velikih gradova, vavilonskih razmera. Varoš – grčki polis – opet postaje velika kao država. Poznavao sam stanovnike Berlina, što su imali osećaj opšte svojine zgrada, saobraćaja, događaja svoje varoši. Za njih je Berlin bio živi stvor, kome su govorili kao bratu“ (283).

Naš pisac je svestan da nije lako objasniti razloge nezaustavljivog nestanka izvornog nemačkog mentaliteta i osećaja za zajedničku prošlost i kulturu. Pojašnjenje nastoji da dâ Slobodan Vladušić:

Pošto se polis prelio u državu, građane polisa objedinjuje zajednička prošlost, na kojoj se i bazira nacionalni identitet. Suprotno polisu kog karakterišu znaci kolektivnog istorijskog pamćenja, megalopolis nije utemeljen u zajedničkoj prošlosti, već u nadanju u zajedničku budućnost od koje se očekuje jedino ekonomski prosperitet i ljubav prema novcu [...] Dok je predratni, pruski Berlin bio utemeljen na prošlosti; posleratni Berlin, Megalopolis u nastanku, žudi za budućnošću“ (Vladušić 2021).

Ma koliko fasciniran određenim tekovinama savremenog sveta, i ma koliko revolucionaran kada su literarne ambicije u pitanju, Miloš Crnjanski je, vidimo, u biti tradicionalista – „čovek polisa“. On stoga ostaje kritičan prema novom nemačkom društvu i njegovoj socijalnoj dinamici, ne prezajući da opiše i izvesne kontroverzne, „ekstremne“ pojave, koje dodatno ilustruju stepen njegovog propadanja. On tako razvija provokativnu „studiju slučaja“ berlinskih homoseksualaca i prostitutki, provokativnu već zbog toga što se u ovdašnjoj, domaćoj štampi o tabu-temama te vrste nije u većoj meri pisalo, ili pak prenosi vesti o brutalnim zločinima: ubistvima i samoubistvima, silovanjima, kao i opsesivnim, „mračnim romansama“ i drugim vidovima devijantnog ponašanja, koje ovom putopisnom tekstu daju neočekivani, intrigantni nivo kompleksnosti.

U vezi sa opštim moralnim propadanjem, Crnjanski pored ovih ekstremnih slučajeva portretira i savremenu nemačku porodicu, koju prepoznaje kao bitan činilac destabilizacije društva. Zaoštravajući ovo pitanje, on utvrđuje da porodica kao temeljna društvena institucija i porodični život, sa svim svojim vrlinama i manama, još uvek postoje, ali

da se opšte opadanje vitalne moći nacije najviše ogleda u njenoj očiglednoj degeneraciji. Svedena na spoljašnjost, na formu i bonton, savremena nemačka porodica je tek simulacija ili ljuštura ispražnjena od smisla, u kojoj dominiraju proračunatost i materijalni interes: „Porodice, u kojima brat ne plaća više sestri u kafani, ili poslastičarnici, jer svaki jede onoliko koliko zarađuje“ (1966a, 235). Ista pragmatičnost i odsustvo emocija primetni su i u ljubavnim odnosima, čemu je u velikoj meri doprinela i emancipacija žena, pa tako čitamo: „Žene što traže rasonode i olakšice, puneći bioskope, varijetea, igranke, u časovima kad su, pre rata, čitale romane, ili išle na kafu. Žene robusne, prividno sentimentalne, bez potrebe naplate svojih draži, sa dubokim ekonomskim instinktom, ipak, i u svojoj razuzdanosti“ (277). Otuđenost je prisutna i u bračnim odnosima, ali i između roditelja i dece, što je sa jedne strane, kako primećuje Crnjanski, posledica društveno-istorijskog konteksta, ali i samog mentaliteta Nemaca.

Nije, međutim, kod Crnjanskog reč samo o pojednostavljenom stereotipnom viđenju nemačkog naroda. Kako primećuje Bojana Stojanović Pantović,

kada je reč o slikama Nemačke koje u svojim brojnim putopisnim, romanesknim, esejističkim i publicističko-novinarskim tekstovima artikuliše Miloš Crnjanski u periodu od 1921. do njegovog posthumno objavljenog dela *Embahade* (1984), može se konstatovati da su one izuzetno složene, često kontradiktorne i ne mogu se svesti na jednu ili drugu dimenziju, odnosno samo pozitivan ili, pak, negativan doživljaj (Stojanović Pantović 2013, 63).

Bilo bi svakako pogrešno na osnovu ovog, uistinu dominantno negativnog stava o prilikama u savremenoj Nemačkoj zaključiti da Crnjanski donosi ishitrene sudove i jednostrano viđenje ove zemlje i njenih stanovnika, za šta je, između ostalog, bio optužen od strane pojedinih savremenika. Crnjanski na ne malo mesta ističe vrline nemačkog naroda, pa tako na primer navodi da se među Nemcima mogu naći „najčestitiji i najvredniji radnici na svetu, što do svoje smrti pošteno služe svojim mašinama“ (1966a, 231), te da među njima ima i onih koji su „otmeni i tihi, i muškarci i žene, kao da su sa drugog sveta. [...] Oni se mirno smeše i pričaju mi Ajnštajnovu teoriju“ (Crnjanski 1966, 16). Srećom ima, zaključuje Crnjanski, „u groznom oku te varoši tolikih strahota što su samo prividne“ (231).

U *Irisu Berlina* Miloš Crnjanski daje „sveobuhvatnu, beskompromisnu rekapitulaciju, rekonstrukciju i dekonstrukciju dvadesetih godina minolog dvadesetog veka. To je, pre svega, jedna

opsežna i sa obiljem kulturno-istorijskih, političkih i anegdotskih pojedinosti ispriповedana, slikovita i uzbudljiva priča o jednom vremenu idejnih i ideoloških nemira i pometnji u Nemačkoj. O vremenu u kome je i iz koga je proizašla ne samo nova politička i ekonomska misao, nego i moderna likovna i književna umetnost, kakvu je danas poznajemo“ (Lazić Gavrilović 2021, 692). Kulturolog i empirista, Crnjanski uistinu dramatično prikazuje društveno-politički trenutak u Berlinu, pridajući podjednaku važnost egzistenciji i reprezentaciji, suštini i pojavnosti. Ponegde su svakako uočljivi autorovi lični stavovi i sporne političke procene, kao što je prisutan i udeo njegove računice s navikama i očekivanjima srpskog čitaoca u vidu brojnih dosetki i pošalica kao kolateralnog sredstva za „bezbolnu“ sugestiju manje ili više važnoga. Međutim, umesto lako čitljive reciklaže znanih i već oveštalih kulturnih i medijskih toposa, postavljenih u prednji plan naracije, a koje Crnjanski nudi kao svojevrsnu prečicu za razumevanje globalne problematike nemačke kulture „kao takve“, *Iris Berlina* doneo je za tadašnje literarne prilike posve inovativan diskurs i jedno raskošno isprepletano tekstualno tkanje. Pritom ovo tkanje ne reguliše samo odnos pojedinačnog i opšteg u slici nemačkog društva i kulture (koji se, neretko, ukrštaju na *anarhičan* i za čitanje tegoban način), i ne objašnjava samo specifičnu kompoziciju ovog putopisa, nego i obuhvata jedan osoben sklop ideja, čije izlaganje prekoračuje granice uobičajenog literarnog kazivanja.

Takođe, vidimo da je pored onoga što je uočio i razradio kao tipične odlike nemačkog naroda, Crnjanski vispreno procenio okolnosti i lucidno nagovestio u kom će se pravcu stvari u budućnosti kretati. Simptomi su se već jasno ocrtavali na kraju treće decenije prošloga veka, iako to tada ni mnogim Nemcima nije bilo jasno. I dok oni nisu slutili, nisu primećivali „da su vraćeni nazad“ u svojoj nezajažljivosti, u svom „gramženju, neprekidno, za pobedama, za velikim epohama“, Prvi svetski rat je pronicljivom Crnjanskom izgledao kao „tek jedna generalna proba za idući“ (1966a, 243).

Nalazeći da „po knjigama, esejima i sintezama političara, novinara, pa i najumnijih ekonomista (Rathenau)“, ima previše „samopouzdanja, fiks ideja i preterivanja“, osećajući, u isti mah, kako atmosfera velegrada rastapa „i najmaterijalnije podatke u sastojke neizvesnosti i sna“, uverivši se, najzad, da se o Nemcima uopšte „ne može pisati u sintezama“ i „logičkim mrežama“ (265–266), Crnjanski konstatuje:

Zato se ova reportaža, mesto, sintezama, napunila zbrkom, prelivima irisa Berlina, na način lakomislen, ljubavi, sažaljenja i trenutnog zastajanja nad licima. Čini mi se da sam tako sakupio nekoliko školjki, što huje hukom te varoši, i u kojima zaista ima neke istine, kao biserne. (Ledeno dno, varljiva površina

čovečanstva, inače, svud, pa i tu.) Jedino tim načinom, sasvim nedoslednim, pesnika i igrača, mislim da sam dodirnuo, blisko, gotički oštre uglove nemačkih stvari, posleratnih, bolnih i neizvesnih površina i sadržaja (kao sve, što je vidljivo, uopšte) (266).

Slike mentaliteta, kojima je Crnjanski posvetio toliko pažnje, postale su danas jedna od dominantnih oblasti istraživanja u humanističkim naukama koje nastoje da spoznaju i opišu individualne i kolektivne, spontane i posredovane oblike ponašanja. Miloš Crnjanski je savremenim istraživačima u tome prethodio. Poput neke velike kontrastne slike, njegova poetsko-esejistička sveobuhvatnost u isti mah interdisciplinarno reflektuje, prepoznaje i razotkriva kako prednosti tako i nedostatke u nemačkoj sredini. Nošen snažnim ličnim porivom da opisuje i sklapa detalje, Miloš Crnjanski se i ovde otkriva kao nemirni duh i zaljubljenik u svet, zagledan u njegovu prošlost, zabrinut za njegovu sudbinu.

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### CRNJANSKI AND FOREIGN CULTURE – THE IMAGE OF GERMANY BETWEEN THE WARS IN THE TRAVELOGUE *IRIS BERLINA*

Using the example of the striking image of Germany between the two wars depicted in the travelogue text *Iris Berlina*, the work analyses Miloš Crnjanski's approach to foreign culture. Crnjanski's life and literary career were significantly influenced by his extensive travels and years spent abroad. While he explored various genres, his numerous travelogues stand out as the most suitable literary forms to explore his relationship with foreign cultures, offering vivid and striking descriptions of the countries he visited. During the significant upheavals in Serbian literature, in which Crnjanski participated, this literary genre moved from the literary margins to the centre of interest and experienced a significant reevaluation. With its open structure, the travelogue allowed avant-garde writers to incorporate elements of other literary genres – novels, short stories, poems and essays, but also, which probably suited Crnjanski best, other border genres – diaries, memoirs, biographies, and autobiographies.

The German travelogues of Miloš Crnjanski, written during his first, relatively short, stay in Berlin (1928–1929), were published two years later as a complete edition under the title *Knjiga o Nemačkoj*. In his most comprehensive and, at the same time, most significant text, *Iris Berlina*, Crnjanski tries to understand all the peculiarities of German culture, and to assess the socio-historical context thoroughly, unafraid to criticize, but also to correct earlier “injustices.”

Miloš Crnjanski not only immersed himself in the study of German culture and its conditions, but also truly grasped its essence and lived it, as demonstrated by numerous facts and precise observations in his German travelogues. In his exploration of German themes, Crnjanski displayed a broad awareness, admirable erudition, and a clear consistency of thought. This gives the impression that he sought to avoid the pitfalls he encountered when publishing his earlier travelogues, such as *Ljubav u Toskani* (Love in Tuscany) from 1930, where he became the target of sharp criticism due to his excessive subjectivity and imprecise presentation of factual data. As it turns out, this

writer does not just gain insight into certain civilizational trends through rational, scientific analyses, relying on entrenched stereotypes, but also employs a creative strategy that combines the interpretation of reality with the production of new approaches to that reality. Crnjanski clearly emphasizes this in his essays: "Memoirs have always been the best part of literature, especially when they are not literally correct." This statement suggests that the credibility of the facts is not necessarily his primary concern, but rather a combination of different procedures fully in line with the principles of the author's poetics. The applied procedure could thus be described as *a triple dialogue*: first, a dialogue of different narrative genres, then a dialogue of the real and fictional world, and finally, a kind of dialogue of civilizational symbols, recognizable even in the smallest details. What caused criticism of Crnjanski seems quite the opposite: personal experiences, awakened associations, and emotions, reflections on one's motivation on the road, that kind of lyrical penetration, are valuable for analyzing and questioning the writer's aesthetic and cultural attitudes, but also for understanding both the foreign culture and one's own.

In encountering foreign cultures, Crnjanski not only familiarized himself with other cultural models and their ways of functioning, but also had the opportunity to view his own culture from the perspective of other peoples and to reflect on his compatriots' attitude toward his own culture. In his initial travelogues, such as *Pisma iz Pariza* (Letters from Paris), he encounters cultures far more "advanced" than his own. While acknowledging that Germany and France are at a much higher level in technological and cultural development, our writer strongly criticizes the tendency of small, unequal nations to have a perception of both their own and foreign cultures which lacks objectivity. By addressing the issue of the Balkans and the interpretation of the Balkans' position within Europe throughout history, he advocates for a new, sober approach to foreign cultures.

Crnjanski endeavors to comprehend all aspects of the socio-historical context, evaluate the circumstances thoughtfully, and recognize that in exploring diverse mentalities and cultural models, we must remember that each phenomenon has two sides. The gleaming side, in this case, symbolizes ancient chivalry, dating back to the era of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation and the German spirit, which made this Germanic nation revered as the land of poets and philosophers since the early 19th century. However, Crnjanski can only observe that this long-held medal is tarnishing, revealing its reverse side, increasingly becoming a symbol of immorality and deceit. Crnjanski discusses this other aspect when he observes the erosion of morality and the noticeable influence of America at every turn.

In the streets of Berlin, along the curves of the Spree, on the pavements, and in the cafes, Crnjanski unfolds his pseudo-chronicle narrative, weaving together various elements in a modern manner: the hypermodern city structure, the seamless operation of various institutions, advancements in science and the economy, museum exhibitions and art displays, as well as statistical data on crime and crimes of passion. This approach lends his prose the significance of a distinct cultural-historical panorama, bearing witness to the imposition of new

values and the emergence of a “new world.” Crnjanski’s portrayal of the resilient German Phoenix serves as a foundational framework for evaluating the “feverish” mentality of the modern world. He anticipates historical trends and the well-known consequences for European society and civilization in general.

Upon encountering the German capital, the writer’s first impression is advanced industrial-technological development and modern, well-organized city infrastructure, which completely alters his perception of Germany. However, the bustling city life and frantic pace of Berlin evoke visible resistance and skepticism in the writer. Although Berlin “at first, intoxicates with false charms, especially the newcomers,” Crnjanski still maintains an ambivalent attitude. Observing Germany’s relentless drive for progress, the writer perceives it as “a desperate and repainted America,” noting that while “the Germans consider themselves a special nation in Europe,” there is a subtle hint of another impending disaster that not only Germany and Europe but also a significant part of the world will soon confront.

The impact of Americanization on Germany goes beyond just a transformation of its image and the erosion of its original culture. As previously noted, Crnjanski highlights a decline in spirituality and morality, leading him to believe there is a pressing need to renew fundamental humanist values. Crnjanski perceives this as one of the most significant challenges of civilization, astutely noting the emergence of “apparitions” not from the past but from the future.

No matter how fascinated he may be by the specific achievements of the modern world, and regardless of his revolutionary literary ambitions, Miloš Crnjanski is fundamentally a traditionalist. Consequently, he maintains a critical stance toward the new German society and its social dynamics, not hesitating to portray certain controversial, “extreme” phenomena that highlight the extent of its decline. In this manner, he constructs a provocative “case study” of Berlin’s homosexuals and prostitutes, which was already provocative because the local press did not often cover taboo topics of that nature; instead, it focused on news about violent crimes such as murders, suicides, rapes, as well as obsessive, “dark romances,” and other forms of deviant behaviour. This adds an unexpected, intriguing layer of complexity to his travelogue. In the context of the overall moral decay, Crnjanski, alongside these extreme examples, also depicts the modern German family, which he identifies as a significant factor in society’s destabilization. Getting deeper into this issue, he observes that while the family, as a fundamental social institution and family life with all its strengths and weaknesses, still exists, the nation’s declining vitality is most evident in its visible degeneration. Reduced to appearances, form, and etiquette, the modern German family is merely a facade or a hollow shell devoid of substance, dominated by calculation and material interest.

Despite his predominantly negative attitude toward the Germany of the time, Crnjanski avoided making hasty judgments and maintained a balanced view of the country and its people, for which some of his contemporaries criticized him. In several instances, Crnjanski highlights the virtues of the German people, noting, for example, that one can find “the most honest and

hardworking workers in the world, who serve their machines diligently until their death." Fortunately, Crnjanski concludes, "there are so many horrors in the terrible eye of that town which are only apparent."

Crnjanski offers a comprehensive, uncompromising recapitulation, reconstruction, and deconstruction of the 1920s in his comprehensive travelogue. It is, above all, a comprehensive narrative rich in cultural-historical, political, and anecdotal details, a vivid and exciting story about a time of ideological and ideological unrest and disturbances in Germany. Furthermore, we see that, in addition to his depiction of the typical characteristics of the German people, Crnjanski assessed the circumstances and lucidly hinted at the future direction of events. The signs were already evident by the end of the 1920s, although many Germans were unaware of them then. Without realizing it, they failed to see that "that they were being taken back" in their inexhaustibility, in their "striving, continuously, for victories, for great epochs," the First World War seemed to the perceptive Crnjanski as "just a dress rehearsal for the next one." By aiming to portray others, the writer found himself able to see his own culture from the perspective of other nations and reflect on his fellow compatriots's attitudes toward their own culture. Through criticism of both foreign and his own culture, Crnjanski also challenges the established practice of writing travel literature, introducing an entirely new kind of avant-garde work with an innovative approach to this border genre, which is valuable for analyzing and reassessing the aesthetic and cultural perspectives of travel literature.

**Keywords:** Miloš Crnjanski, travelogue, Germany, culture, mentality



**NEGOTIATING BOUNDARIES AND MARKING  
CONTAMINATION: THE TRANS-CORPORAL FEMALE BODY  
IN J. G. BALLARD'S COCAINE NIGHTS**

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**Abstract:** This paper explores the concept of trans-corporeality in J.G. Ballard's urban violence novel *Cocaine Nights* (1996) and utilises his earlier catastrophe novel *The Drowned World* (1962) as a supporting framework for interpreting female bodies as trans-corporeal spaces. *The Drowned World* centres around a lone female character who lives under a patriarchal regime, where she is moulded and suppressed within an androcentric world that parallels the catastrophic events unfolding on Earth. In *Cocaine Nights*, the female characters are exposed to urban violence resulting from the interaction between human and non-human entities, with their bodies serving as the site of contact. Drawing upon fourth-wave ecocriticism, the paper argues that the female bodies in *Cocaine Nights* challenge traditional notions of human autonomy and underscore the interconnectedness of all beings within the ecosystem. Through a detailed analysis of key scenes and characters, the paper demonstrates how these female bodies become spaces of negotiation and transformation, where the boundaries between human and non-human entities constantly shift. Additionally, the paper examines how the environments mark and impact the female bodies, leading to contamination and compromise through their experiences. By adopting a trans-corporeal perspective, this research offers a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between human and non-human entities, emphasising the vital role of environmental factors in shaping our physical and emotional well-being.

**Keywords:** trans-corporeality, female bodies, urban landscapes, environmental health, physical and emotional well-being

## 1. Introduction

J. G. Ballard's literary works have gained recognition for their bleak and dystopian representation of natural and urban environments and their scrutiny of humanity's darker impulses. His oeuvre is characterised by his deep engagement with ecological and environmental concerns, particularly in the context of post-industrial societies. In his cli-fi opus composed of *The Wind from Nowhere* (1961), *The Drowned World* (1962), *The Drought* (1964) and *The Crystal World* (1966), Ballard examines the consequences of environmental disaster and the transformation of the natural world into an alien and hostile environment. His urban disaster novels of the first half of the 1970s encompassing *Crash* (1973), *Concrete Island* (1974) and *High-Rise* (1975) examine the breakdown of social order within the confines of modern urban spaces. In his urban violence novels composed of *Cocaine Nights* (1996), *Super-Cannes* (2000), *Millennium People* (2003) and *Kingdom Come* (2006), Ballard further develops the psychological effects of violence on individuals in urban environments and the impact of social and psychological entropy on his characters. *Cocaine Nights* has been widely studied for how it explores contemporary social issues such as hedonism, boredom, violence, and surveillance (Matthews, 2013; Gleghorn, 2019; Altaç, 2020; Škobo and Đukić, "Manifestations of 'New Age' Religions"; Škobo and Đukić, "James G. Ballard's Urban Violence Quadriology"; Škobo and Đukić, 2023). However, the novel's treatment of the body, particularly, the female body, as a site of trans-corporeality has received no attention in the critical discourse.

Trans-corporeality is a key concept in the fourth wave of ecocriticism, which emphasizes the interconnectedness and fluidity of all bodies, human and non-human alike. This paper contends that the exploration of trans-corporeality in J. G. Ballard's *Cocaine Nights* unveils a previously overlooked dimension of the novel, particularly in its treatment of the female body. By examining the various forms of contamination experienced by female characters due to the transformation of the natural landscape (1), their exposure to toxins (2), and their encounters with trauma (3), we aim to shed light on the intricate relationship between the female body, environmental factors, and societal issues, thereby contributing to a more nuanced understanding of Ballard's exploration of gender and the body.

## 2. Theoretical framework

This analysis employs a critical literary methodology rooted in contemporary ecocriticism, particularly building on the concept of "the new call to human-nature co-extensiveness," as introduced by Slovic

(2012; 443). Central to this approach is the idea of ‘trans-corporeality,’ a term derived from posthumanism, new materialism, and material feminism. Stacy Alaimo, a pivotal figure in these discussions, co-edited *Material Feminisms* with Susan J. Hekman in 2008 and further elaborated on these ideas in *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self* in 2010. Alaimo (2010, 20) defines trans-corporeality as “the very stuff of the ever-emerging world,” emphasizing that all embodied beings are intermeshed with the dynamic material world, constantly transformed by and transforming it.

In the context of capitalist societies, trans-corporeality reveals the adverse effects of mass production on the environment and human health, illustrating a constant interchange between human bodies and their surroundings across various domains—biological, technological, socio-economic, and political. In the volume edited by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Lowell Duckert titled *Elemental Ecocriticism: Thinking with Earth, Air, Water, and Fire* (2015), the scholars emphasize the vibrancy and agency of natural elements, which aligns with Alaimo’s idea of matter as an active participant rather than a passive backdrop. Further contemporary scholarship, including the works of Serenella Iovino and Serpil Oppermann, extends this ecocritical framework by exploring how “storied matter” in literature reflects the inseparable link between human bodies and environmental processes (Iovino & Oppermann, 2014). This concept emphasizes that material bodies and natural landscapes not only embody historical narratives of exploitation but actively participate in reshaping social and cultural identities.

Moreover, this critical lens enables an examination of how feminist scholarship addresses the historical objectification of women and marginalized groups (de Beauvoir, 1956; Mulvey, 1975; Hooks, 1992; Bordo, 1995). Trans-corporeality expands this feminist critique by positing that bodies and environments are not merely backdrops but active participants in the production of identity. For example, new feminist scholars such as Astrida Neimanis emphasize in “Bodies of Water, Human Rights and the Hydrocommons” (2009, 163) that human bodies are interconnected through a “hydrocommons”, where the flow of water reflects an ecological kinship that transcends individual boundaries. Neimanis’ view of water as a connective element resonates with Alaimo’s idea of trans-corporeality by illustrating how bodily identities are co-constituted through shared materialities.

Building on the foundational work of intercorporeality by Gail Weiss, Alaimo’s trans-corporeal framework foregrounds the inherent interconnections among human and nonhuman bodies (Weiss, 1999; 158). Alaimo extends this notion through Karen Barad’s concept of intra-

action, presented in *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (2007), which argues for the inseparability of material agencies from subjects. Barad's theoretical framework highlights that bodies and environments are dynamically entangled, continuously reshaping each other, a view that resonates with recent ecological discourse emphasizing the fluid boundaries between human and nonhuman entities.

In *Bodily Natures*, Alaimo (2010, 60) argues that the trans-corporeal subject arises from environmental health and justice movements, tracing substances across bodies and places. This perspective extends to issues of racism, as exemplified in Percival Everett's novel *Watershed* (1996), where bodily harm (i.e. the protagonist is being subjected to police brutality and lethal medical experiments during which his body becomes contaminated by the Anthrax virus) becomes a manifestation of the environmental racism of the U.S. military against native American lands (Alaimo, 64-70). Similarly, Ballard's urban violence novel *Super-Cannes* connects violence against immigrants within the business park Eden-Olympia to a desire to purify urban spaces, highlighting how transcorporeality spans diverse fields. In Eden-Olympia, business operations rely on the exploitation of immigrants from the nearby town of Cannes La Bocca. Tragically, any hints of potential depression among the executives and residents of this high-tech business park and gated community were repelled through acts of molestation against these very immigrants: "Whenever he felt the blues coming on, he would take one of the security men into La Bocca and provoke an incident with a passing immigrant. It worked a treat", as a residential psychiatrist Wilder Penrose puts it for one of the CEOs at Eden-Olympia (SC, 191). Violence against immigrants serves as an executive therapy for stress relief. Trashing Arab cars, beating Russian pimps, violent attacks and rape of immigrant women turned into a "kind of weekend fascism" (SC, 281) as they provided certain health benefits for the executives drained by the work.

Trans-corporeality is evident in environmental health movements, where substances and chemicals impact human health. This methodological framework enables an exploration of how characters in *Cocaine Nights* embody the intersections of gender, commodity culture, and environmental toxicity. Through the commodification of femininity, the novel illustrates how women are situated within a socio-cultural landscape that objectifies their bodies and exploits their identities. For instance, characters involved in running a beauty salon and selling exotic underwear adapt to the demands of a commodified environment. This aligns with Alaimo's assertion that places are "never merely

background" but "human landscapes in which people blend into their living spaces" (2010; 122). Additionally, Alaimo's call for a "scientific investigation into our coextensive environments" (2010; 20) emphasizes the notion that humans are integral parts of the material world, deeply interconnected with their environments.

According to The World Health Organisation (WHO), environmental health includes assessing and controlling all the environmental factors (physical, chemical, and biological) that affect a person's behaviour and health and creating health-supportive environments (Alaimo, 2010; 91). Human health and ability are affected by air pollution, medicaments and other substances and chemicals, which Alaimo (*ibid*; 12) associates with the concept of materiality "at a less perceptible level". In the context of disability studies, human bodies are seen as trans-corporeal spaces displaying "the ways in which built environments constitute disability" (Alaimo, *ibid*; 12). Environmental Illness (EI) or Multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) resulting from exposure to 'normal' twenty-first-century environments and substances and causing a range of reactions (i.e., rashes, tremors, convulsions, breathing difficulties, headaches, dizziness, nausea, joint pain, "brain fog," and "extreme fatigue") is the closest to the concept of trans-corporeality, as people with MCS take the world into their bodies (Alaimo, *ibid*; 114). In other words, they "experience their selves as coextensive with the material world [...] [full of] potentially deviant material agencies" (Alaimo, *ibid*; 116).

In Ballard's urban violence novels, urban environment simultaneously conditions humans' minds and behaviour in such a way that it generates people whose counternatural actions and illicit deeds, along with the products they consume and are exposed to — pharmaceuticals, xenobiotic chemicals, air pollution, and so on — make them become 'waste' themselves, toxic materials that should be mitigated. The residents consume products that, apart from harming the planet, may harm the human bodies to such an extent that they can be classified as "dangerous hazardous waste," thus creating the notion that "all that scary stuff, supposedly out there, is already within" (Alaimo, *ibid*; 18). In other words, the toxic bodies as by-products of EI emerge from "taking the world into your body" (Alaimo, *ibid*; 119). Ballard's protagonists constantly 'consume' and are 'consumed' by the environment (Škobo and Đukić, "Urban Landscape," 2023), hence their toxic bodies, just like the denatured landscapes they belong to, are identified as trans-corporeal spaces where biological, technological, social, economic, political, and other processes and systems circulate through and blend.

### 3. The female body in *The Drowned World*

In Ballard's cli-fi novel, *The Drowned World* (1962), the narrative revolves around a global flood, intertwining themes of women's oppression and the exploitation of nature. Cenk Tan's (2021) social ecofeminist lens, which focuses on the analysis of the sole female character, Beatrice Dahl, emphasises the oppressive impact of patriarchal capitalism on both women and the environment. The flood, symbolically associated with women, disrupts the Earth's balance, exacerbating the exploitation of nature and the degradation of women within the oppressive grip of capitalism.

Despite being the only female in the drowned city, Beatrice is exclusively valued for her gender, physical beauty, submissiveness, and fragility. Patriarchal standards confine her, leading to passive acceptance of objectification. Her fascination with material wealth and jewellery reflects an androcentric mindset, yet her complexity, as described by Tan (2021; 19), reveals hidden strength. Despite being portrayed as a 'sleeping python' with concealed power, Beatrice remains confined by androcentric norms, hindering her from resisting oppression and embracing her true female identity.

Beatrice's exclusive status as the only surviving woman remains ambiguous, but her character typifies mental instability, aligning with broader thematic elements in Ballard's works. This interpretation underscores the interconnectedness of gender inequality with societal issues, highlighting the impact of patriarchal systems on women in environmental catastrophes. Tan (ibid; 23) posits that her unattainable position accentuates the extent of her exploitation. Beatrice symbolises Everywoman, epitomising the oppression of all women under patriarchal capitalism and the exploitation of nature.

While Tan's analysis is rooted in social ecofeminism, emphasising the specific oppression of women in the context of environmental catastrophe and patriarchal capitalism, contemporary 'material feminists,' including Donna Haraway, Karen Barad, Vicki Kirby, Stacy Alaimo, and others, provide a theoretical lens that transcends gender-specific concerns. They challenge essentialism and propose "a reconceptualization of nature" as an active, transforming force, as it "can no longer serve as the ground of essentialism," as Alaimo argued in "Ecofeminism without Nature" (2010; 302). Alaimo's concept of trans-corporeality is applicable to the blurred boundaries between human and non-human entities in Ballard's post-apocalyptic landscape. Beatrice's journey exemplifies trans-corporeal transformation, where her body becomes a site of physical and psychological transformation. Hallucinations blur the lines between her body and the environment,

and exposure to the strange radiation of the flooded world induces mutation and transformation. This process mirrors a psychological shift, as Beatrice forms a deep connection with the non-human entities around her.

Beatrice's experiences illustrate trans-corporeal transformation, "a process of becoming-with that remakes both the human and nonhuman involved in the encounter," as defined by Alaimo (2010, 4). Fear and disgust transform into awe and wonder as she appreciates the interconnectedness of all life forms. The transformation of the natural landscape in *The Drowned World* signifies a call for the recreation and transformation of humans by changing their attitude towards the environment. In "Trans-corporeal Feminisms," Alaimo (ibid; 238) suggests that embracing the inseparability of humans and their bodies from the environment can lead to a positive change in trans-corporeal spaces.

#### **4. Forms of contamination of the female body in *Cocaine Nights***

Ballard's urban violence opus introduces the world of gated communities, which reflect zones of incessant ennui as a product of the culture they inhabit — a culture where aggression, transgression, consumerism, and violence take precedence (Wilson, 2017; 157). Such a landscape is indicative of the forthcoming future. Within these communities, indifference towards nature mirrors the apathy of Ballard's subjects.

The novel *Cocaine Nights* takes central stage for the analysis of the reciprocal impact of natural landscape and human entities, with a particular focus on female characters. Laden with dystopian elements such as violence, technology, and perversions, it reveals a gated paradise dominated by leisure, where idle residents indulge in a languid lifestyle. Both Residencia Costasol and Estrella de Mar, the latter being "a peninsular resort twenty miles to the east of Marbella" (CN, 6), have mostly British occupants, "with a few Dutch and French" (CN, 96). However, there are marked distinctions between them. Estrella de Mar, built in the 1970s, has open access to tourists and visitors, a bustling nightlife, tennis competitions, amateur theatricals, lavish parties, and a continuous undercurrent of crime. The atmosphere of the leisure-driven paradise of Estrella de Mar is shattered by an arson attack in which five people are killed. Despite Frank Prentice's confession of the crime, the manager of the exclusive Club Nautico, no one truly believes that he may be the potential culprit. His brother Charles, a travel brochure writer, eventually arrives at the resort, endeavouring to persuade his brother to retract his confession but becomes drawn into the pleasures of this

languid paradise (Petrović 38). However, Charles' further investigation, which demands adapting to the community of Estrella de Mar and which he sees as a place of spiritual death, will lead him to uncover that behind the seemingly desirable social flourishing and the enviable energy of its dwellers lie deep pathological motives and activities (Petrović, 2007; 38).

Unlike Estrella de Mar, Residencia Costasol was created in the 1990s, with strict security rules and almost no visitors, except for a few. Even friends can pose an issue, as "gates and front doors need to be unlocked, alarm systems disconnected, and someone else is breathing your air. Besides, they bring in uneasy memories of the outside world" (CN, 96). It is an oasis for dozy dwellers inducted into a state of coma by doing nothing all day, as the complex itself is designed for such purposes. However, Bobby Crawford, a tennis enthusiast from Estrella de Mar and a 'psychopath as the saint,' and Elizabeth Shand, Estrella de Mar's business savvy, have somewhat different intentions regarding the revival of the place, aiming to make it more like Estrella de Mar in terms of the overall atmosphere.

Within Ballard's urban violence opus, apocalyptic futures unfold, depicting cities transforming into deserted concrete jungles. These landscapes symbolise the alienation of citizens through technological advances, emphasising the negative repercussions of such progress on both human figures and the natural environment. The pervasive impact of technology becomes a contributing factor to the social and psychological entropy, notably evident in *Cocaine Nights*. This novel serves as a canvas reflecting the inner and outer turmoil of its residence and their surroundings, emphasising the influence of popular culture, mass media, cinematography, and technology on both individuals and the environment. Female protagonists, integral to the narrative, undergo three distinct forms of contamination resulting from the transformation of the natural landscapes (1), their exposure to and consumption of toxins and pollutants (2), and traumatic experiences (3).

#### 4.1. Transformation of natural landscapes

Ballard's exploration of the transformation of natural landscape in *Cocaine Nights* examines the progressive metamorphosis of townscape. As the natural soil gradually disappears beneath a layer of chemicals, Ballard in the preface to the novel *Vermilion Sands* poignantly notes that "cities are reduced to mere urban contexts meant for intersecting roadways" (7-8). This transformation not only alters the physical landscapes, ranging from retirement centres to squash courts, plunge pools to natural elements such as chocolate sand beaches on the

Spanish Riviera, but also isolates individuals within denatured social territories.

Along the Spanish coast, the once-scenic coastal pueblos are losing their pristine features, with every particle of the natural landscape either deserted or transformed for human use. *Cocaine Nights* vividly describes this change, portraying landscaped gardens and flowerbeds with cannas as “untouched by human feet since the day they were laid,” and villas amidst this idle paradise that fail to embrace the beauty of the nearby beach, as “the sea’s only two hundred yards away but none of the villas looks out onto the beach” (CN; 95).

The conflicting viewpoint arises as humans assert dominance over the natural world, creating concrete jungles that demand nature’s adjustment to humankind. In this novel, emerging subcultures, such as commodity culture, expose residents to different microcosms, trapping them in “an alienated world as capitalism’s terminal zone” (Gasiorek, 2005; 174). This also points to the presence of social entropy and the phenomenon of spiritual death, as nothing substantial happens in this retirement oasis whose disaffected populace is also nihilist in nature. This artificial environment profoundly affects the female characters, who, surrounded by luxurious villas and immaculate pools, reflect the sterile and spotlessly clean exterior.

In this seemingly idyllic but stagnant setting, women exhibit a sterility not only in their physical energy and enthusiasm but also in their sense of self. The luxury and monotony of Estrella de Mar contribute to a profound boredom that becomes a catalyst for change. The environment, built around obsessions with crime and transgression, shapes the residents’ behaviour, notably evident in places like Club Nautico and car parks where illicit activities unfold. For the women inhabiting this space, these surroundings become integral to their sense of self, as beyond these activities, they lack a genuine understanding of who they are. The prevalent illicit activities, including drugs, pornography, and violence, dominate the residents’ lives, creating a mechanical pursuit of life’s stimuli induced by the artificiality of their environment. Bobby Crawford’s observation that “town-scapes have changed, and the citizenry is not living anymore” (CN, 99) underscores the residents’ detachment from genuine life experiences, replaced by a numb existence driven by artificial stimuli.

Artificial features dominate the landscape of the sunny coast of Costa del Sol, such as the half-completed Aqua park, artificial hills with unused nightclubs, villa projects that are still in progress, and even golf courts multiplying “like the symptoms of a hypertrophied grassland cancer” (CN, 5). Furthermore, adjacent areas may seem even more

threatening for humans, such as Sotogrande without suburbs or centre, which “seemed to be little more than a dispersal ground for golf courses and swimming pools” (CN, 5). All this space on the coast is internalised, pointing to a man’s will to own and a lust for power. The internalisation of space reflects the internal world of the residents of these complexes — a state of brain death veiled in luxury.

Artificial elements, such as satellite dishes dominating the blue sky, a plethora of villas with empty swimming pools and tennis courts, indicate that the residents in Costasol “live[d] in an eventless world” (CN, 13). This state of affairs may not merely be due to the absence of a need or a will towards filling these landscapes with human presence, for socialising and for activity. It is also a matter of the absence of awareness for such things, which lies in the phenomenon called narcoma syndrome affecting all residents. It all stems from the corrupt system, and “our governments are preparing for a future without work” (CN, 81). As Gasiorek (2005; 175) puts it, old revolutionary ways for changing the system in its entirety have dissipated. Since politics cannot reach the public anymore, residents have found new means for reaching freedom in which criminality and psychopathology are celebrated (Gasiorek, *ibid*; 175). Conclusively, these oppositional practices lead the citizenry of this sunny coast to find sense and purpose in sociopathic behaviour between the occasional bouts of drug abuse and illicit doings. Politics, religion, and a return to nature “fail to excite the rest of [the residents]” (CN, 81).

The transformation of the natural landscape holds a reciprocal relationship with the bodies of the female characters, revealing the insidious contamination of women through the alteration of their surroundings. For instance, Laurie Fox, ensnared in a drug-infested landscape due to her father’s heroin habit, embodies the intersection of the natural environment and the female form. Her body becomes a wasteland in Estrella de Mar, a desolate terrain marked by the pervasive influence of substances.

Elizabeth Shand, the most successful businesswoman in Estrella de Mar, provides another intriguing example. Her body mirrors the contamination brought about by the transformation of the natural landscape into a hub of artificiality and business culture. Constantly seeking new properties, she is depicted as “a predatory widow visiting an entailed property about to fall in her grasp” (CN, 101), aligning with the landscape’s transformation into artificial entities. Her calculating mindset reflects the composed and strategic influence of business culture permeating her core.

Dr. Paula Hamilton, a former lover of Frank and the primary distributor of pills that sustain the torpid lifestyle of Estrella de Mar,

embodies the duality of this retirement oasis. Like the façades of the architecture that appear nearly impeccable, Paula seems calm and composed on the outside but harbours internal unrest. This parallel between Paula and Estrella de Mar reinforces the idea that, in this environment, everything, including human bodies, is treated as a commodity. Women, attempting to navigate this corrupt system, often find themselves playing roles of victims while simultaneously becoming accomplices in illicit deeds. However, exceptions exist, such as the abovementioned Elizabeth Shand, who emerges as a representative of women striving to cultivate a more empowered female ecotopia within this complex social equation.

Humans' alteration of the established natural order by embracing artificiality leads to hazardous consequences absorbed by both the human and the more-than-human world. In the zero-waste community of Estrella de Mar, feminine roles gradually assimilate into a commodified culture that promotes prostitution, drug abuse, and other actions not exclusive to any gender.

#### **4.2. Toxins and pollutants**

The concept of commodity culture, as Gasiorek suggests, objectifies human bodies—particularly those of women—turning identities and bodies into commodities for various gains. In this novel, the contamination of female bodies by toxins and pollutants reveals a complex relationship between the environment, gender dynamics, and the commodification within the community of Estrella de Mar. Here, women's bodies become sites of both physical and social contamination, illustrating how the consumption of toxins is not merely a lifestyle choice but a consequence of a system that treats human bodies as consumable objects. In this context, the protagonists embody trans-corporeal subjects, absorbing toxins through participation in this commodified culture.

In Estrella de Mar, constant stimulation is demanded, encapsulated in Dr. Paula Hamilton's mantra: "be honest, what else is there to do in paradise?" (CN; 39). Most characters in the novel voluntarily expose themselves to toxic chemical, with a few exceptions like Laurie Fox, whose addiction stems from her father's influence. Estrella de Mar is depicted as a "Zombieland ... perfused by vodka and tonic" (CN, 39), while the neighboring Costasol complex is "valiumed out of its mind," awaiting Dr. Paula Hamilton's "new prescription" (CN, 97). These tranquilized communities show how, under commodity culture, the boundary between the human body and environmental pollutants blurs. In this context, drugs and toxins transform into commodities, reinforcing

the objectification of residents, especially women, who both consume and are contaminated by these “products.”

Perpetual intoxication fuels “a social economy based on drug dealing, theft, pornography, and escort services—from top to bottom a condominium of crime” (CN, 138). Here, women’s bodies are commodified twice—first as consumers of toxins and then as objects within the very economy these substances support. This cycle of spiritual and physical contamination demonstrates how commodity culture degrades human bodies, reducing them to disposable objects within a consumption-driven system.

The residents’ addiction to mood-altering substances like cocaine and amphetamines, treated as “mood-enhancers, like brandy or Scotch” (CN, 138), illustrates how the toxins are trivialized and normalized within their lives. For Charles Prentice, a visitor from the “outer world,” this toxic economy is unimaginable. Yet, for the residents, their dependence on these substances reflects a deeper entanglement with commodity culture, where physical and spiritual degradation becomes a form of social currency in this hedonistic environment. The lethargic lifestyles and drug abuse create a paradoxical cycle in which individuals seek to “awaken” their senses while numbing them, turning their bodies into repositories for the very pollutants marketed to them.

Female characters are exposed to contamination on multiple levels. Drugs such as sedatives prescribed by figures like Dr. Paula Hamilton and psychiatrist Dr. Irwin Sanger, alongside “medicinal-quality heroin and cocaine,” (CN, 90) contribute to their toxic state. The abundant silos of cocaine and heroin that fuel the infamous “cocaine nights” (CN, 94), as well as the widespread use of amphetamines to counter depression, highlight how toxins have become essential commodities in this community. Many women in Estrella de Mar regularly use Valium and Largactil, which lead to hallucinations, delusions, extreme mood swings, loss of coordination, and physical impairments, leaving visible marks of degradation on their bodies that symbolize the environmental and social decay around them.

Despite social barriers, female characters engage in prostitution, vice, drug abuse, and drug dealing—actions redefined as “positive social ends” (CN, 136). Mixing alcohol with sedatives creates a fatal combination that dulls judgement, yet residents indulge in these activities, resulting in a day of anaesthetized torpor and a night of illicit pursuits. This directly contaminates their bodies, rendering women victims of their own choices, as seen with Bibi Jansen, the Swedish servant of the Hollinger family, who shifts from Prozac to acid and cocaine. Another extreme case is Anne Hollinger, who, despite claiming

to have stopped abusing drugs, is found with a hypodermic syringe during a fire in the Hollinger villa. Prostitution, particularly, amplifies this contamination, as women's bodies are both consumed by and contribute to the community's toxic economy. Laure Fox, for example, further contaminates herself not only through heroin use with Dr. Sanger but also through her participation in pornographic film sessions and sexual encounters arranged by Bobby Crawford, reinforcing the transactional and self-perpetuating nature of the environment she inhabits.

The degradation extends beyond the physical realm, as cultural norms deteriorate through incestuous acts and exploitative labor, such as women attending a party in sequin dresses after witnessing a car set on fire or participating in a local mother-and-daughter massage service offering 'discreet' intimate experiences. Ballard uses these examples to show that, under commodity culture, even interpersonal relations are commodified, further polluting the values of Estrella de Mar and exacerbating overall contamination of its social and moral fabric.

Elizabeth Shand, a major shareholder at Club Nautico and a powerful figure in the community, presents a contrast. She operates above the physical contamination that affects other women, embodying a "predatory" figure untouched by substance abuse. Focused on property ownership and the management of illicit activities, Elizabeth, instead of falling victim to contamination, manipulates others, thereby perpetuating the toxic culture of Estrella de Mar. Resembling Beatrice in *The Drowned World*, Elizabeth is depicted as "a jewelled cobra half-asleep on an altar" (CN, 57), with "her predatory mind [which] worked best at temperatures lower than the heart's" (CN, 104). She embodies action that is almost epidemic and dangerous, as the mastermind behind fatal ventures and constantly ravenous for new properties, akin to a 'predatory widow' eyeing an entailed estate.

Supporting Elizabeth is a group, including the Keswick sisters, who manage Thai restaurants that double as storage spaces for illegal substances. Unlike other female characters victimized through prostitution or addiction, the Keswick sisters avoid bodily contamination and, instead, function within the economy by managing businesses that facilitate the community's cycle of drug abuse. Through their roles, Ballard illustrates how even those who escape direct physical contamination are implicated in the broader economy that profits from the degradation of others.

### 4.3. Traumatic experiences

Exposure to a variety of factors—ranging from cultural influence and crime levels to environmental racism, pollution and toxins—significantly shapes the health outcomes of the female characters. The toxic environment they inhabit contributes to their obliviousness to the urgent need for change, impacting their well-being. This ignorance leads to detrimental effects such as memory loss, suicidal tendencies, mental disorders, and increased aggression.

Ballard's portrayal of the contaminated landscape in *Cocaine Nights* extends beyond the physical environment, probing the psychological dimensions of the female characters. The novel's narrative is woven with traumatic experiences that shape the feminine psyche within the toxic microcosm of Estrella de Mar. The female characters, exposed to a milieu saturated with crime, substance abuse, and moral decay, undergo profound psychological transformations. These traumas take many forms—ranging from violent acts like rape to involvement in illicit activities—and contribute to a complex web of psychological distress.

The brutal rape of Anne Hollinger, a harrowing incident that reverberates through the narrative, is indicative of the novel's exploration of violent trauma. The violation of Anne's autonomy and dignity symbolises the darker undercurrents of Estrella de Mar, where criminality intertwines with everyday life. Dr. Paula Hamilton's participation in filming the act, further normalizes violence within the community. The psychological aftermath of such traumatic events is palpable in characters like Laurie Fox, who, after being exposed to heroin by her father, descends into degradation, participating in pornographic films and engaging in sexual acts. The intersection of violence and degradation becomes a recurring theme, marking the female characters with enduring scars.

These traumatic experiences are inseparable from the rampant substance abuse that permeates Estrella de Mar. Drugs like heroin, cocaine, and amphetamines become mechanisms for coping with the pervasive ennui and emptiness of life in the resort. The transformation of the female psyche is evident in the altered states induced by these substances, resulting in hallucinations, delusions, and extreme mood swings. Characters like Laurie and Anne embody the destructive consequences of substance abuse, reflecting the toxic environment that shapes them.

The commodification of female bodies through the pervasive culture of consumption contributes significantly to the traumatic experiences of the women in Estrella de Mar. The objectification of their

identities, as seen in the case of Laurie and Anne, reduces them to mere vessels of exploitation, perpetuating a cycle of degradation. Both characters embody the loss of agency and identity in the face of commodification. The trauma inflicted through commodification goes beyond physical acts; it seeps into the very essence of the feminine psyche, leaving lasting imprints on their self-perception and interpersonal relationships. The haunting portrait of the feminine psyche within the contaminated landscape of Estrella de Mar is further exemplified by Dr. Paula Hamilton, “a typical woman (doctor) – a calm and efficient front, but inside rather shaky” (CN, 31). The description of her as having “a calm and efficient front” implies that she presents herself in a composed and professional manner, particularly in her role as a doctor. However, the contrasting revelation that she is “detached from her emotions and sexuality” (CN, 37) indicates an inner emotional turbulence or instability, and the loss of common feminine characteristics.

### **5. The complex dynamics of gender and commodity culture**

Despite the significant presence of at least six female characters in this novel, surpassing those in *The Drowned World*, their existence does not alter the overall impression of humanity but rather reinforces established patterns of human behaviour in Ballard’s earlier work, albeit in a different context. Much like in T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, the female characters in *Cocaine Nights* amalgamate into a singular, abstract representation of femininity, suggesting the emergence of a ‘new kind of woman’ within the denatured social realm they inhabit. This woman conforms to the objectification of her body and, in turn, absorbs “the psychoactive fruit that falls from the tree” (CN, 39). In other words, women absorb the psychoactive element as it “stops them going mad” (CN, 58), serving as a coping mechanism within this toxic environment.

This portrayal moves beyond traditional gender roles by highlighting how cultural and societal forces shape female identity. Alaimo and Hekman’s (2008; 217) concept of pre-existing bodies challenges binary notions of gender, offering fresh insights into the interaction between the body, the environment, and cultural forces. In *Cocaine Nights*, both female and male characters exhibit ‘chameleon-like’ qualities (Gasiorek, 2005; 171), adapting to their surroundings and assuming roles influenced by their engagement with non-human elements, particularly within the realm of commodity culture.

However, the women of Estrella de Mar face a unique form of commodification, as their roles within this artificial society extend

beyond passive victimhood. Rather than mere bystanders, they are essential participants in the criminal undercurrents that define the community. Characters such as Carole Morton, a hairdresser running a beauty salon in the shopping mall, and the widows Susan Henry and Anthea Rose, who sell exotic underwear to cover up illegal activities, exemplify how women's identities and bodies are subsumed by commodity culture. Widows and divorcees are recruited by massage parlours, escort agencies, and bordellos to provide sexual services, thus transforming them into symbols of commodified femininity.

Beyond the beauty salons, other female residents in Estrella de Mar recognize the economic potential of the film business over traditional outlets. For instance, some women who initially ran beauty salons shift to starring in amateur pornographic films. These films, which Crawford describes as "more of a nature film" focusing on "the wildlife of the Residencia Costasol" (CN; 110), are emblematic of the commodification and desecration of female bodies within the community. This intersection of commodity culture and gender is further exemplified in Raissa Livingston, a widow who has become a "tank-trap full of vodka" who has "done a little acting before" (CN; 110), showcasing how the toxic culture in Estrella de Mar shapes female identity by merging femininity with objectification and substance abuse. Anne Hollinger also embodies this brutal commodification, becoming a victim of the societal forces at play in this consumer-driven world. Her fate, shaped by prostitution and induced trances, illustrates how women are caught in the destructive currents of commodity culture. The psychological toll of this environment is also explored through Dr. Paula Hamilton, whose emotional detachment reflects the erasure of feminine identity under societal pressures and professional roles, deepening the narrative's complexities of gender and commodification.

In Estrella de Mar, drugs are woven into the fabric of daily life, contributing to the banalization of substances and clandestine activities. During one scene, Crawford distributes sachets of cocaine to women, who tuck them into the cups of their swimsuits as though it were a normal, routine part of their lives: "He[Crawford] tore a dozen of sachets of cocaine from the plastic snake, which the women tucked into the cups of their swimsuits, and began to demonstrate the camcorder to them" (CN; 109). Here, the line between everyday life and criminality blurs, reinforcing the pervasive influence of commodity culture and its impact on gender dynamics.

The male-female dynamic in *Cocaine Nights* is further complicated by characters like Dr. Sanger, who sustains the trends established by commodity culture. Acting as a "shady character," he forms "ménages

of vulnerable young women" (CN; 31) and often assumes a Svengali-like role, positioning himself as a father figure to those in need. His role highlights the disturbing undercurrents of exploitation within Estrella de Mar, where acts like rape, pornographic films, and prostitution are normalized within a society that maintains a veneer of gender equality while concealing the pervasive degradation and objectification of women.

## 6. Conclusion

Alaimo's concept of trans-corporeality emphasises the intricate connection between living beings and their material surroundings, challenging the notion of human autonomy. Examining J. G. Ballard's novels, *The Drowned World* and *Cocaine Nights*, within capitalist frameworks, underscores a more-than-human realm persisting despite humanity's dominion over nature. The essence of *Cocaine Nights* lies in the corruption of nature and material, reflecting the simultaneous corruption of the female entity and identity.

The industrialisation process led to the proliferation of urban settings and the abuse and exploitation of natural and material entities, including women. This has resulted in women grappling with urbanisation, attempting to understand their new roles and identities. In this modern-day utopia, all women are regarded as "totally promiscuous [...], if they want to be," (SC; 33). Their identities and roles are distorted, as their bodies are wastelands contaminated either through prostitution, use of drugs, and exposure to various chemicals. The insidious contamination of their bodies mirrors the environmental degradation surrounding them, highlighting the intricate relationship between human health and the polluted landscapes they inhabit.

In *The Drowned World*, Beatrice Dahl embodies trans-corporeality by merging with post-apocalyptic flora and fauna, blurring the lines between the human and non-human. *Cocaine Nights* examines this concept in greater depth, revealing the active negotiation and transformation of female bodies within their toxic, commodity-driven environment. In this affluent yet decaying community, women's struggles become entangled with environmental toxicity, symbolizing the deeper decay and corruption of society and challenging traditional boundaries of identity and autonomy.

As societies become more absorbed in corporate and digital lifestyles, issues like technology and substance abuse rise to prominence, reducing the human experience to a wasteland that mirrors environmental decay. Through Ballard's portrayal of the trans-corporeal female body, he critiques human-centric views and dominant

paradigms that shape our understanding of the world. This analysis extends the conversation to include broader themes of ecology, feminism, and the representation of humanity in literature. It prompts us to rethink the deep, intertwined connection between individuals and their environment, challenging traditional notions of independence and inviting a fresh perspective on our place within the web of existence.

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**APSTRAKT: PREGOVARANJE O GRANICAMA I OZNAČAVANJE  
KONTAMINACIJE: TRANSKORPORALNO ŽENSKO TELO U ROMANU  
KOKAINSKE NOĆI DŽ. G. BALARDA**

Ovaj rad istražuje koncept transkorporalnosti u jednom od romana urbanog nasilja Dž. G. Balarda *Kokainske noći* (1996) i koristi njegov raniji "katastrofični" roman *Potopljeni svet* (1962) kao okvir kojim potkrepljuje tumačenje ženskih tela kao transkorporalnih prostora. Roman *Potopljeni svet* se fokusira na jedini ženski lik koji živi pod patrijarhalnim režimom, u kome ona biva oblikovana i potisnuta u androcentričnom svetu, a to istovremeno prati katastrofične događaje na Zemlji. U *Kokainskim noćima*, ženski likovi su izloženi urbanom nasilju koje proizlazi iz interakcije između ljudskih i vanljudskih subjekata, pri čemu njihova tela služe kao mesto kontakta. Oslanjajući se na četvrti talas ekokritike, ovaj rad nalaže da ženska tela u *Kokainskim noćima* dovode u pitanje tradicionalno poimanje ljudske autonomije i ističu međusobnu povezanost svih bića u ekosistemu. Detaljnom analizom ključnih scena i likova, rad pokazuje kako ova ženska tela postaju mesta pregovaranja i transformacije, gde se granice između ljudskih i vanljudskih subjekata konstantno pomeraju. Takođe, ovaj rad ispituje kako okruženja obeležavaju i utiču na ženska tela, dovodeći do kontaminacije i kompromisa sa tom sredinom kroz njihova iskustva. Sagledavanjem stvari iz transkorporalne perspektive, ovo istraživanje pruža opsežno razumevanje odnosa između ljudskih i vanljudskih subjekata,

naglašavajući važnu ulogu faktora životne sredine u oblikovanju našeg fizičkog i emocionalnog blagostanja.

**Ključne reči:** transkorporalnost, ženska tela, urbane sredine, zdravlje životne sredine, fizičko i emocionalno blagostanje

## **EXILE AND LOSS IN DAVID ALBAHARI'S NOVEL *BAIT*<sup>1</sup>**

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**Abstract:** The main character in David Albahari's novel *Bait* leaves Serbia and flees to Canada where he tries to start his life anew. The narrator finds himself alone and lonely, sad, troubled and completely estranged from his new surroundings, language, culture and people. The paper will primarily rely on Edward Said (2001) and Svetlana Boym's (2001) definitions and meanings of exile in which they both recognize loss as its fundamental element. This paper aims to show the complexity of loss following exile and the ways to constructively overcome it. The narrator's life in the novel is filled with different losses – that of his home country, language, his people, identity and sense of belonging. Despite all the promises of a better life that Canada seems to offer to the novel's narrator, Albahari portrays him as a man who is suffering and desperately trying to adapt to everything that Canada represents. The paper will focus on how the narrator navigates his alienation and attempts to forge a new identity in a new country whilst enduring the sadness and estrangement of his self-imposed exile.

**Keywords:** Albahari, exile, loss, country, language, estrangement, identity.<sup>2</sup>

### **1. Introduction**

*Bait* follows a life of a nameless narrator who lives in war-torn Serbia and who, just like Albahari himself, emigrates to Canada in search of a better life. It primarily tackles the problem of exile which, along with themes of alienation, loss and identity, will be the topic of this paper. Although the main character voluntarily chooses to leave his native country, so as to avoid the inevitable horrors and hardships that every war brings with it,

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<sup>1</sup> This paper was presented at the II Scientific Conference for Young Researchers and PhD Students titled *Contemporary Trends in the Study of Language, Literature and Culture* held on 30<sup>th</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> October in 2023 at the Faculty of Philology at the University of Belgrade.

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his life in Canada is nevertheless the life of an exile.

The paper will primarily rely on the theories of Edward Said (2001) and Svetlana Boym (2001), who both wrote about exile. Given that they both recognize loss as its central and underlying part, the paper will analyse exile from this perspective, taking into account all the major losses that the narrator suffers. The narrator of *Bait* experiences different types of loss, that of his homeland and its people, his native language, his identity and his sense of belonging. Each of these losses will be thoroughly discussed and analysed individually in this paper, with the aim of elucidating the self-imposed exile that the narrator finds himself in.

The paper will also examine the role of the narrator's mother, his friend Donald and the role of writing, for they all help the narrator forge his new identity and ease the trauma he experiences when adapting to the new homeland and foreign language. The paper will thus argue that the narrator, along with Donald and writing, needs to listen to the voice of his dead mother from the audiotapes in order to adapt and live his new exile life in Canada.

## 2. Exile and Loss

What is very interesting and even compelling about *Bait* is that both its main character and its author live the life in exile. Edward Said (2001) addressed the problem of exile and associated it with the word loss. He wrote:

Exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience. It is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted. And while it is true that literature and history contain heroic, romantic, glorious, even triumphant episodes in an exile's life, these are no more than efforts meant to overcome the crippling sorrow of estrangement. The achievements of exile are permanently undermined by the loss of something left behind forever (Said, 2001; 137).

Despite the compelling allure it exerts, exile represents irrevocable estrangement, disconnection and irreparable division to an individual. It is a condition which implies sadness and loss, but also an aching void which arises from the things forever left behind. Svetlana Boym (2001) also closely examined exile. She stated the following:

The word *exile* (from *ex-salire*) means to leap outside. Exile is both about suffering in banishment and springing into

a new life. The leap is also a gap, often an unbridgeable one; it reveals an incommensurability of what is lost and what is found. Only a few manage to turn exile into an enabling fiction (Boym, 2001; 256).

The above-mentioned paragraph suggests that exile, on the one hand, implies suffering and a sense of being banished from one's homeland, while on the other, it involves a step toward embracing a new life in a new country. Both Said (2001) and Boym (2001) acknowledge that exile is somehow always connected to the loss all exiles must experience once they leave their country. Moreover, both authors emphasize that loss occupies a vital role and constitutes a fundamental part of exile, one of the major motifs in the novel. Anna Smith (1996; 22) intertwines the terms of exile and estrangement, regarding them as synonyms. Furthermore, she joins in Said and Boym's observations on exile and loss, writing the following:

But even though exile carries within its discourse the memory of a happier time when one was at home with oneself, or when it asserts a future time of reconciliation, thinking and writing about estrangement presuppose being conscious of loss and in exile from the beginning (Smith, 1996; 41).

The essential idea behind this statement is that when one contemplates terms of exile and estrangement, a sense of loss instantly emerges as its integral part and its essential component. Apart from loss, exile is also associated with other terms such as sorrow, suffering, sadness and estrangement. Other exile analysts and critics refer to it as a sort of "forced displacement" (Pavel, 1996; 306) but also as "estrangement from the origin — disjointedness, disparity, decentralization, and marginality" (Zeng, 2010; 33). It is a condition that leaves destructive and detrimental effects on those who suffer from it, as they not only undergo a string of losses in their life, but also have an existential crisis which threatens to ruin them by looming perilously over their existence and lives.

In addition to being "a condition of terminal loss" (Said, 2001; 137), exile also denotes a sort of "orphanhood", as Said (*ibid*; 144) eloquently puts it, where an individual is compelled to go through their life on their own, seeking their own path all the while struggling to find some sense in it. To understand the tragic destiny that exiles undoubtedly have, many critics associate the term with death. William Gass (1991; 90) indicates that exile "is a blow from which only death will recover us" thus

stating that the wounds inflicted by exile penetrate so deeply that death seems like the only resolution, the only release from all that suffering. No matter how hard they try to adjust to their new surroundings, an exile always remains “an outsider” (Smith, 1996; 22), excluded from the cultural, social and even geographical aspects of life.

Boym (2001; 256) further indicates that the key feature of exile is a dual consciousness, where one finds oneself consistently split between the two worlds. An exile, therefore, never really leaves the country of their origin. Although physically dislocated from their homeland, a picture of their old home, very often the only home they will ever have, remains in their imagination thus preventing them from assimilating into a new country.

While trying to adjust to their new environment and foreigners that surround them, exiles often encounter difficulties when forging new friendship and relationships for exile is always “a solitude experienced outside the group” (Said, 2001; 140) which only deepens the profound sense of loneliness, alienation and isolation they already feel. Smith (1996; 24) also points out that for all those in exile, there is no place that can ever feel like a true home. Homelessness thus comes as a prevailing theme of exile, thus additionally highlighting an exile’s sad, desolate and dreadful future.

### **3. Loss of homeland**

One of the very first things that exiles undeniably lose is their native country, their homeland. *Bait’s* narrator is plagued by a myriad of uncertainties and dilemmas regarding his life in Canada, that is his future homeland. Most of them mainly revolve around the quality of life he would experience in Canada, his homesickness and nostalgia, his ability to adapt to new surroundings and other issues. All of a sudden, he finds himself surrounded by strangers and everything around him feels unfamiliar, foreign and new. No matter how much Serbia did not really provide him with the life he desired and despite his voluntary decision to leave, Serbia, his Belgrade in particular, would forever remain the only home he ever had, the only true home. Canada, that is Alberta, never truly becomes a place he can call home.

Here, where the place never became my own, regardless of the cramped space of the house, I’m always running into something, looking for electrical switches in places where they’re not located, stooping down when I should be standing upright, pushing the door instead of pulling it, turning when I should be going straight ahead (Albahari, 2001; 40).

In Canada, he experiences displacement and uprootedness, since the emotions and the necessary connection one needs to call a certain place home are notably lacking in his case. His apartment in Alberta merely functions as a house, a physical setting where he now dwells, writes and works. Canada will forever retain the image of a cold, northern and distant place where he consistently feels lost, disoriented and even estranged. William Gass (1991; 106) in his essay titled *Exile* writes that it is alienation that characterizes the emotional and mental condition that constitutes the inner essence of exile. The protagonist's loss of home seems to permeate the walls of his apartment as he repeatedly experiences all the strangeness and unfamiliarity of a foreign place. Gordić Petković (2012; 100) further notes that the protagonist is not only unable to adapt to his new environment, but also incapable of recovering from the shock of losing his homeland.

Aleksić (2006; 68) specifies that both the narrator's mother's condition and his own "exiled conditions stem from the conflict between the lack of the sense of rootedness and a desire towards its acquisition". Serbia is a country of his birth and origin, but also of his historical, familial and cultural roots. "To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul. It is one of the hardest to define" (Weil, 1952; 40). His home is the only reminder of his entire childhood, any friends he might have had but also of his late parents and his mother in particular, with whom he shared a special connection. The fact that he has no remaining family left in Belgrade potentially makes his situation and his exile somewhat easier as he leaves no one behind and, moreover, there is no one to mourn his departure.

However, the war was not the only reason why Albahari's protagonist voluntarily chose to leave the country and move to Canada. At one point in the novel, he says that his life in Serbia, had he stayed, would have become absolutely unbearable or, in his own words, he would be "sucked in like a tiny crumb" (Albahari, 2001; 113). The protagonist sounds completely lost and more confused than ever. His own country had evidently been suffocating him. There seemed to be no place for him there, no life at all. He knew he had to go. He left thinking of a better life that surely awaited him in Canada, a country that appeared to be an idyllic haven for immigrants and exiles – a promised land for everyone. Leaving his country was his utmost priority.

If Serbia was indeed smothering him, Canada would thus rationally liberate him and grant him the freedom he desperately seeks. It would give him a new pair of lungs to breathe, a new opportunity to start a life. However, he, like all the exiles, was gravely mistaken. "Exile is sometimes better than staying behind or not getting out: but only sometimes" (Said,

2001; 141). Once in Canada, he faces his grasp of reality and comes to an understanding that “every departure is a slow dying” (Albahari, 2001; 83). Taking into consideration this statement alone, his prospects for obtaining a good life in Canada are virtually non-existent. Ribnikar (2005; 67) points out that in *Bait*, life is always closely associated with death.

The protagonist’s own words “so now I’m sitting here, in the North, watching my life diminish and sizzle like red-hot iron in the water” (Albahari, 2001; 21) metaphorically prove how hopeless and defeated he is. Not only is he displeased with his life in Canada, but also painfully and acutely aware of the distressing and terrible mental state he is in. He is profoundly sad and lonely, but also terrified as he watches his life shrink and fade before his eyes. The novel often uses these metaphorical images to show the readers the narrator’s inner state. In his book of essays, Albahari (2019) offers the readers an insight into the mind of an exile. He writes: “A conclusion is always the same: no matter what the arrival brought, a real life remained “far away there”. What we have here, at the best-case scenario, could be but a wretched imitation of life” (2019; 81).<sup>3</sup> The painful feelings of exile, alienation and loneliness, mingled with fears and uncertainties about his future, make his life in Canada ever so cold and distant. In fact, what seems to plague the narrator the most is his inability to establish a stable and peaceful life in Canada. The life of an exile in the modern era, according to Said (2001; 146), equals a tragedy.

Further, what the protagonist, in his frantic and tormented mood, does not seem to understand, but the reader does, is that his life in Serbia in the past and his life in Canada now are not that much different at all. “All immigrants know that exile is much more attractive as a poetic image than it is as a lived experience. It looks better on paper than it does in life” (Boym, 2001; 256). In fact, one reaches a reasonable conclusion that there is no difference between these two countries and that his life in Serbia, where he would be *sucked in like a tiny crumb*, and his life in Canada which *diminishes and sizzles* are virtually the same. Both are equally tragic but each in its own way. What may come as a major disappointment for the protagonist is that the life he had in his former homeland, regardless of how distressing and difficult it really was, is better than the life he has now. The condition of exile, Said (2001; 146) notes, is never the one that is peaceful, stable, safe or where an exile is satisfied. The only real life *Bait’s* protagonist could ever hope to have remained *far away* there, in his Serbia, the only place he could call home.

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<sup>3</sup>All quotations which originally are not in English have been translated by the author of this paper.

With all the repeated references to dying, shrinking and diminishing, the novel alludes that stability, peace and balance are terms which are unattainable for the narrator in exile. Depression and nostalgia, notes Albahari (2019; 56), constitute a life of any immigrant and, no matter what they do, they will always “step in the mud”.

Moreover, the protagonist finds himself in the gravest situation possible as neither Serbia nor Canada is his home now as he is “unable to imagine himself in either world” (Aleksić, 2006; 54). At the end of the novel, he was finally able to admit that he does not belong to “any place” and that “a life without place is a mere flitting about” (Albahari, 2001; 109). The loss of home then leaves him without shelter and renders him a homeless person which, on its own, introduces a new set of difficulties and challenges. The metaphor of *flitting about* not only captures the existential crisis he is going through, but also a lack of belonging to his new country and the identity crisis. The Canadian reality he faces becomes too severe and excruciatingly painful, leaving him utterly helpless as he watches his life “slowly leaking from him [me], drop by drop” (Ibid; 84). The loss of home deeply emphasizes the novel’s exploration of alienation and estrangement and is something the narrator is incapable of recovering from. The protagonist is left with the all-consuming void which affects all aspects of his life. It forms such a great rupture in his life that he becomes completely alienated from his homeland.

It is Gass (1991; 98) thus who asks the most fundamental question for any exile: “What exactly is the crime for which exile seems such an appropriate punishment?” The narrator’s *punishment* is to live a life of an exile in Canada, a life which, despite all his efforts, remains empty and hollow. Smith (1996; 49) writes that estrangement and exile, among other things, have “a fascination with death and absence, an insistence on the individual as a subject never in complete control of his speech”. The overwhelming feeling of absence and void the narrator is experiencing in Canada arises from the losses he is repeatedly enduring. The narrator is conscious of this void within him which poses a serious threat to his entire well-being as he goes through his new life like “an empty shell, like a conch which reaches the roar of a nonexistent sea” (Albahari, 2001; 16). However, it is Said (1993; 123) who specifies that when exiles leave their homeland, they cannot merely resume their life in the new surroundings and assimilate like any other citizen. The majority of exiles feel lost and unable to adapt. Smith (1996; 24) provides a more precise definition of the emotions and psychological turmoil exiles are undergoing. She states:

The exile's sense of space is so dislocated that he can no

longer affirm either the security of a psychic interior or the comforts of a normalising, 'transcendent' exterior (the father, the Law, God). There is no place that offers itself as home (Ibid; 24)

According to Smith (Ibid; 24), an exile's quest for home seems vain and futile. The narrator of *Bait* therefore can never hope to achieve it. All his efforts and struggling appear fruitless. Without the possibility of ever attaining home, his future in Canada looks bleak and empty. It comes as no surprise then, that exiles live their life with their head "forever turned backward" (Brodski, 1991; 104), towards the country they left and towards the only homeland they will ever know of.

#### 4. Loss of Language, Identity and the Sense of Belonging

Loss of language is yet another feature that every immigrant and exile experiences. Upon his immigration to Canada, the protagonist is abruptly confronted with a shock of losing his mother-tongue. Despite his ability to fluently communicate in the language of the country he immigrated to, wherever he goes, he remains isolated and lonely. The reason for this isolation stems from the fact that English is not his mother tongue. His knowledge of and proficiency in English is quintessentially non-important, as long as it is not his native language, it holds no relevance for him. Hence, English only serves as a barrier between the Canadian citizens and himself. The fluency in English therefore, rather than helping him in assimilating into the new society, alienates him even further from it. Language, apart from being a means of communication, is also closely associated with one's culture, identity and a sense of belonging which is why they will be analysed together. The narrator is able to understand and acknowledge that in the harshest and most unyielding way – by experiencing it himself.

I'm speaking about language because exactly it, someone else's language, is constantly telling me I don't belong here, that I'm incapable of precisely expressing abstract concepts in it, condemned to the world of nouns and figures, newspaper banner headlines, and the labels in supermarkets (Albahari, 2001; 2).

Language, for the narrator of *Bait*, becomes a vehicle for establishing a sense of belonging to a certain place. Moreover, for him language equals identity. No matter what, his Serbian will always be his mother tongue, while English continues to be a foreign language that limits his ability to communicate or express himself effectively and in which he will always be "in desperate search for adequate expressions" (Gorup, 2005; 8). Language in *Bait* serves as a perpetual barrier which

constantly makes the protagonist feel like an outsider, preventing him from fully assimilating into Canadian society and ultimately resulting in a profound sense of estrangement and even alienation from everything that Canada embodies and symbolizes. Gass (2005; 97) notices that “to be exiled is not to be flung out of any door, but out of your own door; it is to lose your home where home suggests close emotional belonging and the gnarled roots of one's identity”. The exiled narrator, given that he is also exiled from his own language, as Mijatović and Đurić (2018; 87) add, must always, like all the other exiles, live “with the stigma of being an outsider” (Said, 2001; 144).

The loss of language, like the loss of his homeland, exerts a similar, even identical, impact on the narrator. He firmly states: “It’s as if I’ve diminished since no longer speaking my own language” (Albahari, 2001; 22). The loss of language and homeland cause the narrator to become smaller, to shrink in some way. Both losses diminish him greatly and have a profound negative impact on his life, his prospects, future, identity and sense of belonging. His struggle with language serves as a metaphorical reflection of his internal and external dilemmas. A foreign language repeatedly reminds him “that he does not belong” (Gorup, 2005; 8) there and that his adjustment to the new environment is almost impossible to achieve. Moreover, in a striking and tragic realization, the protagonist of *Bait* comes to understand that language, which once served as a vital means of communication, has now become a symbol of death. He declares:

One can die in a language just as one does in real life, I told him, and if I’ve already died, and I have died, then I don’t have the slightest wish to be a vampire or a ghost and to wander the expanses of that language like some forlorn creature from the tales of Edgar Allan Poe (Albahari, 2001; 177).

Not only does language equal identity for the narrator but it equals his metaphorical death as well. Deprived of his native language, the protagonist experiences a sense of void and of deep inner emptiness. In this light, his Serbian language stands as a symbol of life and a symbol of existence, while English represents the death of his identity, personality and of his selfhood. According to the protagonist, the act of forgetting his native language merely becomes “one of the quickest forms of death” (Ibid; 79). This painful and even fatal revelation, nevertheless, comes as no surprise for those who study the theme of exile as exile is, after all, “like death but without death’s ultimate mercy” (Said, 2001; 141). The committed “matricide” against Serbian, as Aleksić (2006; 60) frames it, represents a “forceful renunciation of his Serbian identity and his

personal/family and collective/national history – of everything that defined him in his past existence”. The *matricide* he commits also applies to the fact that he has actually willfully decided, once he arrives in Canada, never to use his Serbian with anyone (Ibid; 60). Vladiv Glover (2010; 9) confirms this and writes that "the narrator tries to renounce his mother tongue (which means his psyche) and transfer his identity into a new language – English “. While he discerns the voices of his countrymen who converse in Serbian, he entirely refrains from talking to them. Nonetheless, he desperately yearns to hear their voices and repeatedly listens to their conversations “so that he could feel normal” (Gorup, 2005; 8).

[...] and the whole time I was tormented by the fear that a return to my native language, reinforced by the fact that it was precisely my mother who was speaking it, would bring me back to where I no longer wanted to return, especially now that, thanks to someone else’s language, I was finally beginning to feel like someone else (Albahari, 2001; 106).

He firmly believes that by acquiring a foreign language in Canada and by forgetting his own, he will then be able to forge a new identity he needs for the survival. However, such a clear-cut division he imagined would happen is unattainable. What he certainly does not comprehend is that “it is the sound and the melody of the mother language that is the only valuable thing” (Miljković, 2016; 58) in his life. When it comes to establishing a new identity in a foreign country, an issue of Canadian identity immediately arises, a subject which, according to some authors, is a concept that is rather ambiguous. Albahari (2019; 128) addresses the issue of Canadian identity by saying that such an identity is never truly a firm one. He adds that Canadian identity might be something that exists outside of human beings, as if a Canadian citizen is “always in search of himself” (Ibid; 128). Finally, Canadian identity is nothing more than a hyphen which connects two or more terms (Ibid; 129). The concept of identity thus comes as a challenge for the narrator since he himself is constantly in search of himself. Albahari (Ibid; 127) further tackles the theme of identity by saying that an immigrant, such as *Bait’s* protagonist, possesses in fact several identities but also strongly emphasizes that the author himself may very likely die in Canada and never become its citizen. In the novel, the protagonist articulates it in a similar manner:

In general, it often happens that I feel myself existing simultaneously in many places, in various times, and that I continually repeat the same events (Albahari, 2001; 27).

The narrator's sense of identity is not only shattered but looks almost irretrievably lost. This harsh assertion further indicates that the narrator not only loses the identity he had in Serbia, but also fails in acquiring a new one too. "To be exiled is to be from here and from elsewhere, to be at the same time inside and outside, settled in the insecurity of a painful and uneasy situation" (Lahens, 1992; 736). His identity crisis emerges the moment he arrived in Canada and causes him to feel lost, wandering from place to place without any sort of direction. Aleksić (2006; 56) indicates that his Jewish identity is ambiguous, as it is not one he never identified with, but rather the identity his mother enforced upon him. This is the reason why, upon his arrival, he never mentions or discusses his Jewish roots or expresses any inclination to join a Jewish community or even attend their gatherings and religious places.

His statement that he will "always be a European" (Albahari, 2001; 62) merely corroborates the fact that he cannot establish a new identity by forgetting and dismissing everything that is Serbian – the language, the people and the country itself. Smith (1996; 22) adds that not only is the loss of identity something that an exile has to endure but that he becomes unable to distinguish between the outside world and "his own body which now appears repugnant to him". A complete lack of identity immediately presents a challenging dilemma and raises the fundamental question of what one might ultimately become without it. The answer can be found in the narrator's life who somehow manages to find a way to live, despite the fact that his life is completely void of any essence and involves feelings of sadness, despair and loneliness, given that exile is always seen "as a kind of orphanhood" (Said, 2001; 144). The *orphanhood* he experiences not only leaves him homeless, but also dispossesses him of almost everything that constitutes a human being.

### **5. Mother's Voice, Donald and Writing as a Cure for Exile**

Although the narrator refuses to speak Serbian in Canada, he nevertheless repeatedly listens to the audiotapes of his mother, which, ironically, are recorded in Serbian. The tapes represent the life of his mother and it could be said that it is through them, through the voice of his dead mother, that he manages to survive and live. Her voice, which he listens to time and time again, constantly reminds him of his home, comfort, love and security he does not have in Canada, and as such comes to represent precisely those things he lacks – his homeland, his language, identity and a sense of belonging.

Furthermore, readers come to a conclusion that "the drama of the

narrator's exile is the drama of his psychological separation from the mother" (Miljković, 2016; 57). The mother therefore, that is his home, language and identity, not also symbolizes his exile, but also all of his struggles, traumas and hardships he suffers from in Calgary. Miljković (Ibid; 58) further adds that it is the mother's voice that is needed and essential for his exiled life in Canada. The tapes are thus, undoubtedly, one of the most valuable possessions he has. It is through them, Mijatović and Đurić (2018; 95) conclude, that he engages in the imaginary dialogue with his mother that he desperately needs.

The protagonist appears to be unable to stop listening to the tapes of his mother which also symbolizes his strong attachment to her, given that she embodies the protagonist's entire life. Moreover, "his relationship with the mother reveals that he is also trying to cut the psychological, national and cultural ties that hold him connected to his language and his country" (Miljković, 2016; 50). As the novel finishes, readers see that he cannot cut those ties, which serve as an obstacle to the protagonist's survival and adjustment. His mother's voice, along with her memory, has a vital role in his life. Vladiv Glover (2010; 10) confirms this by saying that the connection with his mother is subconscious and complete and that she symbolizes his entire personal and national identity. Although Lopičić and Kostić (2014; 232) write that "the mother embodying the motherland and speaking the mother tongue now stands in the way of her son moving on in a new cultural environment and experiencing an identity shift", her presence through the tapes is of the utmost importance. Her voice not only reminds him of her but also of his Serbian language, his people and his hometown, Zemun. Her voice, in fact, is "the narrator's subconsciousness" (Vladiv Glover, 2010; 4). Having the tapes at his disposal, the narrator can decide whether he wants to live his life in Canada in the present or dwell in the past. By clicking the on and off button on the tape recorder, he is the one who is in control and can limit the mother's presence in his life. "The Mother's voice is passive, non-discursive, almost literally 'frozen' as a symbol (a symbol of the subconscious, etc.), suspended in time and serves merely as a trigger for the 'loud' reflections of the son-narrator" (Vladiv Glover, 2010; 12).

Donald, his only Canadian friend, has the role of an intermediary, helping him during the period of adaptation he is going through it in Canada. He represents the protagonist's need to have company, to belong somewhere all with the purpose of not being alone. Despite all the differences between them, Donald offers him a temporary refuge from exile. The protagonist claims: "In short, Donald was, and is, my gardener. If not for him, I would have wilted long ago" (Albahari, 2001; 63). Donald therefore, along with the mother's voice, functions as a cure

for the protagonist's state of exile. Mijatović and Đurić (2018; 87) emphasize that Donald, on the one hand, belongs to the world of the semi-present whereas his mother, on the other, comes from the semi-past but with a constant reappearance in the narrator's present through the audiotapes. Donald also functions as a foil to the narrator, as Melnyk and Coates (2017; 100) point out, although not purposefully, in adapting to his new cultural surrounding. In the entangled world where the protagonist faces homeland and language related issues, where he repeatedly experiences some sort of spiritual death, Donald offers a glimmer of hope. Without him, he would simply wither away and become a ghost-like image of a man who can make no sense of his life. Donald, in fact, represents a stark contrast to the protagonist. Whereas he, as a Canadian, easily and naturally adjusts to the Canadian society and life, the protagonist struggles with exile, loss and displacement wherever he goes. Donald thus, having somewhat stable and secure life and possessing moral strength, serves to highlight the narrator's moral weakness, his degeneration and vulnerability, but also his dependence on a man with whom he has almost nothing in common.

Apart from the mother and Donald, writing too represents a unique cure for the protagonist. Many literary critics have discussed this particular segment of exile which, according to them, seems to be a singular experience for all exiles. Boym (2001; 252) writes that "perhaps the only cure or temporary relief of the symptoms of homesickness can be found in aesthetic therapy as proposed by some exiled artists and writers". The narrator is, throughout the novel, engaged in writing a novel about his life in Canada, the activity which makes him think less about the quality of the life he leads. Said (2001; 144) expands on this topic as well and claims that "much of the exile's life is taken up with compensating for disorienting loss by creating a new world to rule. It is not surprising that so many exiles seem to be novelists, chess players, political activists, and intellectuals". *Bait's* narrator is not an exception to this. Writing a novel is his compensation for a myriad of losses and his way of dealing with exile. The act of writing is his own defense mechanism established as a cure for his exile and it does help him with that, at least for a certain period of time. His writing indeed is a cure for everything as it "can make up for every loss and somehow bring back the mother, the country and the language, and eventually fill the empty shell" (Milutinović, 2005; 15). The language he uses for the book he writes is, not surprisingly, Serbian. The novel thus constantly brings him back to the past and serves as a proof that he cannot leave it behind him. Therefore, the writing process is an indispensable part of his life, "a means of survival" (Gorup, 2005; 13) which makes him oblivious of all

the obstacles and difficulties he has to cope with every day. It is an essential, lifesaving activity that occupies his mind and heals his heart, now already broken by the losses he can never atone for.

### 6. Conclusion

The ending of the novel reveals that the protagonist cannot simply forget his old country and continue with his life. The scenario he would like to have happened – “Exit Mother and enter Donald; that’s how it would be written in a play if all this were a stage performance and not a real life” (Albahari, 2001; 108) – can never take place. The process of adaptation is far more complex than that. Boym’s words that exile *looks better on paper than it does in life* now appear to be truer than ever. The mother figure emerges as a metaphor for all of his roots, embodying his identity, language and country. She stands as a constant reminder of the place he left, the country he loved, the language he could not forget and the people he could claim as his own. The loss of his mother therefore is felt not merely physically, but also symbolically, because her loss leaves the void in the narrator’s life.

Apart from the mother figure, writing too, in the narrator’s own case, efficiently served its purpose in the novel. It has helped him with his daily struggles, easing his traumas and most importantly, helping him forget, at least temporarily, about the dreadful Canadian present that surrounds him. Writing offers him an escape into a world of his own. In writing, he is the one who has control over the narrative, over the beginning and ending. It becomes a place of refuge for him where the losses of his mother, his homeland, his identity and language are felt less acutely.

The act of writing thus, metaphorically, becomes some sort of shelter where the narrator can protect himself from the struggles of exile. Said (1993; 120) defines it in the following words: “For a man who no longer has a homeland, writing becomes a place to live”. Writing, in fact, is the true definition of homeland for the narrator. Albahari’s narrator, while talking about the book he wrote and sent to Donald to read, added: “I have relinquished an entire possible life into his hands” (Albahari, 2001; 108). His book therefore has now become not only his homeland but everything to him.

It can be therefore concluded that literature, in *Bait*, has the power to heal the difficult ordeals of exile and somehow lessen the burden which seems to threaten an exile’s entire existence. Literature offers a new world, a different perspective where writers can have the freedom not only to express themselves however they want but also to save themselves from whichever they are suffering from. This is particularly important for the writers in exile as they can find their refuge in written

words which carry such a heavy burden. However, one must never forget that in exile “the hurt heart heals, but the healed heart still hurts” (Gass, 1991; 98).

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### ЕГИЛ И ГУБИТАК У РОМАНУ ДАВИДА АЛБАХАРИЈА МАМАЦ

Главни лик романа Давида Алабахарија *Мамац* напушта Србију и бежи у Канаду где покушава да изнова започне свој живот. Приповедач је сам али и усамљен, тужан, забринут и потпуно отуђен од своје нове околине, језика, културе и људи. Рад ће примарно бити заснован на дефиницијама и значењима егила које су дали Едвард Саид (2001) и Светлана Бојм (2001), а у којима обоје препознају губитак као његов фундаментални део. Овај рад има за циљ да покаже комплексност губитка у оквиру егила, као и начине на које се он може превазићи. Живот приповедача у роману испуњен је различитим губицима – губитак своје земље, језика, својих људи, идентитета и осећаја припадности. Упркос свим обећањима доброг живота које Канада наизглед нуди приповедачу романа, Албахари га представља као човека који пати и који се очајнички труди да се прилагоди свему ономе што Канада представља. Рад ће се фокусирати на то како приповедач превазилази своју отуђеност и покушава да оформи свој нови идентитет у новој земљи док се бори са тугом и отуђеношћу својевољног егила.

**Кључне речи:** Албахари, егил, губитак, земља, језик, отуђеност, идентитет.

## THE MANY TURNS OF THE SCREW: THE INHERENT AMBIGUITY OF HENRY JAMES'S *THE TURN OF THE SCREW*

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**Abstract:** Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw* (1898) is perceived as one of his most controversial pieces of literature due to the variety of critical readings that it has generated since its publication in 1898. Readings of the story range from treating it as a Gothic ghost story dealing with the age-old Manichean battle of good versus evil to psychoanalytical examination of its protagonist's experience. This variety has led to later readings that instead of insisting on a single, straightforward interpretation, attempted to explore the inherent ambiguity of the text that has resulted in such diverse readings. Since this ambiguity could be attributed to James's awareness of his readers' experience of the novella, this study primarily approaches the text using Wolfgang Iser's reader-oriented approach. In doing so, this research explores the way James's narrative technique generates indeterminacy and affects the reading process in a way to resist any attempt at a fully coherent interpretation.

**Keywords:** ambiguity, frame narrative, Henry James, reader response theory, repertoire, *The Turn of the Screw*, Wolfgang Iser

### 1. Introduction: The Question of the Reader in *The Turn of the Screw*

In his preface to the 1908 edition of *The Turn of the Screw*, Henry James highlights the significance of the reader's experience as the recipient of his tale:

Only make the reader's general vision of evil intense enough, I said to myself – and that already is a charming job – and his own experience, his own imagination, his own sympathy (with the children) and horror (of their false friends) will supply him quite sufficiently with all the particulars. Make him *think* the evil, make him think it for himself, and you are released from weak specifications. (123)

It is precisely such an awareness of his text's reader, as well as James's insistence on affecting the reader's experience, that makes *The Turn of the Screw* such a controversial piece of literary prose. This deliberate complexity and ambiguity in James's prose has long been the subject of discussion in literary scholarship, generating the term "Jamesian ambiguity" as an "uncontested critical category" among James critics (Sussman, 2014; 1). For instance, Rebekah Scott, in her "'The Dreadful Done': Henry James's Style of Abstraction," explores James's style of deliberate textual complexity and believes James practices a style of "literary abstractionism" that, not unlike painterly abstraction, it is "heavily invested in 'implication' – as 'the fact of being implied or involved, without being plainly expressed'" (2021; 942, 944). Garry L. Hagberg also asserts that while James did not "[want] a blurred, over-general, imprecise picture" in his prose, he did not "want to erase ambiguity from a fuller conception of language" either (2020; 72). This deliberate ambiguity and textual complexity often complicate the relationship between the reader and the text, prompting readers to "become involved in second-degree gap-filling, mind-negotiating processes . . ." throughout their reading activity (Álvarez-Amorós, 2020; 101). As is shown by the aforementioned James scholars, such textual complexity and ambiguity are central features of James's prose.

This signature complexity and ambiguity of *The Turn of the Screw*, in particular, has prompted Wayne C. Booth to assert that the work has been "discussed more than any other modern story" (1995; 163). Booth begins his reader-response study of the text by observing that, contrary to many other significant works of literature, the readers of James's novella cannot even agree on the kind of story that they are confronted with: "I can think of no other work of art that has stimulated as many contradictory readings" (164). In the interest of simplification, Booth categorizes the different readings of James's text into three groups: straight, ironic, and what Booth terms the "mazed" readings of the text, which, he explains, are "the readings that see the story as itself rejecting any one interpretation" (ibid; 169). This study builds on Booth's ideas offered in the aforementioned study, particularly the "mazed" reading, and through a reader-response criticism of the work, focuses on the way Henry James produces indeterminacy through his narrative technique.

In Booth's classification of the text's diverse readings, the "straight" readers are those who take the governess's word at face value and approach the account as a ghost story. Therefore, their impression of the novella is "a horrifying story of how two utterly corrupt people return from the dead in the hope of possessing the souls of two helpless little children" (ibid; 169). "Ironic" readings, on the other hand, are those that

question the reliability of the narrator. Such readers scrutinize the text for subtle clues that point to the madness of the governess (*ibid*; 171), thus opening the door for more complex psychoanalytical approaches to the story. Such readings often build on James's own familiarity with the psychological research of his time as a way to promote such interpretations (Lind, 1970; 232). However, Booth maintains that both of these readings can ultimately be rebuffed. If a reader is to take the governess as trustworthy, the symptoms of her unreliability will soon surface as they go on reading. On the other hand, an ironic reading will be equally undermined as many of the facts in the story lend credibility to the governess's account, thereby increasing her reliability as a narrator. This is where Booth's "mazed" readers intervene; they are the ones that see the story's project as "ensuring the constant frustration of every interpreter; it leads readers a merry chase through one failed reading after another" (Booth, 1995; 173).

In these different readings of the story, the effect of the frame of the story on the reader could hardly be overemphasized. In exemplifying the "straight" readings, Booth points out how the readers that go down this route are those that take Douglas's assessment of the governess literally. To them, Douglas's positive judgment of her character gives the governess, and thus her story which follows the prologue, credibility (*ibid*; 169). The "ironic" readings, on the other hand, not only doubt the governess's trustworthiness but also Douglas's comments; it is not difficult to see the man's bias toward the governess and, consequently, to mistrust his judgment. The significance of the prologue and the level of complexity that it adds to the story has attracted the attention of several other critics as well. For instance, commenting on the narrative technique of Henry James, Sidney E. Lind points out that "[t]he 'frame' is contrived with such complexity and detail that it might nearly stand as a short story by itself, some three thousand words long, Douglas' tribute to the governess" (1970; 235). Michael J. H. Taylor (1982) even goes as far as devoting his entire analysis of the narrative to the unnamed narrator of the prologue, discussing the narrator's undetermined sex and its contribution to the overall ambiguity of the text. Much of the ambiguity of the text, which, according to Peter Beidler, prompted many contemporary critics to adopt "the postmodern 'we-can-have-it-both-ways' view" (1995; 135), stems from James's distinctive framing of the story by including the prologue. Therefore, studying not only the tale itself but also the frame narrative and its influence on the main tale can be illuminating in determining many aspects of the controversial ambiguity of the narrative.

## 2. A Gothic Tale or a Parody? Indeterminacy in the Governess's Tale

Wolfgang Iser's reader-response theory offers an apt framework for exploring the ambiguity of the text and its implications for the reader, since his phenomenological approach considers both the text and the reader, instead of focusing on either one of the two. In his seminal work, *The Implied Reader* (1974), Iser asserts that a literary work consists of two poles: the artistic one, which is the text as created by its author, and the aesthetic one, which refers to the realization of the text by the reader. According to Iser, it is the convergence between the two poles that brings the literary work to life (ibid; 274–275). Since the literary work is never equivalent to the text – the artistic pole – itself, there are certain unwritten elements in the text that prompt the reader to engage with it on a creative level (ibid; 275). It is precisely the unwritten components that constitute what Iser refers to as the “indeterminacy” or the “gaps” within the text, which stimulate the reader's imagination (ibid; 283). In *The Act of Reading* (1978), Iser further elaborates on his conceptualization of the reading process. Iser views the establishment of consistency as “essential to all comprehension” (ibid; 16). In a sense, readers search for consistency in texts in order to be able to grasp a text. However, as the reading process progresses, the reader “finds himself confronted with inconsistencies; the solution to the conflict lies in some idea of reconciliation which is not formulated by the text” (Act, 1978; 48). It is in this oscillating process of seeking consistency within a text and confronting inconsistencies, which restrict the reader's interpretation, that the aesthetic experience of the reader materializes. Thus, Iser's model would offer a suitable framework for Booth's “mazed” readers, who view *The Turn of the Screw's* resistance to one fixed interpretation as an inherent characteristic of the text itself.

The reconciliation that Iser offers as the solution to confronting inconsistencies lies in the convergence between the text and the reader, and he further explicates this process by expanding on his notion of the “repertoire” of the text. The repertoire refers to “all the familiar territory within the text” (Act, ibid; 69). Once the repertoire lays the foundation of what is familiar between the text and the reader, it is ultimately up to what Iser calls the “strategies,” which are the narrative or poetic techniques utilized in the text, to *defamiliarize* the familiar (Act, ibid, 87). What is important in Iser's model is that both the repertoire and the strategies are part of the schemata of the text itself. The text itself has properties that not only stimulate the reader's imaginative activity but also impose a limit on the unwritten implications that the reader can formulate.

In his discussion of the repertoire of the text, Iser posits that the familiar elements of a text “may be in the form of references to earlier works, or to social and historical norms, or to the whole culture from which the text has emerged” (*Act, ibid*; 69). In the different readings of *The Turn of the Screw*, the literary allusions to earlier Gothic works have not escaped the critics’ attention. Perhaps the most notable example is the second sentence of the fourth section of the novella: “Was there a ‘secret’ at Bly – a mystery of Udolpho or an insane, an unmentionable relative kept in unsuspected confinement?” (James, 1995; 39). The phrase “mystery of Udolpho” refers to one of the best-known classic Gothic novels by Anne Radcliffe published in 1794, and “an insane, an unmentionable relative kept in unsuspected confinement” is considered by several critics such as Oscar Cargill and Robert Kimbrough to be an allusion to *Jane Eyre* (1847) by Charlotte Brontë (Petry, 1983; 62). Iser points out that the literary allusions to a previous work not only serve to provide a referential context that is familiar to the reader but also, due to the fact that they are stripped of their original context, they can “offer a form of orientation by means of which the new meaning may perhaps be found” (1974; 79). In other words, a literary allusion has a definite meaning in its original context, but when it is removed from that context, it allows for new meanings to emerge. Iser offers the example of a parody as such literary allusion, stating that in a parody “the change of context results in a complete reversal of the original meaning” (*Act*, 1978; 93). This aligns well with Alice Hall Petry’s reading of *The Turn of the Screw* as a Jamesian parody intending to “undermin[e] the literary tradition of the plucky English governess” (1983; 61).

Petry begins her analysis of James’s parody of *Jane Eyre* by tracing the familiar ground that the two works cover:

I believe that the process of parodying *Jane Eyre* begins with the general story line of the two works: a young woman goes to a remote country estate to serve as governess. In each case, her immediate confidante and associate at the estate is a widow who functions as the house-keeper: Mrs. Fairfax and Mrs. Grose [...] . Each guardian is a man in early middle age who is understandably resentful about being forced into the role of surrogate father, in part apparently because each is something of a ladies’ man [...] (1983; 62–63)

These are a few examples of the similarities that Petry finds in the two works, the most important of which is in the behavior, personality, and the background of the governess and *Jane Eyre* themselves, which leads

Petry to conclude that “James expected his readers to perceive his governess as modeling herself upon Brontë’s heroine, and with lamentable consequences” (ibid; 64). Petry’s claim is important because it adds to the significance of the literary allusion that James consciously utilized here, not merely as a gimmick to attract the attention of the more literary reader, but as a significant element within the text with two important functions. First, it provides the familiar schemata for the reader, which starts the process of communication between the reader and the text. When the reader – albeit one who is familiar with Brontë’s most famous work, and Iser does point out that literary allusions as repertoire may not be familiar to all readers (Act, 1978; 81) – stumbles upon all these familiar elements from a previous work, they begin to see patterns of consistency which are essential to the process of communication between them and the text. However, the second function of literary allusions – which, in this case, are the elements from *Jane Eyre* – stems from their de pragmatization in a new context, that is, *The Turn of the Screw*. This de pragmatization, in Iser’s words, creates the indeterminacy that engages the reader creatively in the text: “The contemporary reader will find himself confronted with familiar conventions in an unfamiliar light, and, indeed, this is the situation that causes him to become involved in the process of building up the meaning of the work” (Act, 1978; 78). The meaning of the work, to a reader like Petry who reads the story as a parody of *Jane Eyre*, seems to lie in the distinction between fiction and reality:

That the readers of Brontë’s durable novel were somehow blurring the distinction between reality and fiction seems to have struck James’s fancy: and what better way to develop this bizarre notion than to write a parody in which the heroine confuses her own life with that of Brontë’s heroine and becomes, as it were, a flesh-and-blood parody of Jane – with horrible consequences? (1983; 62)

However, Petry is careful not to postulate that a parody was indeed James’s intention, asserting that *if it were*, “then it is a remarkably clever one [...]. if it has not been noticed for nearly ninety years” (ibid; 76). Whether Petry’s conclusion that James’s project in writing *The Turn of the Screw* was to parody *Jane Eyre* or not is not as important as her astute observation of the literary allusion’s function in generating this level of ambiguity, which, again aligns well with Booth’s “mazed” reading of the text.

### 3. A Second Turn of the Screw: Indeterminacy Generated by the Frame Narrative

Thanks to James's carefully worded diction and the unreliability of its narrator, the Governess's tale is a complex enough story in itself. However, the significance of the frame narrative in interpreting the Governess's story is hardly lost on the reader. The frame narrative is as important to the "straight" readers as it is to the "ironic" ones, and even more so to the "mazed" readers. Due to the intentional ambiguity of the text, which is a view that a "mazed" reader adopts, it is safe to suggest that a "straight" reader would find as much evidence in the prologue to support their reading of the main plot as a ghost story, as an "ironic" reading would highlight evidence confirming that the governess is unreliable. Here lies the relevance of James's narrative strategy, which, according to Iser, has the "defamiliarizing" function (*Act*, 1978, 87). Without the frame narrative, the main plot would lose not all but a significant portion of the ambiguity that makes it such a controversial piece of literature. The story, of course, as the previous section and its review of Petry's analysis indicate, could still be read as either a Gothic-inspired ghost story or a parody of it. However, without the prologue, one or two turns of the screw, specifically the existence of two *other* narrators and the very nature of the main plot as a written document, would be lost, and along with it, some of the evidence that supports either a "straight" or an "ironic" reading.

Before we meet the main narrator of the story, the Governess, James introduces us to two other narrators: the unnamed "I," who is a member of the group gathered around the fire to hear a ghost story, and Douglas, whose relationship to the Governess has not escaped the attention of many critics. In terms of this spin on the narrative, a "straight" reader would take Douglas's relationship with the Governess as a factor that lends the Governess's account credibility. The reader, in a sense, identifies with the unnamed narrator and becomes a member of the group gathered around the fire, ready to hear a ghost story. This is a familiar scene, part of the text's repertoire, in Iserian terms; not a social norm, perhaps, but a social practice that is familiar both to the readers of James's time and to the modern reader living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As the reader associates the scene with their own experience of such a gathering, they would feel that in hearing such a ghost story, they would be more prone to believing that it happened if its narrator vouches for its validity in the way that Douglas does in the narrative. Douglas tells his audience, the reader among them, that he himself knew the person to whom the harrowing events happened:

'She was a most charming person, but she was ten years

older than I. She was my sister's governess,' he quietly said. 'She was the most agreeable woman I've ever known in her position; she'd have been worthy of any whatever [...] we had, in her off-hours, some strolls and talks in the garden – talks in which she struck me as awfully clever and nice. Oh yes; don't grin: I liked her extremely and am glad to this day to think she liked me too. (James , 1995, 23)

The familiarity with which Douglas describes the governess could be quite reassuring to any listener. This is not merely a person whom Douglas knows, but he seems to have spent much time with her and even admits to liking her. His judgment of her character, that she “was the most agreeable woman [he has] ever known in her position” (James, *ibid*, 23), certainly affects the opinions that his listeners – and the reader – will form of the Governess. How could such an “agreeable” person be lying about what happened to her? An “ironic” reading of the text, however, would mistrust Douglas's words as much as it mistrusts the Governess's. Douglas clearly confesses to liking the Governess, characterizing her as “charming,” coupled with the fact that the ten-year age difference between him and the Governess serves to place him at a lower level of maturity and makes him more susceptible to her charms. In an “ironic” reading, his bias toward the Governess does not offer the same reassurance that it offers a “straight” reader.

While it seems that the “ironic” interpretation so far has prevailed, as it was mentioned before, James's intentionally ambiguous text does not allow for one interpretation to take over completely. A “straight” reader would be correct in pointing out that since the main story is a manuscript, and not Douglas's recollection of it, his bias toward the Governess does not affect the account at all. After all, right from the beginning, Douglas himself points out that the story is written, the manuscript being locked in a drawer, and that “it has not been out for years” (James, 1995, 22). The written state of the text is supposed to lend further credibility to the Governess's tale, and Douglas's comment that “it has not been out for years” serves to allay any doubt that it might have been subject to modifications. In her reading of *The Turn of the Screw* as an “Autospectrography,” in which she delves into the relationship between the autobiographical form and spectrality, Kalliopi Nikolopoulou further explores the reliability of the main narrative as a written text. She first points out that the governess initially recounts the events that happened to her to Douglas orally, and then she writes them down. Nikolopoulou then proceeds to point out: “One must ask why the governess even needed to write the manuscript after having told him

the story. Did the talking cure alone not work? Did it need a writing supplement? To some extent at least, writing guarantees for the future the permanence and sameness of the original [...]” (2005; 10).

For such a carefully crafted piece of literature, the significance of the unnamed narrator of the frame and the ambiguity he or she generates in the novella should not be overlooked. The unnamed figure is brought up in a different section of Nikolopoulou’s article, whose reading of the text can be characterized as what Booth calls a “mazed” reading. In fact, she is also concerned with the question of ambiguity, instead of imposing either an apparitionist – “straight” in Booth’s terms – or a hallucinationist – that is, “ironic” – interpretation upon the text: “What we are dealing with here is a question that has [...] more with the unreliability inherent in [the governess’s] mode of expression – the memoir. It is the unreliability of a genre based on the ambiguity of memory that James allegorizes” (2005; 10–11). The ambiguity of memory is a very important point here because, as Nikolopoulou also points out, the beginning paragraphs of both the governess’s tale and the framing prologue contain the word “remember” (Nikolopoulou, *ibid*; 8). The unnamed narrator starts his account as follows: “The story had held us, round the fire, sufficiently breathless, but except the obvious remark that it was gruesome, as on Christmas Eve in an old house a strange tale should essentially be, *I remember* (emphasis mine) no comment uttered [...]” (James, 1995; 21). It is, indeed, needless to say that the ambiguity of the frame’s narrator has no effect on the main plot because the narrator specifically points out that the account the reader is going to read is a transcript that the narrator has made of the manuscript in Douglas’s possession: “Let me say here distinctly, to have done with it, that this narrative, from an *exact* (emphasis mine) transcript of my own made much later, is what I shall presently give” (James, 2005; 24–25). James was certainly meticulous in emphasizing the written state of the main plot, appealing to the reader’s association of writing with permanence and sameness, and a “straight” reader would certainly take all the reassurances they need when approaching the story as a ghost story. However, what the “straight” reader may overlook is the fact that James takes away reassurances as soon as he gives them to the reader because, merely a few pages later, the opening sentence of the governess’s tale reads: “*I remember* (emphasis mine) the whole beginning as a succession of flights and drops, a little see-saw of the right throbs and the wrong” (*ibid*; 28). In fact, the phrase “I remember” is repeated throughout the novella in different pivotal moments. One instance is when the governess is going to ask Flora about the last governess: “I overtook her, *I remember*, on the staircase; we

went down together and at the bottom I detained her, holding her there with a hand on her arm” (James, 2005; 33). Another example happens during her first encounter with the ghost of Peter Quint in the third chapter: “It produced in me, this figure, in the clear twilight, *I remember* (emphasis mine), two distinct gasps of emotion [...]” (James, 2005; 39). James makes it quite clear that this is not a case of what Samuel Richardson terms “writing to the moment” but rather a documentation of memory, which prompts Nikolopoulou to read the story as an autobiography and to explore the unreliability of the genre as James allegorizes in the novella.

The intentional ambiguity of the novella can now be identified in the relationship between the main narrative and the framing prologue. It is true that the main narrative does contain references to its written state, as we see that in describing the first encounter with the ghost, the governess writes, “I can hear again, as *I write* (emphasis mine), the intense hush in which the sounds of evening dropped” (James, *ibid*; 38). However, James seems to have felt the need to add a prologue to the story that further emphasized its written state by clearly describing its form as a manuscript being read aloud to a group of people and also by including Douglas’s comments on the governess to influence the audience’s opinion, including the reader’s. On the other hand, James also includes several references to the governess’s mode of expression that increased the unreliability of her written words, in a way undermining the prologue’s attempt at appealing to writing’s association with permanence and reliability. However, James is careful not to affirm either position. The prologue explicitly confirms that the text is written and, therefore, reliable, but the emphasis on memory in the main narrative undermines that explicit confirmation. In a sense, the frame and the main narratives constantly undermine each other, and here lies the intentional ambiguity in the novella as a whole, which prompts the “mazed” readers to be able to interpret it both ways. In a sense, instead of an absolute interpretation, the “mazed” readers of James’s fiction “must accept an ‘absolute’ indeterminacy” (Wrethed, 2023; 91).

#### 4. James’s *Pharmakon*: Having it Both Ways

Out of all the similarities between *Jane Eyre* and *The Turn of the Screw*, a few of which were briefly mentioned in reference to Petry’s article in the second section, the autobiographical form of both is of interest here because a comparison between the two showcases James’s complex literary technique. The eponymous protagonist of *Jane Eyre* is writing her account to an audience, whom she occasionally addresses as the

“reader,” and when doing so, she attempts to add certain details to her narrative that correct the reader’s perception or more clearly communicate her own feelings. A number of these instances are as follows: “Reader, though I look comfortably accommodated, I am not very tranquil in my mind” (Brontë, 2000; 79); “And was Mr. Rochester now ugly in my eyes? No, reader. Gratitude, and many associations, all pleasurable and genial, made his face the object I best liked to see” (Brontë, *ibid*; 125); and “Gentle reader, may you never feel what I then felt! May your eyes never shed such stormy, scalding, heart-wrung tears as poured from mine” (Brontë, *ibid*; 274). As demonstrated, such addresses are written in such a way as to make the reader feel as if they were the immediate audience of Jane Eyre’s account and the bond between the two is further solidified with the intimate manner in which Jane appeals to the reader’s emotions and attempts to demystify any confusion. James also presents the account of the governess in the form of an autobiography, but instead of feigning intimacy, James’s project seems to be to make the reader realize just how far removed they are from the original account. Nikolopoulou’s elaboration on James’s convoluted technique can be illuminating here:

the governess first narrated the story to Douglas, then she sent it to him in manuscript form, which he kept secretly for forty years in a drawer, which he then read to a circle of friends, which he handed down to the general narrator, who then copied it, and then rewrote it in its current version, attaching a prologue to it. This is not just a modernist exercise in self-reflection and ironic *mise-en-abîme*; it looks like a senseless children’s rhyme. (2005; 13)

The framing situation is so deliberately complex that, to borrow Petry’s interpretation of the novella, it seems to be parodying *Jane Eyre*’s technique. If Jane Eyre’s intimate way of addressing her reader is an attempt both at making the account easier to digest and at taking the reader’s understanding into consideration, James’s framing device seems to be designed to alienate the reader, reminding them that they are so removed from the original account that any attempt at fully understanding it is futile. Shoshana Felman’s deconstructive reading of *The Turn of the Screw* is in line with this reading, as it views the readers’ desire to arrive at one clear interpretation of the story to be unavailing: “The question, therefore, can no longer be simply to decide whether in effect the ‘Freudian’ reading is true or false, correct or incorrect. It can be both at the same time” (Felman, 1977; 117). She asserts that any reading of the narrative should have less to do with

fixing its meaning and resolving its ambiguity and more with “[understanding] the necessity and the rhetorical functioning of the textual ambiguity” (ibid; 119).

As previously elaborated, much of the textual ambiguity of the narrative owes to the story’s status as a written text and the frame’s reminder as to how removed the reader is from its origin: not only is the transcript we are reading a copy of another manuscript, but the author of the account, the Governess, is dead; the written text is cut off from its origin, or in Platonic terms, orphaned. In his deconstruction of Plato’s notion of writing in “Plato’s Pharmacy,” Jacques Derrida elaborates on the notion of writing as an orphan. In dealing with Plato’s dialogue *Phaedrus*, Derrida dedicates a large section of his essay to the myth of Theuth, who was an ancient Egyptian deity associated with writing, and Thamus, the King of all Egypt (Derrida, 1981; 75). Theuth’s project in visiting Thamus is to present his arts, including writing, which he claims can be “a recipe (*pharmakon*) for both memory and wisdom” (qtd. in Derrida, ibid; 75). Thamus – who represents Ammon, the King of the Gods – experiences this *pharmakon* as a product and passes judgment on it from a position of authority similar to that of a father. Derrida elaborates that the position and power of a king are associated with speaking: “He speaks, he says, he dictates, and his word suffices,” and thus, through the Platonic association between the figures of the god, the king, and the father, the power of speech is assigned to the parental position (ibid; 76). Derrida further elaborates that the speaking subject would be the father of speech, and that speech without the father, is nothing but writing (ibid; 77). Therefore, in Thamus’s rejection of Theuth’s invention, which is writing or *pharmakon*, Derrida arrives at the Platonic association of writing with orphanhood. If speaking is indicative of the presence of the father, writing signifies his absence: “another thing held against the invention of the *pharmakon* is that it substitutes the breathless sign for the living voice, claims to do without the father (who is both living and life-giving) of *logos*, and can no more answer for itself than a sculpture or inanimate painting, etc.” (Derrida, ibid; 91–92). When Theuth presents his invention – that is, writing – he presents it as a remedy for memory, which is in line with one meaning of *pharmakon*. However, the king’s rejection is predicated upon his presupposition that the effect of writing can be reversed: it can worsen the memory, thus arriving at another meaning of *pharmakon*: poison (Derrida, ibid; 97–98). In Thamus’s eyes, as well as in Plato’s, the *pharmakon* or writing, because of the absence of its father, can only give people a semblance of wisdom and not true wisdom: “Thanks to you and your invention, your pupils will be widely read without benefit

of a teacher's instruction" (qtd. in Derrida, *ibid*; 102).

It merits attention to trace the aforementioned Platonic ideas in James's *The Turn of the Screw*. The choice of presenting the governess's story as a written instead of a spoken one opens up new instances of ambiguity because for Plato, the phonic signifier, speech, is close to the signified *eidōs*, but the graphic signifier or writing is merely the signifier of the phonic signifier, the imitation of another imitation. Therefore, "it falls outside of life" because it is no longer in living proximity to *eidōs* (Derrida, *ibid*; 109–110). In *The Turn of the Screw*, the very writer of the account is dead, and the reader does not even get to read her own manuscript but the first narrator's. In spite of the narrator's claim that it is the same account as the original manuscript, it is still an imitation of an imitation, and the origin, the Governess, is not present to clarify any parts of it. James's technique in presenting the story as a memoir is not new, as was seen in the *Jane Eyre* parallels, but in presenting the story as a transcript of a manuscript written by a woman who has been dead for a while, James goes out of his way to reinforce the detachment of the Governess's tale from its origin. Indeed, *Jane Eyre*'s account is also written and thus, orphaned, giving an "ironic" reader plenty of reasons to question the reliability of the narrator and the events. However, James's technique is deliberately convoluted, intentionally drawing the reader's attention to the written status of the text. It is not there merely for the reader to question, which is the tendency of "ironic" readers, but to explore, which is in line with Booth's "mazed" readings.

It is important to point out that in deconstructing the Platonic conceptions of writing, Derrida points to the ambiguity in the meaning of *pharmakon*, which is reduced by Plato to one side of a definite binary opposition: "It is precisely this ambiguity that Plato [...] attempts to master, to dominate by inserting its definition into simple, clear-cut oppositions" (Derrida, *ibid*; 103). *Pharmakon* could be both a remedy and a poison to memory, but Plato reduces this ambiguity to only one side. Writing, to Plato, is considered bad, external to memory, indicative of absence rather than presence, and thus orphaned as opposed to the merits of speech, its closeness to *eidōs*, and its presence. However, Derrida suggests that it is this very ambiguity in *pharmakon* that enables these systems of opposition to work: "it can only be out of something like writing – or the *pharmakon* – that the strange difference between inside and outside can spring" and, as a result, it "cannot be subsumed under concepts whose contours it draws" (*ibid*; 103). And writing, as suggested by Derrida in an earlier section of *Plato's Pharmacy*, is shrouded in the same suspicions that *pharmakon* is surrounded with:

"Books, the dead and rigid knowledge shut up in *biblia*, piles of histories, nomenclatures, recipes and formulas learned by heart, all this is as foreign to living knowledge and dialectics as the *pharmakon* is to medical science" (ibid; 73). And it is precisely this ambiguity that James invokes in writing *The Turn of the Screw*, and his technique of distancing the original events of the story from the reader further solidifies the text's function as a *pharmakon*; the text can act as both a remedy to the reader's interpretation of events, reinforcing it, or weaken it as a poison. This is why many postmodern critics "felt increasingly uncomfortable asking 'either-or' questions about this story. The only 'correct' answer is likely to be 'both' or 'we cannot decide'" (Beidler, 1995;136).

In short, the uniqueness of James's *The Turn of the Screw* lies not in the fact that it is ambiguous and thus open to interpretation; in fact, many literary texts, such as *Jane Eyre*, have certain levels of ambiguity that, as Iser has illustrated, prompt the reader into a consistency-seeking endeavor and results in various interpretations. However, most texts are not so deliberately ambiguous as James's as to actively resist any one interpretation. A text such as *Jane Eyre* can be read in a number of ways and evidence can be found within the text to support each of them. However, in James's text, it seems that each detail is implemented to resist any attempt at wringing a coherent meaning out of it. In the end, as Booth believes none of the "straight," "ironic," or even "mazed" readings can truly triumph over the others (1995; 176). However, as this study has hopefully demonstrated, any reader of *The Turn of the Screw* must be as vigilant about the inherent ambiguity of the text and how it affects their experience and interpretation, as James was while writing it.

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#### **DE NOMBREUX TOURS D'ECROU: L'AMBIGUÏTÉ INHERENTE DANS LE TOUR D'ECROU D'HENRY JAMES**

*Le Tour d'écrou* d'Henry James (1898) est considéré comme l'une des œuvres littéraires les plus controversées en raison de la variété des lectures critiques qu'il a suscitées depuis sa publication en 1898. Les lectures de cette histoire vont de la considérer comme une histoire de fantôme gothique abordant le bon vieux bataille manichéenne du bien contre le mal à un examen psychanalytique de l'expérience de son protagoniste. Cette variété a conduit à des lectures ultérieures qui, au lieu d'insister sur une interprétation unique et directe, ont tenté d'explorer l'ambiguïté inhérente du texte qui a donné lieu à des lectures

si diverses. Étant donné que cette ambiguïté pourrait être attribuée au fait que James était conscient de l'expérience de ses lecteurs de la nouvelle, cette étude aborde principalement le texte en utilisant l'approche axée sur le lecteur de Wolfgang Iser. Ce faisant, cette recherche explore la manière dont la technique narrative de James génère de l'indétermination et affecte le processus de lecture de manière à résister à toute tentative d'interprétation entièrement cohérente.

**Keywords:** ambiguïté, Henry James, théorie de la réponse du lecteur, répertoire, Le Tour d'écrou, Wolfgang Iser

## AN ECO-CRITICAL APPROACH TO HEMINGWAY'S A FAREWELL TO ARMS: A STUDY OF CULTURE-NATURE NATURE DICHOTOMY

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**Abstract:** Drawing upon the culture/nature dichotomy as the basic analytical framework of ecocriticism, and by employing a descriptive-analytical method, this research investigates the consequences of anthropocentric warfare on the natural world, and its impact on the man-nature relationship within the narrative of *A Farewell to Arms*. It further explores the evolution of the hero-narrator's attitude, demonstrating his growing detachment from the culture of war towards a profound connection to the natural world. Henry's ultimate escape, with his beloved, from war-torn Italy to the sanctuary of Switzerland represents the physical embodiment of his ecological transformation. The binary opposition of nature and culture is also employed to gauge the characters' alignment with their inner nature versus their attachment to cultural codes. The author artfully challenges the culture of war that often justifies violence and expansionism in the name of patriotism and 'holy defense'. He suggests that the world should bid farewell to war and embrace the natural world, cultivating the seeds of love within the realm of human nature.

**Keywords:** Ernest Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, eco-criticism, culture/nature dichotomy, ecological baptism

### 1. Introduction

In the early nineteenth century, a vivid demarcation emerged between the 'natural' and the 'human' sciences. This division of knowledge, as described by Bruno Latour, is central to what he terms the 'Modern Constitution', which he believes "has sundered the human from the non-human realm, while defining society's relationship to nature predominantly in terms of mastery and possession" (qtd. in Rigby 152).

Renowned philosopher, Martin Heidegger, blames Socratic philosophy "for constructing a rational subject that approaches the natural world as an object that serves a purely utilitarian purpose, a

process that culminates (or reaches a disturbing nadir) in the Cartesian split (of mind and body)" (qtd. in Borlik 9). Only recently have cultural and literary theorists, influenced by post-humanist scholarship, dared to cross the divide and bridge the gap, establishing interdisciplinary fields of studies to gain a deeper understanding of our time's complex philosophical, cultural, social, and political issues. Examples of these synergistic interactions between the 'human' and the 'natural' sciences include ecocriticism, ecofeminism, and postcolonial ecocriticism.

William Rueckert is known to be the first to use the term 'ecocriticism' in his 1978 paper *Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism*. By challenging the lines between binary oppositions and moving beyond the limitations of modernism and humanism, ecocriticism seeks to regain a sense of the interconnectedness of nature and culture. Of course, as a relatively recent approach to the study of literature, it remains open to debate. Arne Naess, a Norwegian philosopher, originated the term 'deep ecology' in his 1974 paper, *The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement*, as a response to anthropocentrism that underlies contemporary models of existence and lifestyles. He made great contributions to the richness of ecocriticism by laying out some basic principles of deep ecology, relevant among them to our analysis is the principle of "refusing excessive human interference with the nonhuman, as it worsens ecological conditions" (97). Based on the checklist provided by another eminent ecocritic, Lawrence Buell, ecologically-oriented literature should exhibit all, or some of, the following features:

- 1 The nonhuman environment is present not merely as a framing device but as presence that suggests that human history is implicated in natural history.
1. The human interest is not understood to be the only legitimate interest.
2. Human accountability to the environment is part of the text's ethical framework.
3. Some sense of the environment as a process rather than as a constant or a given is at least implicit in the text (7-8).

In recent decades, nearly every academic field of study has taken it upon themselves to actively play a constructive role in tackling global environmental degradation. As can be deduced from the above principles and definitions, ecocriticism is a literary response to a range of growing ecological issues of the late 20th century. As a critique of

anthropocentric modes of existence, it is committed to protecting the natural world by actively raising awareness of cultural and philosophical factors that are chiefly responsible for the status quo. "All ecological criticism shares the fundamental premise that human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it. Ecocriticism takes as its subject the interconnections between nature and culture" (Glotfelty xix). By showing the interconnectedness of human culture and nature, authors try to garner public support for the preservation of the natural environment and harmonious coexistence between human and nonhuman, recognizing the imbalanced relationship as the root cause of contemporary ecological crises. Thus, "creative writers, with ecological thoughts, by redefining the concept of nature in their artistic creations, try to highlight humanity's insignificant place on the extensive map of the universe" (Niazi 75). Since it would be impossible to explore complex aspects of the culture-nature relationships in the novel under examination by applying a single theoretical framework, the present research freely draws upon various theoretical concepts and principles of ecocriticism that are relevant to the purview of the study, providing a wider avenue for exploration of the novel's concealed green layers.

## 2. Literature Review

Ernest Hemingway, as one of the greatest and most influential American literary figures of the twentieth century, has won more critical acclaim than any one of his contemporaries. The critical reception of his work has grown considerably over decades with the deepening interest in ecocriticism across American studies. Most of Hemingway's novels as well as short stories exhibit great potentials for an eco-critical study. G. Srilathe (2022) observes that although Hemingway was an unabashed hunter and fisher, he was also a conservationist and conveyed this attitude in many of his works. Having investigated his first forty-nine short stories, she concludes that twenty-two of them show ecological concerns in some form or the other.

Hemingway received favorable critical reception for his celebrated novel *A Farewell to Arms* by the critics as well as general reading public, for offering a realistic depiction of War and simultaneously presenting the love story of Frederick Henry and Catherine Barkley, the hero and heroine. The novel is mainly the tale of Henry, a young American in charge of an ambulance unit on the Italian front in the First World War, and his passionate relationship with a beautiful English nurse. Set against the backdrop of the brutal realities of war, the novel portrays the pain of combat and the love between the protagonists caught in its

inexorable sweep. Henry, the protagonist-narrator, struggling to overcome his existential crisis, undergoes a fundamental transformation from an initially naïve war supporter to a mature antiwar lover. The mainstream critiques of the novel have mainly focused on the thematic dichotomy of war and love and the way these dimensions are reflected in its protagonist. However, there are those who by moving beyond these binaries have explored other aspects of the novel. Alexandru Oravitan (2014), for example, by analyzing the protagonist's hesitations between tending to personal happiness gained through love and the idea of doing his duty on the battlefield has highlighted an underlying philosophical dimension in the novel, namely a struggle for self-knowledge. He concludes that gaining self-knowledge and, thus, attempting to make a change in one's life, proves to have a very high price. By applying Judith Butler's theory of "gender as performance", Victoria Addis (2018), demonstrates how the novel challenges the traditional masculine gender role through Ferederick's doomed search for an ideal of masculinity, which can no longer exist. The landscapes operating symbolically and psychologically reveal aspects of Ferederick's characterization, thoughts and emotions. Faced with the overwhelming realities of war, Addis concludes, Ferederick's patriarchal outlooks and the landscapes it engenders cannot hold. In losing this perspective, the immateriality of the various performances of gender roles in the narrative is revealed, culminating in the tragic irony of the ending. Lay Sion's (2022) ecological gothic reading of *A Farewell to Arms* is a commendable effort to interpret various elements in the novel including the rotten food, the disjointed bodies, the broken landscapes, and the gothic rain as counter-narratives against the narratives of war, a resistance against the industrial, anthropocentric warfare. However, while extensive critical analyses of the novel exist, an eco-critical study of this celebrated work that would exclusively devote itself to the exploration of the relationship between culture and nature within the narrative has not been conducted so far. Therefore, the researcher takes it upon himself to make a fresh reading of the novel by applying the culture-nature dichotomy as a principle analytical framework of ecocriticism, aiming to uncover its hidden green themes.

### 3. Methodology

This research broadens the concept of "nature" to encompass aspects of human nature inherent in the natural world. Drawing upon the culture/nature dichotomy as well as other principles of ecocriticism pertinent to the purview of our study, and by employing a descriptive-analytical method, the present research first demonstrates the

consequences of modern warfare on the natural world, emphasizing its impact on man-nature relation, as it is depicted in the narrative. Then, it explores the protagonist's ecological development, tracing his journey, or rather his escape, from the war-ridden landscape of Italy to the serene natural world in Switzerland. The binary opposition of culture/nature is also employed for characters' evaluation. Finally, in the concluding part, Hemingway's particular perspective on the theme of culture-nature relationship will be explored.

#### **4. Discussion**

German social theorists Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (1979) believe that domination over nature via military conflict is the outcome of what they term 'the dialectic of enlightenment', which they believe has generated a whole new order of barbarism in Europe (the reference is to the second world war). Hemingway's novel, likewise, portrays the modern anthropocentric warfare over possession of land, mountains, jungles, rivers...., demonstrating the stark tension between anthropocentric culture and natural world. The novel commences with a vivid description of a beautiful landscape:

In the late summer of that year we lived in a house in a village that looked across the river and the plain to the mountains. In the bed of the river there were pebbles and boulders, dry and white in the sun, and the water was clear and swiftly moving and blue in the channels. (3)

Soon after, the landscape is tarnished with the passage of troops through the village carrying heavy logistics and turning it into a dusty, gloomy environment: "Troops went by the house and down the road and the dust they raised powdered the leaves of the trees. The trunks of the trees were too dusty and the leaves fell early that year...." (3). The melancholic scene, with the leaves of trees falling prematurely, is foregrounded by the contrast that is made between the army, as the embodiment of war culture, and that of nature symbolized by the landscape. The leaves falling prematurely can metaphorically represent soldiers facing premature death. The description mirrors the damaging effects of military presence on natural elements, counter to Naess's principle of "refusing excessive human interference with the nonhuman, as it worsens ecological conditions" (97). The advance of Italian military resulting in a massive deforestation, as described below, emphatically demonstrates the adverse impact of armed conflict on the natural world.

The whole thing going well on the Carso made the fall very different from last fall.... The forest of oak trees on the mountain beyond the town was gone. The forest had been green in the summer when we had come into the town but now there were the stumps and the broken trunks and the ground torn up.... (5-6)

However, the narrator remains insensitive to the extensive ecocide, focusing instead on the military success. Now, the Italian army rules the Carso and the only difference, what the author seems to imply, is that a whole ecocidal phenomenon has occurred and the beauty of the landscape vanished. Thus, from the outset of the novel, by employing symbolism and imagery, Hemingway highlights the tension between war and nature, setting the stage for a deeper exploration of the theme of human culture versus natural world throughout the tale.

#### **4.1. The Culturally-Oriented Narrator**

The narrator-hero of the story, Henry, is initially shown to be influenced by the propaganda of war, taking for granted the losses of both human and non-human elements. His account of seven thousand deaths is made with an impartial tone: "At the start of the winter came the permanent rain and with the rain came the cholera. But it was checked and, in the end, only seven thousand died of it in the army" (4). However, on the part of the author, the choice of words 'only seven thousand' is meant as an understatement, which indeed magnifies the scale of the calamity and reveals Henry's attitude. In the following year, the Italian army captures the strategic mountain of San Gabriele. The narrator, hailing the event a great success, tells us in an elated tone:

The next year there were many victories. The mountain that was beyond the valley and the hillside where the chestnut forest grew was captured and there were victories beyond the plain on the plateau to the south and we crossed the river in August.... Now the fighting was in the next mountain beyond and was not a mile away (5).

Later in the novel we are told that the Italians suffered heavy casualties while capturing such places: "The Italians lost one hundred and fifty thousand men on the Bainsizza plateau and on San Gabriele"(120), which further highlights the absurdity of military operation. Passini, the mechanic, while questioning the capture of mountains, has a strong point to make: "Did you see all the far mountains to-day? Do you think we could take all them too? .... what if

we take San Gabriele? What if we take the Carso and Molfalcone and Trieste? Where are we then?" (47). The questioning signifies the futility of military efforts to dominate the natural world. However, Henry's insistence on labeling the tragic event a triumph reinforces his culturally-oriented idea of "victory".

While the Italian officers suggest Henry to go visiting glamorous cities of Italy such as "Rome, Naples, Palermo, Sicily, and Capri" (7), the young priest asks him to go and see the village of Capracotta in the Abruzzi and stay with his family for a few days. The priest tells him: "You would like it and though it is cold it is clear and dry" (8). The officers, scoffing at the proposal, tell the priest: "He doesn't want to see peasants. Let him go to centers of culture and civilization" (8). The simplicity and clarity of the countryside contrast with the cities of Italy, ironically called "centers of culture and civilization", where indulgence in sensual pleasures is sought. An officer tells Henry: "I will give you the address of places in Naples. Beautiful young girls—accompanied by their mothers" (8). However, instead of going to the village of Capracotta "where it was clear cold and dry and the snow was dry and powdery and hare-tracks in the snow..." (12), he would go to "the smoke of cafes and nights when the room whirled and you needed to look at the wall to make it stop, nights in bed, drunk, when you knew that that was all there was" (13). Later, he tells us regretfully: "When the priest came to know about it I was disappointed and suddenly hurt that I had not gone to the Abruzzi. I myself felt as badly as he did and could not understand why I had not gone" (12). Henry's preference for "glamorous cities" over the simplicity and tranquility of countryside highlights his initial values and mindset.

#### **4.2. The Impact of War on Man-Nature Relation**

Hemingway uses nature symbolism to unveil the harrowing consequences of war. When the narrator reports on the death of seven thousand troops due to the rain, it may initially seem symbolic of death, but rain takes on a broader meaning in the context of war. Hemingway suggests that, due to the circumstances of war, soldiers are sometimes forced to drink contaminated water, effectively turning a vital element of nature into a fatal agent. Catherine's fear of the rain is also connected to the circumstances of the war. She tells Henry: "I'm afraid of the rain because sometimes I see me dead in it. And sometimes I see you dead in it" (114). Indeed, she associates rain drops with bombs falling during bombardments, turning a typically romantic element of nature into something dreadful in Catherine's traumatic mind. This mirrors Brucoli's idea when he says: "war takes the normal expectations of life

and turns them into their opposite" (146). Hemingway's description of the troops marching on the muddy road with bulging cartridge-boxes under their capes provides a telling example:

Their rifles were wet and under their capes the two leather cartridge-boxes on the front of the belts, gray leather boxes heavy with the packs of clips of thin long 6.5 mm. Cartridges, bulged forward under the capes so that the men, passing on the road, marched as though they were six months gone with child. (4)

What the troops carry is death. The image links pregnancy and death, emphasizing the reversal of natural order by war. This concept aligns with Glotfelty's premise of "interconnections between culture and nature, affecting it and affected by it (xix), where war distorts the relationship between the humans and the natural world, turning the ordinary into its opposite. This transformation is further echoed in Catherine's pregnancy, which also experiences a reversal of the natural order. Hemingway's narrative underlies the idea that war disrupts the harmony between the human and the natural world, leading to tragic consequences.

#### **4.3. The Role of Nature in the Novel**

Nature plays a dynamic role in Hemingway's novel. Rain and snow are capable of intervening in the war, bringing military operations to a standstill and effectively functioning as peacemakers. Henry gladly tells the major: "There will be no more offensive now that the snow has come" (7). Likewise, rain as a powerful agent is capable of getting the war to a stilled point. The major tells Henry:

-They say they are to attack but I can't believe it. It is too late.  
You saw the river?  
-Yes, it's high already.  
-I don't believe they will attack now that the rains have started (148-9).

Thus, natural elements actively intervene in the war, declaring ceasefire with their presence, although the strife of war still exists beneath. This effectively mirrors Kate Rigby's idea when he observes: "the natural world is no longer a passive recipient of human interventions and projections but an active participant in the formation and transformation of human culture and activities" (159).

The river, saving Henry's life when escaping from military execution, is another example of nature's positive and dynamic role. In

the nightmarish retreat Henry with many officers are arrested and taken to the river bank where they are casually questioned and put to death for treason. While standing in queue and witnessing the injustice done by the battle police, Henry suddenly rushes to Tagliamento River and dives into the water. The stream takes the hero away and saves his life. The symbolic significance of the scene is that of purification, and to use my own coinage, an 'ecological baptism', signifying Henry's rebirth into the natural world. He says: "Anger was washed away in the river along with any obligation" (208). Henry's jump into the river marks a crucial turning point in his development; running away from the clutches of the military to the embrace of nature.

Additionally, the wind suddenly turns favorably and facilitates Henry and Catherine's final escape to Switzerland in the cold rainy night, pushing their small boat forward at a pace needed to avoid Swiss's custom guards before the break of the day. This underscores the facilitating role of the wind, enabling Henry to evade prosecution.

#### **4.4. Culture/Nature dichotomy as a Basis for Characterization**

The binary opposition of culture/nature is employed for characters' evaluation, as they reveal various degrees of propensity towards the opposites. On the one hand, there is Frederick Henry and those officers who celebrate victory in the war. They align with the culture that attach fake values to victory and spread violence. In contrast, the priest, the ambulance drivers and mechanics such as Passini and Gordini display an antiwar stance and ask for peaceful coexistence that is compatible with the natural order. Perhaps, it is not coincidental that the officers who show proclivity for war are from the city, demonstrating higher degrees of cultural impact. While the priest and the like-minded soldiers who oppose the continuation of war come from the countryside, signifying the impact of environment on their world view.

Characters' various responses to cultural codes and social conventions also reveal levels of awareness of their inner nature that is inherent in the natural world. Henry, for instance, wishes to marry Catherine in the church in accordance with Christian tradition. Catherine, in contrast, rejects the need for a formal church wedding emphasizing that their love is the most crucial aspect of their relationship.

-We are married privately. You see, darling, it would mean everything to me if I had any religion.

-Then nothing worries you?

-Only being sent away from you. You're my religion (104).

Looking at their relationship from a naturalistic perspective, Catherine shows greater depth. Her metaphoric statement suggests that 'love' is all that matters in a relationship, and that their "marriage" has already been consecrated by love; no more a priest or church is needed for its further consecration. "We're really married. I couldn't be any more married" (103). Catherine's bitter experience of losing her fiancé in the war, while waiting for eight years, for the "right time" to marry has taught her to be true to her natural self, versus cultural self; 'right time' and 'marriage' being socio-cultural concepts. Her rejection of such formalities in favor of genuine love mirrors a deeper understanding of the triumph of nature over cultural norms.

#### **4.5. Narrative Structure: movement from culture towards nature**

The structure of the narrative in *A Farewell to Arms* reflects the protagonist's transformation from the culture of violence and meaningless sensuality to a deeper connection with nature and true love.

In book one, Henry is shown hailing the capture of mountains as a great success, despite massive human and non-human losses. As an American, he takes part in the Italian war for no specific reason. Catherine asks him why he volunteered, and the answer is: "I don't know. There isn't always an explanation for everything" (17). He drinks excessively and visits the officers' whorehouse, an establishment of modern war culture, frequently; "knowing that that was all there was" (13). However, behind that, there is a lack of genuine contentment and a feeling of revulsion. His regret about failing to visit the village of Capracotta, and instead going "to the smoke of cafes..." (13), bears testimony to the fact. The search for meaning in a culture that values violence and deems 'prostitution as civilization' leaves him spiritually unfulfilled. Having seen the void of devotion in Henry, the priest explains to him the love of God, but all in vain. The love story with Catherine is still at the level of appetite at the end of book one.

The second book, introduces a shift in Henry's attitude as he experiences genuine love with Catherine in Milan's hospital where he is admitted as a war patient. He displays unprecedented emotional reaction to meeting Catherine after a short gap. This is how he has expressed his feelings: "When I saw her, I was in love with her. Everything turned over inside of me.... I pulled her down and kissed her and felt her heart beating" (84). Here, Henry's love for Catherine undergoes a dramatic change; from a casual 'card game' to a serious 'heart game'. The scene marks his long transition from the culture of war that despises love to the world of nature that upholds it. The story

behind the love story is the quest for meaning and certitude in a world which seems to offer nothing of the sort. Despite the priest's efforts, Henry fails to make sense of the ambivalent cultural legacy of the West, the abstract God of Christianity. Catherine, on the contrast, offers Henry a taste of tangible true love; the selfless sort, which the priest talks about, but cannot provide. This is what she tells Henry: "I want what you want. There isn't any me anymore. Just what you want" (96). Henry's hunger for Catherine's affection goes to the extent that he is ready to spend his convalescent leave in the hospital room with her. Catherine, finding the idea silly, suggests him to pick a place and she would go with him, ready to sacrifice her job for their love. "If necessary, I'll simply leave" (123). Henry starts to understand the selflessness of love and moves toward a more authentic, nature-oriented way of life.

In the third book, Henry returns to the front reluctantly, and merely as a matter of duty. Questioning the very meaning of war, he tells the priest: "I don't believe in victory anymore" (161). And eventually, having acknowledged the hollowness of abstract concepts such as "the sacred soil", "sacrifice" and "glory" as motivating forces of the war propaganda, he makes this observation: "I had seen nothing sacred, and the things that were glorious had no glory and the sacrifices were like the stockyards in Chicago if nothing was done with the meat except to bury it" (165). This book marks significant events, including the nightmarish retreat of the Italian military, the execution of officers by the battle police; and above all, Henry's sole desire to get reunited with his beloved, all of which leading to Henry's complete break with the Italian army, and by extension, all armies in the world.

In the fourth book, having suffered a lot while escaping from the battlefield, Henry finally arrives in Milan. However, he has just "made a separate peace" (217) that he has to face prosecution for his desertion. After a reunion with his beloved, the couples take a perilous journey in the cold rainy winter night and cross the lake into Switzerland in a small boat.

In the fifth book, having eventually managed to reach Switzerland, Henry exhibits a great attitudinal transformation, seeking a simpler and natural life, away from the people and the war. He says contentedly: "We lived in a brown wooden house in the pine trees on the side of the mountains" (257). Here, the stunning beauty of Switzerland's mountains and the serenity they offer to the couples are contrasted with the mountains of Italy where the bloodshed still goes on. Whereas in Italy the armies go through massive losses trying to capture mountains, here in Switzerland the hero and heroine are captured by the captivating beauty of the mountains that offer safety and serenity. Nevertheless,

the narrative takes an unexpected turn at the end when Catherine's baby is stillborn and she dies of a fatal hemorrhage after the caesarian operation. Catherine's death serves as a reminder of Brucoli's significant quotation (146) about war's ability to upend the normal expectations of life. Despite this tragedy, Henry carries the impact of Catherine's love, undergoing a transition from the culture of war to a deeper connection with his true nature.

### **5. Conclusion**

Ernest Hemingway employs symbolism and imagery to demonstrate the extensive consequences of war on the natural world, highlighting the tension between culture and nature from the outset of the novel, and setting the stage for a deeper exploration of this theme throughout the tale. It is demonstrated that, by reversing the natural order, the war turns natural elements such as the rain into fatal agents; hence disrupting the man-nature relationship. However, in Hemingway's novel nature is not merely a passive setting for human action. It plays a dynamic and positive role by using its formidable forces such as the snow and the rain to bring military operations to a standstill, and effectively functioning as a peacemaker.

A culturally-oriented character; Fredrick Henry, our narrator, initially leads a life characterized by random and meaningless indulgence, "knowing that that was all there was" (13). He displays an impartial attitude toward the extensive ecocidal consequences of the war, reflecting a profound lack of ecological sensitivity. Instead of going to Capracotta, a village of natural beauty where the environment is described as "clear and dry" and spend his leave in the lap of nature, he prefers the dark and chaotic atmosphere of the cafes in the so-called "centers of culture and civilization". This preference signifies his alignment with a culture that, ironically, equates 'prostitution with civilization'.

Henry's transformation from this culture-centric outlook towards a more ecologically-oriented perspective starts with his deepening relationship with Catherine. His initial description of his casual love for Catherine as a "card game", gradually turns into a serious "heart game". Her love becomes the symbol of the untapped potentials inherent in the natural world, functioning as a catalyst for a significant shift in Henry's values. Having experienced the brutality of the war and deeply felt the magnetic pull of Catherine's affection, Henry begins losing faith in the armed conflict, and eventually bids farewell to the false ideals of a culture that regards violence as sacred. He says: "I had seen nothing sacred, and the things that were glorious had no glory and the sacrifices

were like the stockyards in Chicago if nothing was done with the meat except to bury it" (165). Henry's plunge into the river while escaping from the battle police can be interpreted as a metaphorical "ecological baptism", marking a crucial turning point in his development. The protagonist's final escape from the "butchers' land" to Switzerland represents the physical embodiment of his ecological transformation. It symbolizes the shift from the confines and chaos of "centers of culture and civilization" to seek refuge in nature's tranquility, reflecting the comprehensive theme of the tale- the movement from culture to nature.

Ernest Hemingway artistically challenges the foundations of anthropocentrism, built on misconceptions about human intelligence, by exposing the brutality and absurdity of modern warfare, and its disrupting impact on man-nature relationship. By the use of contrast and comparison, he points to the insignificant place of human (culture) on the massive map of the universe, picturing the armies as 'ant colonies' that attempt to conquer mountains of great magnitude. While the Italian army "very handsomely" capture towns such as Gorizia, its attempt to capture the extensive Alpine mountains, despite inflicting ecological damages, is bound to failure. The author, by demonstrating the anti-ecological aspects of war, suggests that the world should bid farewell to the war culture and embrace the natural world, cultivating the seeds of love within the realm of human nature.

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### خوانشی بوم‌گرایانه از رمان *خدا حافظی با اسلحه* اثر ارنست همینگوی بر اساس دوگانگی فرهنگ/طبیعت

**چکیده:** این پژوهش با خوانشی بوم‌گرایانه از رمان *خدا حافظی با اسلحه* اثر همینگوی، و با استفاده از مفاهیم دوگانه‌ی فرهنگ/طبیعت به عنوان چارچوب اصلی تحلیل در نقد بوم‌گرا، و نیز با روشی توصیفی-تحلیلی، سعی در نمایاندن پیامدهای جنگ بر دنیای طبیعی و تاثیر آن بر رابطه‌ی انسان و طبیعت دارد. سپس، به کشف تکامل نگرشی قهرمان داستان می‌پردازد، که با پس کشیدن از فرهنگ جنگ طلبی و عمیق‌تر شدن رابطه‌اش با دنیای طبیعی مرتبط است. فرار نهایی هنری از ایتالیا پر هیاهو و جنگ‌زده به سوی خلوتگاه سوئیس مظهر تحول نگرشی اوست. از مفهوم دوگانه‌ی فرهنگ/طبیعت نیز به عنوان یک سنگ محک در سنجش سطح ادراک بوم‌گرایانه‌ی شخصیت‌های اصلی داستان استفاده شده است. در پایان، همینگوی با روشی هنرمندانه گفتمان جنگ و فلسفه‌ی انسان‌محوری را به چالش کشیده و توحش انسان مدرن را به نمایش می‌گذارد. وی اعلام می‌دارد که برای صیانت از نظام طبیعت باید از فرهنگ جنگ دوری جست و عشق را در طبیعت انسان بارور نمود.

**واژگان کلیدی:** ارنست همینگوی، نقد بوم‌گرا، خدا حافظی با اسلحه، فرهنگ/طبیعت، غسل زیست محیطی



## **FROM LIFE TO TEXT AND FILM: PEDRO AMODÓVAR AND AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL DISCOURSE**

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**Abstract:** This work analyses Pedro Almodóvar's texts published in two books, *Patty Diphusa Stories and Other Writings* and *The Last Dream*, in which his playful engagement with autobiographical discourse is noticeable. Despite consistently stating his lack of interest in writing an autobiography or desiring others to do so, the published texts do not adhere to these generic determinations. However, a more detailed analysis reveals features akin to intimate texts bordering on diary entries, associative autobiography, letters, or essays. Building upon the theoretical assumptions of Philippe Lejeune and Gérard Genette regarding autobiographical prose, as well as the typology of life narrative models by Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, it is evident that Almodóvar largely opts for a form of expression that does not conform to the criteria of a typical autobiography, but rather life narrative forms within its discourse. The aim is to ascertain whether he writes them with the purpose of narrating specific moments from his own past or supplementing information about his films.

**Keywords:** Pedro Almodóvar, autobiographical discourse, Patty Diphusa, *The Last Dream*

### **1. Introduction**

Pedro Almodóvar's cinematic poetics encompasses over twenty feature films and several short films, subject to numerous discussions approaching the works from various perspectives within the realms of scientific and journalistic interest. Considerable attention has been devoted to interpreting the aesthetic value of his films in the context of Spanish culture and art, as well as postmodernism in general. The depicted characters striving for self-determination within established social paradigms have prompted inquiries into the (de)construction of their identities, which harbour complexity and often deviate from existing stereotypes. It is noticeable that in most of his films, Almodóvar is inclined towards "the concept of performativity, instability, and

ambiguity of identity” (Varga 187), significantly influencing their narratives. The discussion revolves around the reception and social engagement of Pedro Almodóvar’s films through the lens of art. It involves the analysis of thematic layers of the film narrative, intertextual and intermedial elements, highlighting him as a postmodernist artist who sets standards for the language of cinema. For the editors Epps and Kakoudaki, compilers of the anthology *All about Almodóvar: A Passion for Cinema* (2009), Almodóvar is somewhat of a paradox because he is “celebrated and denigrated by critics as serious and superficial, political and apolitical, moral and immoral, feminist and misogynist, experimental and sentimental, universal and provincial” (Epps and Kakoudaki, 2009; 1). It is evident that Almodóvar has been pushing (and continues to do so) the boundaries of artistic expression, provoking the public to uncover meanings and delve into the profound layers of the presented narratives. In doing so, he has naturally garnered specific followers as well as critics.

As the author of all his original and adapted screenplays Almodóvar is aware that writing good screenplays does not necessarily equate to writing good novels. As he emphasizes, the latter requires many hours of solitude, skill in devising narrative plots, and “being a little ruthless with yourself” (2024, 155). However, he began his career as a Spanish writer and columnist during the heyday of the Spanish social and cultural scene (*movida*)<sup>1</sup>. In the early 1980s, he published his first works, such as *Fuego en las entrañas* and the photo story *Todo tuya*. From an early age, he was dedicated to written expression, storytelling, and literature in general, and he produced an increasing number of “short stories, chronicles, comics, and ‘photo novels’”, leading Zurían to the conclusion that his arrival in Madrid marked “this passion for telling stories issued in an assortment of filmic texts and literary texts in which the budding director and writer began to create a style, a poetics, an aesthetics, and, perhaps most important of all, a unique public persona” (Zurían, 2009; 411). In other words, during those years, Almodóvar adeptly intertwines and blends two artistic expressions, with the narrative serving as a common element. His career takes the trajectory of a film director, where possessing writing skills helps in developing ideas for the creation of visual works.

This paper will discuss Pedro Almodóvar as an author through the analysis of his two published books, *The Patty Diphusa Stories and Other*

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<sup>1</sup> *La movida madrileña* marks the political and cultural transition in Spain after the death of Franco (in the 1970s and 1980s).

*Writings* and *The Last Dream*<sup>2</sup>. In the introductory text to the book *The Last Dream*, Almodóvar emphasizes that, for him, everything is primarily a story, and not the differentiation based on genre (2024; 7). He guides readers, indicating that through his texts, he primarily aims to provide more information about himself as a filmmaker and writer, detailing everything he writes, films, and experiences. He notes that everything primarily resembles “a fragmentary autobiography, incomplete and a little cryptic” (ibid; 7), and this autobiographical fragmentation can be somewhat complemented by analysing his interviews and films.<sup>3</sup>

In line with that, the aim of this paper is to identify autobiographical elements in the above-mentioned books, and ascertain whether Almodóvar writes them with the purpose of narrating specific moments from his own past or supplementing information about his films. As he pointed out, some stories are a complement to his cinematographic work (2024, 8) and for readers they can use both – as intimate writings of a famous person and as insight into the director’s ideas. Building upon Lejeune’s premise that determining a typical autobiography requires the identity of three narrative instances – author, narrator, and character (the autobiographical pact) – and relying on Genette’s classification of narrators in autobiographical prose, the focus of this paper will be directed towards the position of Almodóvar’s texts within these frameworks. Although it is obvious that his texts do not represent typical autobiography, they represent life writing and life narrative forms (diary entries, associative autobiography, letters, or personal essay) which can be categorised or at least analysed (for instance, the autofiction in *The Patty Diphusa Stories*) in terms of autobiographical discourse. Furthermore, it is significant to see what extent their credibility and authenticity allow them to be categorized as autobiographical. The methodological-theoretical framework will also rely on the typology of autobiographical prose, so-called life narrative, by Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, who also proposed the components of autobiographical acts.

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<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this paper, the editions to be utilized are *The Patty Diphusa Stories and Other Writings*, Faber and Faber, London – Boston, 1993, translated by Kirk Anderson, *Patty Diphusa i drugi tekstovi*, Konzor, Zagreb, 2005, translated by Dunja Frankol, and *The Last Dream*, HarperVia (HarperCollins Publisher), London, 2024, translated by Frank Wynne.

<sup>3</sup> Although not analysed as a corpus for the purposes of this work, it is important to note four texts by Almodóvar that he wrote for the renowned magazine *Sight & Sound* during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021. The subtitles of these texts, titled *Pedro Almodóvar’s Lockdown Diary*, directly indicate the form of autobiographical discourse.

## 2. Theoretical Background

Although autobiography as a term was coined in eighteenth century, self-referential writings were known many centuries earlier, such as “memoir”, “confessions” or “essays of myself” (Smith and Watson, 2010; 2). Linda Anderson wrote that autobiography, once recognised as distinct literary genre, became an “important testing ground for critical controversies about a range of ideas including authorship, selfhood, representation and the division between fact and fiction” (2001, 1-2). She notes some scholars believed that autobiography is impossible to describe as a genre (such as James Olney) and some of them emphasized conditions and limits must be provided if autobiography intends to be a truth-telling form distinguishable from fiction (such as proposed by Lejeune and Gusdorf) (2001, 5). Furthermore, Smith and Watson make distinctions among self-referential modes designate them as life writing, life narrative or autobiography. Life writing implies a novelistic approach or an explicit self-reference to the writer and marks a general term that takes life as its subject. Life narrative is a narrower term that encompasses many self-referential writings and is a “set of evershifting self-referential practices that engage the past in order to reflect on identity in the present” Finally, autobiography marks a particular mode of life narrative which represents an individual and his life story (2001, 3). Such categorization shows the different forms of autobiographical discourse which have multiplied over the last century. Georg Misch and his seminal work *The History of Autobiography* are often emphasized in discussions about autobiography. He wrote about autobiography as a valuable discourse of understanding both the individual and the world. By writing about oneself, the author not only creates a literary work about their own life but initiates a process of self-discovery, instrumentalizing knowledge about themselves and the world around them.<sup>4</sup>

The -abovementioned Philippe Lejeune calls autobiographical narrative a retrospective prose of a real person “where the focus is his individual life, in particular the story of his personality” (1989, 4), establishing categories by which autobiography can be defined. It involves the use of language where narration takes a central place, the narrator’s perspective is retrospective, and thematically, it addresses

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<sup>4</sup> Smith and Watson analysed Misch’s arguments about autobiography in *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives* (2001) and Predrag Finci wrote about the basic theses of Georg Misch in his essay *Autobiography and the Question of Identity*, *Philosophical Investigations*, Vol. 31 (2011) Issue 4 (707–718).

personal life, complemented by various social and political influences. Leading to the differentiation of autobiography from other forms (diary, memoirs, biography, self-portrait, personal novel, or essay), the confirmation of the identity of the three narrative instances (author – narrator – character) is necessary for the classification of autobiographical text. By fulfilling these conditions, there is an equality at the level of expression, whereby the category of character and narrator can be identified with the author, thus establishing an autobiographical agreement.<sup>5</sup>

In interpreting focalization (the point of view), Genette engages with narrative models of autobiography and autobiographical prose, primarily delineating a distinction between these two concepts, while also delineating the relationships between author, narrator and character. He establishes the following models: autobiography (the identity of the author, the narrator, and the character), biographical narration (the identity of author and the narrator, but not the character), homodiegetic fiction (where the author differs from the narrator and the character), heterodiegetic autobiography (the author and character are identical, but not the narrator), and heterodiegetic fiction (the author, narrator, and character are not identically related) (1991, 73). Organizing instances, Genette presents these five potential models, among which autobiography is determined by the interdependence (identity) of the author, the narrator, and the character.

In certain texts (albeit reluctantly), he observes specific deviations, which he labels as “awkward prothesis”, wherein the character is divided into two components – an “authentic personality and a fictional destiny” (1991, 76). He emphasizes that there are texts in which the author, through expression, confirms their identity with the character but disputes the actual occurrence of what is written. Thus, the sincerity of narration is brought into question as a crucial assumption of autobiography, which, in Genette’s case, implies that the equal sign in the triangle of the author – narrator – character relationship does not hold the same value across all connections. It is interesting to note his interpretations of these relationships in relation to the category of identity. When observed through the lens of the relationship between the author and the character, he emphasizes that they become equal on a “legal level”, where the author is accountable for the actions of the

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<sup>5</sup> Lejeune identifies four criteria that a text must fulfill to be considered autobiography: the form of language usage, theme, the author’s situation, and the narrator’s position. For more details, see: Lejeune, P. *The Autobiographical Pact*, in: *On Autobiography*, pg. 3 – 30.

character. The identity of the narrator and the character is equated on a linguistic level through the use of the first-person singular. Meanwhile, the alignment of the author and narrator largely signifies the gravity and truthfulness of the narrative, as their identity nullifies the role of the narrator and the necessity of their presence. In other words, these are “semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic relationships” among which the latter (author – narrator) delineates fiction from truthful narration (1991, 78).

At this point it is significant to notice appearances of the “producer of the autobiographical story” proposed by Smith and Watson who distinguish four models: the “real” or historical “I”, the narrating “I”, the narrated “I” and the ideological “I”. Each of them depends on a subject’s position in the autobiographical narrative encouraging readers to explore their occurrence. While the “real” or historical “I” refers to a historical person (the author, the signature on the cover page) located in a certain time and place, the narrating “I” and the narrated “I” refers to a narrator, but with their own particular position. The first one refers to the “I” who tells an autobiographical story, who tends to tell the story about himself, and the second one is the object “I”, a version of the narrating “I” based on memories. Lastly, the ideological “I” refers to the narrator’s historical and cultural notions at the time of writing, due to each of them being culturally situated and a product of a particular time (2001, 58-63). In conclusion, autobiography (and autobiographical writing) necessarily relies on the truthfulness of narration (an unequivocal confirmation that the author is a participant in the events) and the authenticity of the text (that what is written pertains to the author) to affirm its referential relationship to reality. The author alone possesses all the information, emotions, and thoughts that they perceive as significant elements of their personal development. In this case, the reader's reception becomes a relevant indicator of the author's persuasiveness in portraying their own life, especially when certain information about the author is already known beforehand.

Speaking about Almodóvar in the context of autobiography can prove to be a rather challenging task. The fact is that there is no book by him narrating his own life (unlike the numerous works that focus on his creative output). Elements depicting episodes from his life, experiences of growing up, influences on his involvement in filmmaking, internal feelings, thoughts on lived and experienced situations, personal details, and so on, can only be gleaned fragmentarily through interviews. As such, it is challenging to consider them as a form of autobiographical expression. Nevertheless, as the evolutionary progress of conceptual-thematic elements and visual style is noticeable in his film poetics,

achieving narrative and aesthetic coherence, his attitude towards biography and autobiography gradually takes on a reconciliatory tone over time.

The fundamental strategy through which Almodóvar constructs stories in the books *The Patty Diphusa Stories and Other Writings* and *The Last Dream* primarily revolves around skilfully intertwining fiction and reality, sometimes blurring the boundary between them. The representation of the real and literary worlds holds equal importance for him when expressing his own ideas about a character or an event. It is precisely this interweaving and playing with real, possible, and unreal elements that have defined his film poetics (as well as his narrative texts), establishing him as a film-maker who manages to convincingly persuade viewers (and readers) of the realism of the portrayed. His intention and key guidelines for the texts become evident in the introductory notes of both books. It is immediately apparent that Almodóvar has been grappling for decades with an internal struggle regarding his self-perception as a writer and storyteller. In writing about Patty, he mentions that he was never sure if he would even write the next instalment and implores readers not to be overly demanding in approaching the book (2005, 8-9). In the introduction to *The Last Dream* he recalls the beginnings of his artistic creation, describing himself as a writer who has always been clear about wanting to do it, being unsure only whether his texts had any value (2024; 8). This uncertainty about his own potential for shaping a story and the need to achieve a level of “self-criticism” in the writing process is particularly highlighted in the text “A Bad Novel”. Following this line, both introductory texts open up space for interpreting the autobiographical discourse that suggestively or authentically appears in almost all of Almodóvar's texts.

### **3. *The Patty Diphusa Stories***

Among the early texts of autobiographical discourse, it is worth highlighting the stories about the character Patty Diphusa. Genre-wise, they are challenging to classify, as their form oscillates between erotic sketches and shorter erotic novels (if considered as a whole). Almodóvar emphasizes his diversity in writing these stories and leaves it to the reader to decide whether to accept them as “fiction or non-fiction”. For Almodóvar, *The Patty Diphusa Stories and Other Writings* belongs to both genres. In the context of autobiographical discourse, the stories about Patty Diphusa do not fit into the standard framework of autobiography as a genre where identity among the author, narrator, and character can be found. The autobiographical agreement on a formal level is not realized. Patty is simultaneously the first-person

narrator and the main character, and through the narrative discourse, we learn about events in her life.

According to Lejeune's interpretation, such a form of statement is considered autodiegetic narration, emphasizing that within this definition, it is advisable to distinguish the category of voice and the category of identity, as there is always a possibility of an exception that demonstrates the feasibility of writing an autobiography in a different manner (1989, 5-6). Such qualification will prove beneficial in the analysis of Almodóvar's implicit presence in the texts of Patty Diphusa. From the perspective of the fictional character, one can discern Patty's inclination to portray her life and speak about herself. Her narrative function, in fact, is to depict the ambiance of Madrid's *movida* as an icon of that era (here, the 1980s). Almodóvar brought her to life through columns published in the magazine *La Luna*, thereby turning her into a cultural symbol of an era significant for the development of Spanish democracy and the modernization of society.

It is noteworthy to observe two distinct discourses in her stories – one pertains to the *movida* era when, through Patty, Almodóvar crafts controversial texts brimming with profanity, sexual connotations, humour, irony, and pleasures – while the other encompasses texts from the mid-1990s, characterized by a calmer, more composed, and decidedly serious tone. In the final episode of Patty's life, Almodóvar tells her that ten years ago, she was the “embodiment of the Crazy Eighties, and today she is a symbol of the Deep Depression of the Nineties”, indicating changes in her life and, indirectly, the evolution of Almodóvar's cinematic poetics. This evolution shifts from depicting the wild and vibrant Madrid (films like *Pepi, Luci, Bom and Other Girls on the Heap* and *Labyrinth of Passion*) to a more serious thematic exploration (violence, identity issues, inequality, and so on) and questioning crucial life matters (*The Law of Desire*, *High Heels*, *Kika*). Through his final text titled “Me and My Clone in a Night Full of Unpredictability”, Almodóvar playfully toys with the delineation between fiction and reality, reaching a culmination in their relationship and interconnectedness. It has been argued that Patty's first-person narration and the absence of equality among all three narrative instances exclude the existence of a typical autobiography. However, the author here plays with the category of identity, hinting at a similarity between himself and Patty. Lejeune discusses the novelistic pact (where the author and character do not share the same name, and the text is fictional), which excludes the possibility of autobiographical determination but does not exclude the presence of autobiographical indicators that may prompt readers to seek similarities between the author and the fictional character (1989,

15-16). Smith and Watson suggest autofiction as a mode of autobiographical discourse that contains fictional narrative and the first-person mode. However, autofiction uses technique for pointing out some “deliberate” and “often ironic interplay” between fiction and fact (2001, 186). Even when the reader is aware that Patty's story is fiction, what can be identified as real is Almodóvar's implicit engagement, through Patty's character, in expressing his views on life, society, Spanish culture, and so on. If Patty states that Almodóvar is her clone, and the fact is that he is her creator as an author, it is evident that the occurrence of identity is problematized, positioning the text in an ambiguous space.

The connection between them is established at the level of naming, as Patty Diphusa becomes Almodóvar's pseudonym, and at the level of identity, through which he projects everything he thinks and feels onto her. In introduction he states that Patty was “a faithful reflection” of his feelings and that “she soon became saturated with so much superficiality, and with herself.” (2005, 7). In the use of pseudonyms, Lejeune distinguishes between a pseudonym as an author's name and as the name of a fictional character “because this person himself is designated as fictitious by the simple fact that he is incapable of being the *author* of the *book*” (1989, 12). From this, it follows that Patty, under no circumstances, certifies Almodóvar's autobiography at the level of expression, especially because, according to Lejeune, a reader can doubt it even if the author chooses not to confirm his identity with the character. However, Almodóvar has never contested his identification with Patty. Almost forty years later, with the publication of *The Last Dream*, he recalls her as an extraordinary character in every sense, from which a new character (“I”) emerged in the stories (“In this new century, I became darker, more serious, and melancholic, less confident, increasingly insecure and frightened.”), realizing that he is a complete opposite of Patty, even though it is the same person (2024; 9). From such interpretations by the author, far from the characteristics of a typical autobiography, an implicit autobiographical foundation can be discerned, making Patty Diphusa an integral part of his autobiographical discourse. This presence is not reflected in Patty's narrative statements, depicted events, and relationships with other characters. Instead, it manifests on an emotional and cognitive level, through which Almodóvar reveals something about himself.

#### 4. The Other Writings

The second part of the *Patty Diphusa* book pertains to other writings published during the 1980s in Spanish magazines and newspapers such as *El País*, *Diario 16*, and others. These texts exhibit thematic heterogeneity. Given that we are dealing with narrative statements bordering between diary entries, associative autobiography, or letters as a potential narrative technique marked by autobiographical discourse, determining a common autobiographical form to categorize them is challenging. Nevertheless, their characteristic in terms of autobiographical discourse is authentic and credible, as the majority<sup>6</sup> feature a first-person narrator directly pointing to the author, thereby certifying the identity with the narrator (Genette calls it 'factual narrative'). On a formal level, the "real" or historical "I" is confirmed, but Almodóvar also mixes the narrative "I" and the narrated "I", as Smith and Watson stated, where the narrated "I" is especially evident when the narrative unfolds at the level of recollection, encompassing a broad range of events from early childhood and youth to the period of Almodóvar's affirmation as a film director decades later. Almodóvar does not adhere to chronology, nor attempt to establish it. Occasionally, references to the time of the events emerge, but at the level of expression, he unquestionably affirms his identity and what he is discussing.

Among the texts employing fragmented autobiographical narrative strategies, touching upon events, individuals, and personal experiences, notable examples include "Without Love, Life Just Isn't Life", "Scarlett O'Hara, a Perfect Manchega", "Coming to Madrid", "Styles and Customs in the Nineties", "Self-Interview (1984)", "Map", "Promotion", and "Echoes and Corners". Within the autobiographical discourse, they could be organized based on roughly shared characteristics. At the level of diary entries, texts like "Without Love, Life Just Isn't Life" and "Self-Interview (1984)" could be included. Regarding associative autobiography, texts such as "Scarlett O'Hara, a Perfect Manchega", "Coming to Madrid", "Map", "Promotion", and "Echoes and Corners" could be categorized as such. The text "Advice on How to Become an Internationally Famous Filmmaker" could be mostly recognized as a letter form, but displaying typological distinctions. Given the absence of chronology and uniformity at the level of form, within the context of autobiographical prose, it is not possible to characterize these texts as

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<sup>6</sup> The collection also features texts such as "A Good Start", "The Birth of DADA" (1978), and "Scrotum in the Wind", in which significant references for autobiographical discourse do not appear.

typical diary entries. Lejeune noticed that the diary often deals with the “struggle against time” and it’s “actually based on a prior yielding to time (which is atomized, exploded, reduced to moments)” (2009a, 170). For him, the date is essential to defining the diary as “a series of dated traces” (2009b, 179). If an author decides to write a diary, it is necessary to present real events with the minimized temporal gap between events and writing. Additionally, the narrator’s position should be marked by the retrospective nature of the narrative text (Lejeune, 1989). Such qualifications may not apply to texts like “Without Love, There Is No Life” and “Self-Interview (1984)” as they, due to their writing about immediate events and minimal temporal distance, resemble instead disconnected, fragmented diary entries.

“Without Love, Life Just Isn’t Life” was published in 1987, and in it, Almodóvar references the recently released film *The Law of Desire*. On the other hand, “Self-Interview (1984)” was published in 1984, following the release of the film *Dark Habits*. The diary-like elements present in these texts primarily relate to the positioning of the subject, the choice of topics, and the expression (Sablić Tomić, 2002; 96). Almodóvar adopts the position of an affirmed subject as, at the time of writing, he is already socially recognized and well-known. He cites events that serve as the reason for writing, such as film premieres, minimizing the temporal gap. The choice of narrative discourse approaches the intimate and the public. In “Without Love, Life Just Isn’t Life”, he discusses the experience of filming, delving into his conceptual and thematic world, the actors and their performances as immediate events he experienced. However, he does not shy away from the initial recollections of the period of dictatorship and the restrictions on freedom of speech in Spain (remembering, reflecting), introducing a socio-political dimension into the text nor does he miss the opportunity to express a viewpoint on the human need for love. This also represents his philosophical dimension. The narrator’s position in one part of the text shifts from “I” to “We” when Almodóvar identifies himself with the citizens of Madrid, expressing the assertion that all of them experience unhappy, unwanted, and unrequited loves. Although this involves a generalization at a subjective level that seems more like a need to find meaning in what may be happening in his intimate life, rather than a statement that could be factually substantiated, by addressing the readers, he manages to achieve a certain level of credibility and intimacy that is highly relevant for readers of these diary entries.

The “Self-interview” is an unconventional text of self-reflection written in the form of a dialogue with his own self. The title itself alludes

to an autobiographical discourse, through which Almodóvar introduces himself to his readers, stating that if someone has to write about him, it is best that he does it himself. At the level of content, there is a rapid shift between topics because, much like typical interviews, the interviewer aims to learn as much as possible about his interlocutor. He comments on life in Madrid, talks about the filmmaking process, and discusses upcoming projects. Following that, he expresses his desire to create a biography of Bette Davis, reflects on death, discusses the recently released film *Dark Habits*, and reflects on success. Through the alternation of questions and answers, the narrator's position is uneven, yet this is just one of the models through which Almodóvar projects reflections about himself. In such a conversation, Almodóvar directs himself toward the free expression of his own reflections and identification within what was then Spanish society. Analysing the narrative model, according to Smith and Watson, it could be identified as the ideological "I", due to Almodóvar's reflections on his personhood and identity. Although seeking answers related to his own existence and philosophizing about death, Almodóvar does not shy away from irony and sarcasm, to which both those he discusses and he himself are equally exposed. This is one of the strategies in writing diary entries through which the content becomes interesting, and the reader is offered the opportunity to learn something about the author through ironic expressions.

There is a slightly larger number of texts in which elements of associative autobiography can be recognized as a form of storytelling about one's own life based on recollections. Such narration is retrospective (mixing the narrative "I" and the narrated "I"), does not follow chronology, and includes associations that shape the narrative sequence (Sablić Tomić, 2008; 63). As noted above, Smith and Watson distinguish a form of life narrative as a "nonfictional mode" pointing out the parts of "a constitutive processes of autobiographical subjectivity: memory, experience, identity, embodiment, agency" (2001, 15). Almodóvar writes his texts based on his memories of his childhood and filming, and through his experiences gives the readers interpretations of the past events. The autodiegetic narration is confirmed by the identity of the author, narrator, and character (called the "real" or historical "I" by Smith and Watson). However, the texts are written fragmentarily and lack a solid structure that could assert Almodóvar's intention to write a comprehensive autobiography.

In the text "Scarlett O'Hara, A Perfect Mancheaga", Almodóvar reminisces about his childhood and the first time he watched the movie *Gone with the Wind*, which had a significant impact on him as a

filmmaker. In “Coming to Madrid”, he reflects on his youthful desire to leave his village and move to Madrid. He contemplates his memories of that decision, which would forever change his life and be one he has never regretted. This is a text in which, due to its narrative components and chronology, elements that could fit into a typical Almodóvar autobiography are perhaps most discernible. The text “The Map” brings him back to his childhood, where he recalls his poor religious upbringing and the influence of the clergy on shaping his beliefs, which he vehemently resisted. In the text “Promotion”, Almodóvar recalls the films he released until *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* in 1988. The retrospective was prompted by the commercial success of the film, which opened doors to his international career, but also stirred feelings of saturation and emptiness within him. Finally, “Echoes and Corners” contains multiple motifs (associations) that shape the narrative sequence, including the influence of film characters on his own life, the search for a personal item, and encounters with unfamiliar individuals. In a form that refers to a life narrative similar to a *Bildungsroman*, in these writings Almodóvar represents his own “social formation” as a young man and describes his escape from a repressive schooling to an urban life where, as Smith and Watson noted, usually new encounters “lead the protagonist to reevaluate assumptions” (2010, 63). The common thread is Almodóvar’s reflection on his own identity. In general, the narrative strategy in these texts does not establish a causal relationship among events. Instead, their coherence is based on the connection between the narrator/author and symbolic themes that hold the author’s retrospective evaluation of their own past and the search for identity. The autobiographical foundation is thus confirmed and clearly indicates Almodóvar’s intention to portray the evolution of his own views and personality over time.

The last text is “Advice on How to Become an Internationally Famous Filmmaker”, where Almodóvar begins with a retrospective narrative about situations in which his words influenced the fate of people around him. This inspired him to write a guide for all those who, like him, dream of becoming globally renowned film directors. Once more, autodiegetic narration is initially confirmed, but it quickly changes, and the storytelling continues through a form that closely resembles a letter. The text is divided into four individually titled sections (*The Vocation*, *The City*, *It’s just not right!*, and *Loneliness at the top*), and the dating is not recorded, although it is known that the texts were published in 1985. Within the autobiographical discourse, Smith and Watson described the letter as a model of life narrative which serves the epistolary subject to express the inner feelings. For a letter, the

characteristic features include recounting and describing the emotions of the discourse subject, and its essential element is the connection between the sender and the recipient (the addressee). Other formal characteristics involve information about the time of writing the letter (dating), addressing the recipient, a farewell at the end of the letter, and the sender's signature. Considering all these characteristics, it is noticeable that through his narrative expression, Almodóvar self-referentially reflects on his life journey from when he arrived in Madrid as a young man from the provinces to becoming a famous director. Despite the irony and caricatured situations that can happen to anyone embarking on such a path, it is easy to identify parts that are connected to truthful details about him (the shift from province to city, the humble beginnings of his film career, his membership in the *movida*, the search for his own film poetics, the reception of films, and so on). The name of the addressee is missing, but he points out that the advice is intended for all those who want to become world-famous film directors overnight. In that case, the recipient should be every reader who will recognize the authenticity and truthfulness of the statements in the text to establish trust in the subject, which also leads to confirming the autobiographical basis. The letter's form at the end of the last text is validated by the farewell ("I'm sending you a cinematic kiss. Adiós.") without specifying a signature, but the confirmed identity of the author and the mention of the "old Almodóvar" are sufficient indicators of the autobiographical discourse.

### 5. *The Last Dream*

The collection of stories *The Last Dream* initially appears to be Almodóvar's autobiographical endeavour. However, it is essential to emphasize that, looking at it as a whole, this is not a typical autobiography in a narrow sense. Moreover, most of the stories in this collection are fictional. In the introductory part, Almodóvar mentions that he has compiled 12 stories he wrote between the 1970s and the early 2000s. The period of their creation is quite extensive, and with the help of his collaborators, he decided to publish them. Among all the stories, he emphasizes that only four are autobiographical, categorizing them genre-wise as parts of a diary (specifically "The Last Dream", "Adiós, Volcano", "Memory of an Empty Day", and "Bad Novel"). He emphasizes that the remaining eight stories<sup>7</sup> are also closely related to

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<sup>7</sup> The list of the remaining stories includes: "The Visit", "Too Many Gender Swaps", "The Mirror Ceremony", "Joanna, The Beautiful Madwoman", "The Life

his life and profession (“These stories are a complement to my cinematographic works: sometimes they served as an immediate reflection of the moment I was experiencing, and either became films many years later...”), referring to all the texts as “initiation”, which served as a “desire to escape boredom” (2024; 8).

It is significant to note that when Almodóvar talks about the autobiographical characteristics of his texts, he reveals the intertwining of the written with what is portrayed in his films. For those more familiar with his work, such a statement can be highly relevant, prompting the question of whether Almodóvar is addressing what Lejeune calls an “autobiographical space”. If one reads Almodóvar’s texts as fragmented and incomplete parts of autobiography (as he himself emphasizes), and films represent fiction into which layers of personal nature are inscribed, then they should not be ignored as documents affirming the autobiographical space in which all his works can be analysed. In other words, the absence of a complete autobiography by Almodóvar can be compensated for by consolidating everything he has written, spoken, or filmed to date – this would be a rather rich autobiographical record.

The introduction itself contains valuable information about the author, adding to the authenticity and truthfulness through autodiegetic narration. It is designed as a space where Almodóvar reveals certain details from his own life (his relationship with films, his arrival in Madrid, his mother's death, and his own identity formation), serving as valuable guidelines for reading the published autobiographical texts. Nostalgically recalling the places, people, and times when he wrote stories “in the courtyard of the family home”, he admits that he didn’t revise or change them, wanting to “remember himself” and “seeing how much he has changed” – his life and everything that surrounded him (2024; 8). While informative and directive, the introduction is simultaneously an intimate text through which Almodóvar, in the words of Helena Sablić Tomić, strives to unfold his self and preserve his own identity (2008, 23). He significantly emphasizes three key places that shaped him as a person: the courtyard of La Mancha where he spent time with his mother and the women from the village, Madrid during the *movida* era, and the Salesian school, which he recalls as a place of distressing religious upbringing. By inscribing these spaces into his identity code, Almodóvar gains a sense of self and recognizes their power in shaping an identity that, despite everything, retains enough freedom for self-realization.

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and Death of Miguel”, “Confessions of a Sex Symbol”, “Bitter Christmas”, and “Redemption”.

It has been mentioned that in the published collection *The Last Dream* Almodóvar's autobiographical act is only recognizable in four stories. All of them, in their discourse, unveil his intimate world and reflections on the social environment and himself. The identity of the author, narrator, and character is confirmed by the autodiegetic position that certifies Almodóvar's fragmented writing about his own life. As Genette said, an equality of these three instances provides an autobiography. What points again to the problem of the typology of his autobiographical discourse is the inconsistency and deviation in meeting the genre criteria. Specifically, three texts ("The Last Dream", "Adíos, Volcano", "Memory of an Empty Day") according to certain characteristics, would belong to the form of diary entries. It involves a discourse that does not fulfill the basic features of a diary as a model of autobiographical prose (incoherence, chronological sequence of described events, and the frequency of recording events), but within certain limits, it comes closest to it.<sup>8</sup> First and foremost, Almodóvar retrospectively narrates about immediate events that prompted his writing (his mother's death in "The Last Dream", the death of his friend and artistic muse Chavela Vargas in "Adíos, Volcano", and loneliness during Easter in the text "Memory of an Empty Day"), fulfilling the criterion of the simultaneity of events and writing. Smith and Watson state such kind of life narrative as filiation narrative which provides author's memories of a "relationship to a parent, sibling, or child, someone with whom one has had a longstanding affiliation" (Smith and Watson, 2010; 270). In that way, it is easy to notice he dedicates his texts to the most significant women in his life – a mother Francisca and a friend Chavela. However, he does not explicitly mention the dates of writing, but the time category is not entirely neglected, as it is possible to determine that information from verifiable and credible sources. For example, in "The Last Dream", he begins the narration:

When I step out into the street on Saturday, I discover that it is a bright, sunny day. It is the first day with sunshine and without my mother. I cry behind my glasses. I will do so many times throughout the day. Having not slept the night before, I wander the streets like an orphan until I find the taxi to take me to the South Mortuary. (Almodóvar, 2024; 77)

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<sup>8</sup> In the story "Memory of an Empty Day", he refers to the fact that he is trying to keep a diary about the moment he is living. In this way, he genre-determines his texts, even though it's not exactly a diary but rather diary-like entries that do not form a coherent whole of diary discourse.

Furthermore, in “Memory of an Empty Day”, he mentions the following:

Maundy Thursday. Bright sunshine streaming through the window, but I can't think what to do with the day that stretches out before me. (...) I haven't turned the TV on all day, but through the windows comes the sound of drums from the religious processions (...) I can also hear Russian bombs devastating Ukrainian cities. (ibid; 146-154)

In “Adíos, Volcano”, the temporal category is revealed with the following words:

After twenty years spent searching for her in all her usual haunts, and having finally found her in the tiny backstage dressing room of the Sala Caracol in Madrid, I have spent another twenty years saying goodbye to her, culminating in this extended farewell, beneath the blistering August sun in Madrid. (ibid; 128)

From these and other pieces of information documented in the texts, and after verifying them with reliable data, the dates of writing can be precisely determined (“The Last Dream” – September 11, 1999, “Adíos, Volcano” – between August 5 and 31, 2012, and “Memory of an Empty Day” – April 14, 2022). However, in the narrative statement of the story “The Last Dream”, there is a moment that may raise doubts about the legitimacy of the time category. As observed, Almodóvar begins the story by stating that it is Saturday today and that his mother passed away yesterday. However, in the continuation, he writes the following: “She also requested a full requiem mass, not just a funeral service. We respected her wishes and the whole town (Calzada de Calatrava) flocked to ‘give us the nod,’ its term for offering condolences” (ibid; 79). Such a statement contradicts the initial one because it implies a longer time gap from the day of the mother's death, suggesting that the burial has already taken place. As Lejeune argues, there is nothing wrong in putting some discontinuity in diary writings due to life also needs renewal and the fact that a “diary's discontinuity may be quite relative” (2009b, 183). The inconsistency in statements could challenge the fact that the entry was made on September 11, 1999 (mother passed away on September 10, 1999), but it may also suggest the possibility that Almodóvar wrote it in parts over several days following his mother's death. Regardless, each entry represents a separate moment in the author's memory and uniquely corresponds to his present. Through these temporal leaps, it seems like Almodóvar is attempting to avoid a

chronological continuity based on a logical sequence. It is not known why Almodóvar avoids recording exact dates. The answer may lie in his aversion to writing any form of autobiography, including a typical diary, but rather present it as a stories without formal characteristics of the genre. Nevertheless, he has somewhat met the criteria of documentation by writing about his intimate experiences, mentioning true events in his life and making his entries truthful and authentic.

In his theoretical assumptions for defining the diary as a model of autobiographical prose, Philippe Lejeune emphasizes that it is a discontinuous and allusive form, and it is not constructed as a typical story with a beginning and the end (Lejeune, 2009a). The starting point of all three texts are certain events that trigger Almodóvar's narrative act. His reflections on his mother's and Chavela's death, as well as the loneliness and emptiness of a particular day, inspire him to recall events from the immediate, closer, or more distant past and connect them with his current lived experience, selected facts. In this way, he created a diary-like discourse as a space in which he had the opportunity to identify his own existence and communicate with himself. The thematic level encompasses private experiences related to family, friends, childhood memories, his mother and contemplations on emotional states such as pain, anxiety, and loneliness. Everything indicates that in these texts, Almodóvar still somewhat respects the characteristics of diary discourse, which can be identified even at the micro-level of these fragmented autobiographical entries. He is aware of this and does not shy away from the intention to share them with readers. It remains an open question whether he will ever do it completely.

In the entry "Memory of an Empty Day", there is a detail that does not narrate a personal event but is an important reference in the context of the author recognizing his own attitudes and opinions. This is about the autobiography *Le Parfum des fleurs la nuit* by Leïla Slimani, and Almodóvar expresses his enthusiasm for it, finding it extremely interesting. He projects quotes from another author into his diary entries, engaging in a kind of dialogue and interpretation. The book constantly prompts him to question his own relationship with writing, art, and his relationships with other people. He occasionally includes quotes, comments on them, replies, and presents counterarguments. In this self-dialogue, Almodóvar points out his loneliness and the need to analyse his own actions. By choosing that particular book and recording quotes from it, he has made it a permanent part of his intimate space, reconnecting with what, alongside films, represents his other love – literature and writing.

Finally, the text “A Bad Novel” is a personal homage to the act of writing with which Almodóvar concludes his collection of stories. On the conceptual and thematic level, the text can be classified as an essayistic-reflective piece, containing characteristics of a personal essay characterized by narration and its retrospective perspective (Lejeune, 1989). For Smith and Watson, this is a form of discourse that shows “one’s own intellectual, emotional, and physiological responses to a given topic” (2001, 200) and it combines narrative, reflective, autobiographical, and theoretical elements (Zlatar, 2000). Starting with the sentence “I have always dreamt of writing a bad novel”, Almodóvar initiates a kind of literary-theoretical discussion about the novel and the screenplay as narrative forms.<sup>9</sup> He speaks from the position of a filmmaker, not a literary theorist, so his conclusions primarily concern his own experiences in writing and his relationship with that activity. He considers himself an author of good screenplays, but he is equally aware that this is not the case with writing novels: “It has taken me a long time and quite a few films to admit that, as a novelist, I wouldn’t be up to the task, despite the fact that my screenplays are becoming more and more literary and some of my works, had I had the talent, would have made better novels than films” (2024; 157). Discussing what represents his private and professional sphere, Almodóvar employs autobiographical strategies to examine his subjective position and personal perspectives in the context of literary creation. He approaches this matter very seriously, aware of his strengths and weaknesses in writing. He supports his claims with concrete examples and analyses, shaping a text that leaves the impression that he needs much more “practice in self-criticism” to write a novel. At the same time, he reveals himself as a very skilled and creative storyteller.

## 6. Conclusion

The focus of this work has been directed towards the analysis of texts by the Spanish director Pedro Almodóvar. Seeking to establish their aesthetic and narrative coherence, the aim was to identify all those works that can be encompassed within the domain of autobiographical discourse. The corpus for such research included the books *The Patty Diphusa Stories and Other Writings* and *The Last Dream*, which to the greatest extent open space for discussion on narrative models based on

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<sup>9</sup> In the discussion, he interprets a subtype of text, calling it a “novelization”, which, for him, is “a means of spinning out the success of the movie by repackaging it as a novel” He describes it as self-deception, even in the case of autofiction (2024, 156).

authenticity and credibility. Starting from the theoretical assumptions of Philippe Lejeune and Gérard Genette and their discussions on autobiographical discourse, through the typology of narrative models by Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, it has been pointed out that Almodóvar, despite his resistance to writing an autobiography, largely chooses a form of expression in his texts that does not adhere to the criteria of a typical autobiography, but can be classified as life narrative form within its discourse.

*Patty Diphusa* belongs to homodiegetic fiction in which the narrator and the character are identical, but on an emotional and cognitive level, certain details about the author are implicitly revealed through the character. Almodóvar has attributed importance to Patty Diphusa in his professional career for decades, often emphasizing that he has created a character “uninhibited in every way” that has evolved over forty years into a “new character (...) more somber, more austere, more melancholic, less certain, more insecure, and more afraid”, while always highlighting that it is the same person (2024, 9). In line with this, Almodóvar, through the fictional character Patty Diphusa, establishes a self-referential relationship on a certain level. A somewhat clearer picture emerges in *Other Writings* that are more difficult to classify in terms of genre but can, based on certain parameters, be grouped among diary entries, fragmentary associative autobiographies, and letters as models of intimate writings. In most cases, an autodiegetic narrative and an autobiographical agreement have been observed. The same applies to the collection *The Last Dream*, where the autobiographical act is recognized in only four stories, primarily in the form of diary entries and essays.

To conclude, it can be said that Pedro Almodóvar’s texts do not represent typical autobiography, but rather life writing and life narrative forms which can be categorised or at least analysed in terms of autobiographical discourse. Writing them he shows his writing sensibility, even though he cannot be considered a conventional writer. He does this effortlessly and without the fear that his artistic work will be evaluated solely through what he has written. He has proven to be, above all, a storyteller who blurs the boundaries between fiction and reality. Simultaneously, he finds inspiration in his own life to shape autobiographical discourse because “reality needs fiction in order to be more complete, more pleasurable, bearable” (2024, 79). For him, as a filmmaker, screenwriter, and narrator, this has proved to be crucial.

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## OD ŽIVOTA DO TEKSTA I FILMA: PEDRO ALMODÓVAR I AUTOBIOGRAFSKI DISKURS

Rad analizira tekstove Pedra Almodóvara objavljene u dvjema knjigama *Patty Diphusa i drugi tekstovi* i *Posljednji san* u kojima je primjetno njegovo poigravanje autobiografskim diskursom. Kako oduvijek govori da ga ne privlači pisati autobiografiju niti želi da to drugi čine, ni objavljeni tekstovi ne podliježu takvom žanrovskom određenju. Međutim, detaljnijom analizom mogu se prepoznati obilježja tekstova na granici dnevnika, asocijativne autobiografije, pisma ili eseja. Polazeći od teorijskih pretpostavki Philippea Lejeunea, Gérard Genetta o autobiografskoj prozi i tipologije pripadajućih narativnih modela Sidonie Smith i Julije Watson, ukazalo se na to da Almodóvar u velikoj mjeri izabire oblik izričaja koji ne podliježe kriterijima tipične autobiografije, ali se po određenim mjerila mogu svrstati u njezin diskurs. Time Almodóvar podjednako predstavlja određene trenutke iz vlastite prošlosti, ali i dopunjuje podatke o svojim filmovima.

**Ključne riječi:** Pedro Almodóvar, autobiografski diskurs, Patty Diphusa, *Posljednji san*

## **UNRELIABLE NARRATIVE STRATEGY IN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITING – THE CASE OF SPARE BY PRINCE HARRY**

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**Abstract:** The paper problematizes unreliable narration in autobiographical writing, exploring the rhetorical effects produced in the process of narrativization that challenge genre conventions in terms of the relativization of objective reality in subjective interpretations. Therefore, the paper analyzes discordant and estranging narration as the outcome of textual effects and the rhetorical layering produced by the author-narrator. The theoretical grounds for the exploration of the types of unreliable narration involves a discussion on authorial fictionalization, the role of fictionality in non-fiction as the rhetorical veil between story and narrative discourse, and textual and figurative narcissism. Illustrations come from *Spare* (2023), the memoir authored and published by Prince Harry, The Duke of Sussex, and his ghostwriter J. R. Moehringer.

**Keywords:** discordant narration, metafiction, autobiography, memoir, textual narcissism, figural narcissism, fictionality, non-fiction.

### **1. Introduction**

#### **1.1 The Space between Fiction and Non-Fiction**

Narratives in autobiographical writing represent interpretations rather than factual accounts of events sourced in the referential reality. The interpretation resides in the space between the non-fictional and fictional, as it relies on the implied veracity of the factual, yet necessarily offers limited readings for a number of reasons which may, or may not, be relevant for the overall value of the text. The autobiography constructs narrative reality by imitating the universals of the collective experience, so that in reading a literary text, the reader finds veracity not only in the potential factual content, but the analogies implied by it, as well as the manner in which they are invited to interpret the text. This is particularly significant for the reception of autobiographical writing, since the genre exploits the space between the non-fictional – in its

claim to truth with regard to real life events, history and objective insight, and the fictional – which is contained in the nature of interpretation of these events from the focalization point of the author of the story. The reader, therefore, approaches this non-fictional genre as a document of sorts, and subjective, though reliable, testament of actual events. The literary competence of the reader, and their implicit reliance on genre conventions, along with the rhetorical instruments present in such writing, usually direct them into perceiving the literary work as leaning towards non-fiction. In the context of contemporary culture, an average reader approaches the genre as a tell-all account, expecting to learn information privy only to the direct experiencer – the author-narrator. Whereas the convention of the biography as a work of non-fiction keeps the reader aware of the potential inconsistencies and the presence of interpretative content, since the author need not be the immediate witness to the events and subject of their writing, autobiography relies heavily on the first-hand quality of the experience. It is this convention, as a rule, that exacerbates the tension between fact and fiction in non-fictional writing. From the reception point of view, the discourse of autobiographical writing assumes not an analogical relation to reality, but one that purports to show something of the truth about it, and therefore, the issue of narrative reliability becomes highlighted. Since the text invokes ideological dimensions, regardless of the actual authorial intention or reader's perceptiveness, narration is experienced in degrees of reliability or unreliability.

Authored by Prince Harry, The Duke of Sussex, with the help of famous ghostwriter J. R. Moehringer whose role and influence remain somewhat mysterious, *Spare* – the memoir consists of three main parts encompassing the author's childhood and early years, the time spent in the military, and finally, the life after meeting his spouse. These chapters are preceded by a Prologue reflecting on the event of his grandfather's death and the infamous *secret* family meeting at Frogmore, which serves as the interpretative key to the entire autobiography. The Epilogue briefly deals with the author's recollections of events immediately preceding the funeral of his grandmother, Queen Elizabeth II, and rounds up the inward journey of the author in his quest to piece together the narrative of the *real* Harry. The analysis of the memoir in this paper willingly disregards the already exposed historical inaccuracies and factual inconsistencies, since their exploration goes beyond the subject of interest. The paper focuses on the noticeable conflict-driven plot patterns that permeate the memoir and bind together the author's self-narration in order to analyze its reliability. Essentially, in Part I, the conflicts that enable narrative progression are the one between the

author and his elder brother, William, and one between the author and the media. These conflicts remain the driving force behind Parts II and III, as the consequence of his perceived mistreatment and neglect – the implied subordinate position against the heir-apparent (his being the *spare*), and his resentment towards the media.

The proposition is that unreliability in *Spare* is the product of figural rather than textual narcissism commonly present in autobiographical writing. Therefore, the paper analyzes the process of narrativization for the manner in which the author establishes truth programmes decoded in the reception of the text.

## 2. Unreliable Narration

### 2.1 Contextualizing Narrative Form

In *Transparent Minds* (1978), Dorrit Cohn compares the positions of first-person narrator's attitude towards the narrated past-self to that of a third-person narrator we often find in fiction (1978; 143). This likeness resides in the relationship of "distance between the narrating and the experiencing self" (Cohn, 1978; 143), which she categorizes as the same as the third-person narrator narrating the life of the protagonist. The effect of temporal continuity (Cohn, 1978; 144) between the first-person narrator's past and narrating-self, which separates this type of narration from third-person narration, is analogous to the existential relationship we all have with our past. In Cohn's words, it is a relationship "that differs substantially from the purely functional relationship that binds a narrator to his protagonist in third-person fiction" (1978; 144). First-person narratives utilizing this "autobiographical retrospection" (Cohn, 1978; 145) are characterized by the relationship between the experiencing and narrated selves – contained in the first-person narrator's function. Distinguishing between different types of first-person narration – each specifying the nature of relationship between the experiencing and narrated self, Cohn essentially highlights the rhetorical ambiguity that is produced in the process of life-narration. Although this author's considerations take only fiction as subject, they are applicable in the consideration of writing that positions itself within the non-fiction genre, considering it equally requires extensive narrativization. If narrativization occurs, we must assume that the work is characterized by fictionality – as a communicative strategy (Walsh, 2007; 7; Shen, 2011), especially if the work asserts claims of objectivity, truth and authority as is the case of the convention in autobiography.

In "Discordant Narration" (2000), Cohn contrasts two kinds of unreliable narration with regard to the narrator, which is particularly

interesting for autobiographical writing. One kind of unreliability is of the “factual kind” (Cohn, 2000; 307) pertaining to the inability or lack of capacity of the narrator to provide the facts. Whereas this kind of narrator might not intentionally deceive or omit due to a lack of knowledge, the ideological “is attributed to a narrator who is biased or confused, inducing one to look, behind the story he or she tells, for a different meaning from the one he himself provides” (Cohn, 2000; 307). The source’s lack of knowledge does not necessarily affect the attitude of the reader towards the text. However, the narrator’s overt ideological and rhetorical motivations influence the reception of the discourse. This is what Cohn terms “discordant narration”, because it “[signifies] the possibility for the reader to experience a teller as normatively inappropriate for the story he or she tells” (2000; 307). In terms of fiction, Cohn explores how the reader differentiates between the author’s intentions behind the work, and the discrepancies in the narrator’s storytelling. The reader must exert effort to discover the points at which narration is unreliable and therefore interpret, “against the grain of the narrator’s discourse” (Cohn, 2000; 307). Whereas the narrator’s inability to relate an accurate factual report does not compromise narrative reliability, narration imbued with ideological judgment and visible rhetorical intent causes the reader to disengage from the discourse-established truth programme (Schaeffer, 2012), and turn to the implied author’s intention behind the discordant mode.

In “Unreliability” (2011), Dan Shen explores discordant narration focusing on the process of reception, whereby the reader’s capacity to assess unreliability, rather than the implied author’s potential intent, is emphasized. As Shen explains, drawing on Seymour Chatman and his particular focus on the layers of story and discourse, the problematics of discordant narration lie in “the narrator’s mis- or under-interpretation and evaluation of events and characters” (2011: Para. 7) in contrast to the implied author’s established truth program. Shen interprets Chatman’s understanding of unreliability as occurring when “the story undermines the narrator’s erroneous discourse through the implied reader’s inference of the true facts” (ibid; Para. 6). This further implies a discrepancy between the factual and the ideological layers implemented throughout the discourse that cause the (implied) reader to observe points of incongruence. The emphasis on the *implied* is intentional because the author-narrator’s position invariably targets a specific group of people. When reading an autobiography, the reader is able to evaluate the rationale behind the interpretation of the factual, the conditions upon which the ideological positioning of the author occurs, but also the inconsistencies that might render the narrative unreliable,

or incredible, in the process of the author's fictionalization of events. Similarly, Puxan-Oliva suggests that unreliability is evaluated not against reliability as such, but as a process of narrative construction (2018; 196). This author also proposes that discordant narration, as defined by Dorrit Cohn, and forms of estranging or bonding unreliability as defined by James Phelan, among others, depend on the context in which the reader is invited to assess the ethical, ideological or other dimensions of the text (Puxan-Oliva, 2018; 192). As the genre itself involves creating connections in context, and across media in contemporaneity, it requires a broader approach in interpretation.

## 2.2 (Meta)Fiction and Narcissism

Autobiographical writing is metafictional because of the narrative techniques employed and the genre's framework involving the author-narrator who addresses the implied reader in sharing the narrativized account of their life. In *Metafiction*, Patricia Waugh explicates metafiction as the process in which writing about oneself, or writing from the first person, necessarily fictionalizes the author (or narrator) (1984; 123). In the process of narrativizing the self – regardless of whether it is an authorial intrusion or autobiographical writing, the author's "identity disappears the moment that it appears in the fictional text" (Waugh, 2001; 143). The awareness of the writing process invariably pushes the writer into fictionalization – self-reflexive or not. Waugh states that metafiction involves "fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artefact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality" (2001; 2). However, as a strategy, metafictional writing relies on the storyteller's ability to observe the contexts in which the act of storytelling takes place and the process of telling, which includes reflection on the level of fictionality created in the process, especially in autobiographical writing. The level of awareness remains with the author, and the narrative may rely on metafictionality as an instrument and reject its primary quality of self-reflexiveness when the author's own perception of reality is compromised, which is paradoxical (Hutcheon, 1980; 7). This *semblance* of self-reflexivity provides grounds for unreliability in the form of misinformation, omission and particularly biased interpretation, all of which are related to the phenomenon of textual and figural narcissism in literature.

Autobiographical writing relies particularly on subjective experiences and the ability to hypothesize about events presented. As Hogan explains, "all of us, as storytellers, produce stories from our narrative idiolects, that is, from the complexes of principles that allow us

to tell tales” (2017; 158). These narrative idiolects, though varied, contain universal patterns that allow for interpretation from diverse readership. Moreover, the cognitive and affective structures (Hogan, 2017; 159) in these proto-stories allow for a wide range of responses, since they “bear on our construal of our lives, our assessment of our conditions and prospects, and our moral evaluation of ourselves and others (Hogan, *ibid*). They are observable as patterns, and they can be reduced to simplistic narratives that guide our understanding of interpersonal relations and morality (Hogan, *ibid*), but also the creation of the autobiographical account of oneself. Julie Walsh notices that “the emancipatory potential of narration – or of narrative re-description” (Hogan, 2017; 74) as contextually supported by the “cultural zeitgeist in which projects of self-fashioning, self-actualization all hold sway” (*ibid*). The cultural context of contemporaneity holds the space for textual narcissism, but “a culture in which social actors use therapy to re-write the star part in their own stories” (Walsh, 2017; 74) also allows space for the rewriting of the plots of life-narratives – the paradigms according to which these stories are told.

### 2.3 Textual and Figural Narcissism: Me, I and They

The evaluation of unreliability in Prince Harry’s *Spare* depends on the reader’s ability to recognize the narcissistic orientation of the text. Textual narcissism (Hutcheon, 1980; Berning, 2017), an expected narrative strategy in autobiographical writing, might be somewhat appreciated by the implied reader – the one who expects the text to be oriented towards the author-subject. On the other hand, figural narcissism, as defined by Berning (2017), drawing on insight by Campbell and Foster in *The Narcissistic Self* (2007), represents the self-regulatory strategy of the character, which is the author-narrator. Whereas textual narcissism is inwardly oriented, figural narcissism in autobiographical writing is contained within the character of the author, focusing on the dialogue with the reader (Hutcheon, 1980; 7). It is a feature of a persuasive discourse, and the outcome of the author’s self-regulation and meaning-making strategies to maintain their narcissistic self-esteem. The reader comprehends such narration as discordant when the narcissistic author’s storytelling reveals the conflict between (objective) reality and erroneous interpretation of facts, or self-inflated or delusional beliefs directed at the reader to influence their interpretation of the discourse. Estranging unreliability becomes evident when the internal strategies of the storytelling process expose the author as unreliable in *their* interpretation, as well as intent on manipulating the dialogical relationship with the reader. The entire narrative structure

serves to aggrandize the authorial figure in the process of their identity-fictionalization, at the expense of other characters who merely feature their narrative as a function.

In “On the Seductions of Psychoanalytic Story-telling: Narcissism and the Problems of Narrative”, Julie Walsh explicates how “the quest for a seamless narrative is not the exclusive preserve of a therapeutic world-view” (2017; 78), but essentially a feature of our (cognitive) capacities that rely on storytelling to explain the experiences of our inner-worlds. Our emplotment capacity (Bruner, 1990; Ignjatović, 2018) enables the structuring and comprehension of complex experiences into mental constructs that we can further write upon, or re-write. This implies the rewriting of countless experiences from interpersonal contacts and events. This extends to the rewriting of narratives that Hogan explains as patterns (2017, 159) solidifying into narrative idiolects (ibid, 18), which hold cognitive and affective dimensions, modify our notions of morality and position our self-narrative in the framework of matrix-plots. As Walsh suggests, “once the self is conceived as a planning project – or a project of self-design/self-fashioning – the question of authorship becomes again critical” (2017, 77), because the author of the narrative not only approaches their identity from an existential distance, but from a distance that merges the real and imagined, the actual and desired. Self-narration, therefore, necessitates gap-filling or elision tasks in order to resolve narrative inconsistencies (Walsh, 2017; 80). This act, Walsh suggests, similarly to Waugh, is an act of “dissemblance” (ibid). The identity of the author is a fictionalized construct, motivated by the desire to stabilize their own image using metafiction as a tool.

Exploring narrative in the psychoanalytic practice and the broader context, Julie Walsh comments on the importance of paradigms signaling narcissism (2017; 71), and emphasizes that “beginnings and endings are particularly vulnerable to falsehoods and fabrications on the grounds that it is at these critical junctures that we strain most to give sense and shape to experience” (ibid.). It is for this reason that the analysis particularly focuses on the Prologue and Epilogue of the memoir as the framework within which the author establishes the truth programme using the two recurring plot-patterns. Moreover, these plot-patterns in *Spare* represent the foundation of the narrative and institute clear rhetorical and ideological positions crucial for the interpretation of the entire discourse. This approach is motivated by Walsh’s position that individuals, who in the psychoanalytic self-narration process become attached to “the particular version of the story that they are compelled to recount” (2017; 72), appear to compulsively repeat it as if cued by the triggering beginning, retelling the fictionalized account as a finished

product. As if the complete and meaningful narrative of the self is the goal, it becomes a compulsion. Walsh deduces that, “[when] stories are worn too tightly – taken as gospel, so to speak – then the teller risks becoming a mouthpiece for a story that, in truth, she has yet to make her own” (Ibid.).

#### 2.4 Plot-Pattern: Rivalry between Brothers

The main plot pattern of *Spare*, as the title itself suggests, is the bitter rivalry between brothers revealed by the younger sibling. The Prologue begins with the details of the meeting between Harry, his father and brother, shortly after the funeral of Prince Phillip in Frogmore gardens. The poetic descriptions of the place aside, the truth programme of the entire narrative is subtly introduced in the signaling of contrasts and qualities ascribed to *him*, as the main character, and others – those who create the atmosphere in which he must remain calm (Prince Harry, 2023; 6)<sup>1</sup>. The Frogmore estate, once Harry’s home, is now the place he and his wife flee, “in fear for our sanity and physical safety” (Ibid.), which implicitly positions those remaining on its premises – his brother among others, as threats. In the setting of Frogmore – the resting place of many a royal member, the author subtly finds the thread connecting his own life’s circumstances to those of the infamous King Edward (P. H., 2023; 7) and Wallis Simpson. However superficial and inaccurate the analogy, though they both did flirt with Nazis in one way or another, Harry manages to relate his supposed exile to this King’s popularly romanticized, though misinterpreted, choice of love over the throne. By this point in narrative, the second page of the book, the image of late Diana, appears on at least three occasions, which is unsurprising considering that Harry is anxiously waiting for the meeting parties, surrounded by dead relatives and historical figures. Yet what he relates of his mother are images, which is where it becomes tragically poignant that the author’s recollections are merged with her representations in the media (P. H., 2023; 8). A more skeptical individual would probably address the position that writing about the late Princess Diana sells even decades after her death, and that the pragmatic structuring of Harry’s narrative might be the contribution of the experienced ghostwriter in terms of content design.

Maybe she was omnipresent for the very same reason that she was indescribable – because she was light, pure and radiant light, and how can you really describe light? Even

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<sup>1</sup> Further references to the scenes from the book are listed using the author’s initials only, i.e. (P. H., 2023; 6).

Einstein struggled with that one. [...] That was my mother. [...] That – and the fact that I was carrying her flag. I'd come to those gardens because I wanted peace. [...] I wanted it for my family's sake, and for my own – but also for hers. (P. H., 2023; 8-9)

In a matter of a few short paragraphs, the author establishes the analogy between himself and the romantic idealist – Edward, but also his mother – the unmistakable, infallible, elusive, eternal peacemaker. The reader is reminded of Harry's mother's achievements (ibid.), which serves to strengthen his own position in coming to Frogmore, although from the dialogue that is subsequently told one can understand that peacemaking is not Harry's strong suit. The metaphor that serves to reinforce the two plot-patterns in the memoir – “Windsors [...] at war” (ibid.) is established and only deepened and expanded in the accounts of events described in the rest of the book.

Shoulder to shoulder, striding towards me, they looked grim, almost menacing. More, they looked tightly aligned. My stomach dropped. Normally they'd be squabbling about one thing or another, but now they appeared to be in lockstep – in league. (ibid.)

Not only is Harry *surprised* by the apparent absence of animosity between his brother and father, he is also *outnumbered* – supported only by the omnipresence of late Diana. The stomach-dropping shock leads him to question whether “we [are] meeting for a walk... or a duel?” (ibid.). In fact, he must consciously work on calming himself down by taking deep breaths due to “fear [...] a kind of hyper-awareness, and a hugely intense vulnerability” (P. H., 2023; 10). The sight of his father and sibling taking steps towards him reminds him of walking behind his mother's coffin, experiences of war, public speaking, and so on (ibid.) – in other words, a sense of generalized anxiety, which might lead a discerning reader to question the author's state of mind and perception. After all, this meeting happens hours after the funeral of a family member, which is unsurprisingly a difficult time. However, Harry's concern is the matter of his own project – the exile, and the requests for funding of his former lifestyle. After resigning the royal position, Harry must use his own funds – his mother's inheritance amounting to scanty \$10 million, to sustain the standard that involves a luxurious villa in Montecito California.

I tried to explain my side of things. I wasn't at my best. For starters, I was still nervous, fighting to keep my emotions in

check, while also striving to be succinct and precise. More, I'd vowed not to let this encounter devolve into another argument. But I quickly discovered that it wasn't up to me. Pa and Willy had their parts to play, and they'd come ready for a fight. (P. H., 2023; 11)

The excerpt contrasts Harry, at the literal level, as vulnerable and intimidated against the belligerent sibling and father, intent on shutting down any conversation. Figural narcissism operates in the provided excerpts as the superficiality of the intended self-reflection (introspection) and the naively manipulative creation of binary oppositions elaborated in the remainder of the book. Moreover, on the day Prince Charles buries his father, Harry's apparent realization of his father's age not only comes with an undertone of disgust (*ibid.*), but also a reminder that in a matter of years, he would be in the same place – burying him. Concurrently, yet unsurprisingly, his perception of William changes:

All at once something shifted inside of me. I looked at Willy, really looked at him, maybe for the first time since we were boys. [...] his familiar scowl, which had always been his default in dealings with me; his alarming baldness, more advanced than my own; his famous resemblance to Mummy, which was fading with time. With age. In some ways he was my mirror, in some ways he was my opposite. My beloved brother, my arch nemesis, how had that happened? (*ibid.*)

On the surface, Harry's revelations about the feelings for his brother resemble a moment of self-reflection. However, considering this epiphany comes immediately after Harry is reminded of his father's mortality, therefore, the succession, and his being farther down the line of heirs, it cannot possibly be interpreted outside of the context of the Frogmore meeting. The configuration of the truth programme in contrasting the brothers as opposites, as well as placing the father on the side of the antagonizing forces in Harry's life, inevitably represent Harry, once again, as unfairly subordinated to the two. This rivalry plot establishes the paradigm of *me vs. them*, as Harry is being acted upon by the brother and father, with no agency. Descriptions of William range from emotionless, unsympathetic, indifferent and rigid, violent and uncompromising, with feigned rationalization about it being his abiding by the rules of the crown that favors him for being the firstborn. However, the main reason is his being entirely *different* from the author. The memoir-Harry is established not as the successor to the Crown, but the

true successor of his mother, whereas William is her fading image.

This paradigm, and the disregard for the context in which the event takes place, suggest either deliberate underreporting or misinformation, or the narrator's inability to fully grasp the contexts of the past. The theme of rivalry and the war with media are furthered by claims that being called and treated as a spare was not "merely how the press referred to us – though it was definitely that," but also the "shorthand often used by Pa and Mummy and Grandpa. And even Granny" (P. H., 2023; 19). Prince Harry states that the term itself contained no judgment, "but also no ambiguity" (ibid.) explaining that his purpose was to be the holder of spare parts for William, "Kidney, perhaps. Blood transfusion." (ibid.), which "was all made explicitly clear to me from the start of life's journey and regularly reinforced thereafter" (ibid.). This incongruous reporting is not the effect of irony, or humour. It appears as if two conflicting sides reside within the fictionalized author. One sees the label as a matter of cultural idiolect – being no ordinary younger sibling, but a Windsor. The other toys with anti-monarchist sentiments, promoting equality. However, it is this particular ideological layer is based on pure sibling jealousy – the slight at not being granted everything that his older sibling got, which may be one of the most relatable dimensions of the book to the wide readership, although the most bizarre as well. Harry is simultaneously unbothered by his status, succession being "like the weather" (ibid.), and sardonically wounded that it encouraged an instinctive definition of his identity as "a byproduct of who you weren't" (ibid.). In the Prologue scene, Harry retains his position against his *old* father – another privileged Windsor implicitly and explicitly blamed for his mother's accident, and the Prince of Wales who was even privileged to have their mother's looks on top of everything else. Harry's rationalizations for grievances, including the claimed exile, include being given smaller rooms in castles and palaces, not being able to marry and have a family before William due to his trauma and relationship issues, not being able to build his career in the military due to the exposure and media, or privately sustain substance abuse due to the paparazzi, and so on. In other words, the fictionalized Harry insists on suffering the unprivileged status within the family, as well as the eyes of the public.

As Berning suggests, in literature, narcissism is "shaped, on the motivational side, by a continuous and intense craving for having one's superiority reaffirmed" (Berning, 2017; 116). Being the younger sibling, Harry is unable to achieve superiority over his elder brother. The author's polarized thinking leads him into an unfortunate generalization that clearly reveals class awareness. Clumsily socializing the issue of sibling jealousy, the author assumes that "[every] boy and girl, at least

once, imagines themselves as a prince or princess” (P. H., 2023; 20), which also exposes awareness of the privileged position he enjoyed until resigning from senior royalty. The very foundation of the ideology behind the narrative, verging on pragmatic anti-monarchist ideas, exposes the actual attitude of the author. The fictionalized author of the memoir additionally establishes moral superiority in the consistent invocation of his mother’s memory and image, and his claims of likeness to it. Moreover, her slightly awkward presence as some kind of a spectral figure following and supporting him on his path becomes a fully established paradigm – in the function of justifying the author’s actions towards his brother, father and the media. In other words, the narrative positions him and his mother’s legacy in contrast to the living members of the family, which grants fictionalized Harry the authority to address not only his family, but the world (P. H., 2023; 12), with the (re-written) *truth* in the ironic attempt to *reclaim* the narrative by once again releasing it to the media. This is the point in the narrative where the paradigm of me vs. them shifts into *I vs. them* – in the very act of self-narration. The agency is contained within the refashioning of his image and identity in the act of self-narration, and this agency is the source of unreliability.

All my life I’d told people I couldn’t remember the past, couldn’t remember my mum, but I never gave anyone the full picture. My memory was dead. (P. H., 2023; 357)

Discordant narration, as a textual effect (Puxan-Oliva, 2018; 198) presumes the reader’s knowledge about the arguments pertaining to a judgment presented in the text at the degree to which they could agree or disagree with them. The entire rivalry plot-pattern relates populist value judgments in representing the circumstances of the author – a former senior royal. The idea of the neglected, overlooked and downright humiliated *spare* appeals to the reader’s ability to empathize in the broader social, political and economic context, yet one analogous to them. This is where the discrepancy occurs and the reader is most likely to *disagree* with the author. However, what particularly estranges the reader are “the discrepancies between the narrator’s reports, interpretations, or evaluations and the inferences about those things made by the authorial audience” (Phelan, 2007; 225). In the act of self-aggrandizing carelessness, the author admits that his “memory lies” (P.H., 2023; 15), that he could “make no verbatim claims” (P.H., 2023; 17), that he cannot clearly remember his own words (ibid; 24), that his memory places people and events in different times on occasions (ibid; 27), that perhaps it is his defense mechanism that renders his memory

unable to “[record] things quite as it once did” (ibid; 34), that his “memory equaled grief” and “[not] remembering was balm” (ibid; 58), that his “memory was dead” (ibid; 357) and that, ultimately, “my memory is my memory, it does what it does, gathers and curates as it sees fit, and there’s just as much truth in what I remember and how I remember it as there is in the so-called objective facts” (ibid; 17). The last quote was his ghostwriter’s response when asked to explain the factual inaccuracies in the book. The question should perhaps instead have addressed the overall unreliability of the narration.

### 2.5 Plot-Pattern: Persecution by the Media

The second plot-pattern, embodied in Harry’s fierce war with the media – the press and paparazzi, revolves around their portrayal of his behaviour, particularly in his early twenties, but later on as well. This extends to portrayals of his wife, claims of racism, criticism of her fashion style, and all other topics that contemporary tabloids might assess as interesting to the detail-hungry readership. The plot-conflict is established in the Prologue when Harry’s self-proclaimed resemblance to his mother and her causes implies their sharing the same treatment by the media. The inference is that the media attention Lady Diana attracted is extended to the author, by virtue of his relation to her and status, but also the resemblance of his spouse to his mother. Severing ideological, emotional and all other ties with the *evil* Windsors, he assumes the role of the saviour of his allegedly persecuted wife, in contrast to his father, and justifies trying to prevent the same accident that happened to his mother from happening to her. His moral superiority hangs precisely in the contrast to his father and the media. The complete, though bizarre, identification with his mother is achieved as he becomes the saviour, and his wife Lady Diana’s avatar. Yet, in the elaboration of the effect ill-intentioned press had on Meghan Markle – including accounts of untruthful reporting and malicious twisting of facts, we learn that the physical threats were in fact the alleged suicidal thoughts of the American. Conversely, the author admits to his therapist the compulsion to read tabloid articles about himself – the apparent cause of his two-decade-long vicious cycle of substance abuse. In other words, the physical threats mentioned at the beginning of the Prologue, blamed on the royal family, refer to mental states and anger issues caused by the couple’s inability to reconcile their own images about themselves, against the overwhelming slurs of the tabloids. Similarly, after publishing the memoir, Prince Harry’s requests for the royal family to provide security become even louder. This is only exacerbated by the memoir revealing the number of people he killed during military service

– an imprudent disclosure drawing attention to the already exposed couple, now with two children. Whereas the latter example shows the propensity for irrational judgment on the part of the Duke, the former examples testify to the under-reporting and misinforming processes present in narration.

The episodes with the media Harry singles out as particularly significant are those in which substance abuse is highlighted. Incidentally, these perhaps tell us most about the *real* Harry, because he does confirm most of the allegations, albeit not taking any accountability and presenting the issue as a coping mechanism. He not only fervently defends his rampant alcohol and drug use as a means of self-regulation (P. H., 2023; 91), but equally aggressively and disparagingly describes the editors who published accounts of his behaviour (P. H., 2023; 28). He finds himself in situations where uncontrollable substance use escalates and reaches the eyes of the public either due to his being stalked by the paparazzi, or poor judgment in choice of company. Incapable of trusting his own memory, yet concerned about the implications of his unacceptable behaviour, he resorts to deceiving his own courtiers, as well as shifting the blame onto the media invading his privacy. He is seventeen when one of the tabloids discovers that he is using cocaine, and due to his memory problems, he has to *reassure* himself (P. H., 2023; 91) that the editor has no proof. The entire endeavor of convincing the courtier that he would not “*submit to blackmail*” (ibid.), much like his other accounts of the press publishing stories damaging his reputation, ends with his refusal take any responsibility or accountability. However, for whatever reason, the author shares:

Of course... I had been doing cocaine around this time. At someone's country house, during a shooting weekend, I'd been offered a line, and I'd done a few more since. [...] That was what I told myself anyway. Back then, I could lie to myself as effortlessly as I'd lied to that courtier. (P. H., 2023; 91)

The author's memory-issues and admission of deceptive habits, clearly call for the reader's estrangement from the narrative due to the failing logic of his truth programme. The absence of the author's reflection on the consequences of his action to his interpersonal relationships in the memoir, but also in the aftermath of its publishing, all add arguments in support of the discussion of the memoir featuring a figural narcissist as the protagonist. The affective (emotive) dimension of *Spare* indicates a manipulative or pragmatic intention behind the narrative structure. Similarly to how the Prologue opens with the immediate mention of Lady Diana, which suggests an awareness on the

part of the author(s) about the value of merging narratives about this historical figure for various purposes, the Epilogue employs similar strategies in attempting to merge the fictionalized identities of Harry, but more specifically Meghan, to the late Princess. The occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Lady Diana's death becomes the opportunity for the Sussex couple to seek spiritual guidance. Whereas Harry senses her presence at Frogmore at the beginning of the narrative, it is Meghan here who "also [wants] a moment" (P. H., 2023; 459) in order to kneel and pray at the grave, "eyes shut, palms against the stone" (ibid.). In the next days, the events of the Queen's health and subsequent death reveal more animosity between Prince Charles and Harry: "I checked the BBC website. Granny was gone. Pa was King." (P. H., 2023; 461)

### 3. Conclusion

The pseudo-psychoanalytic narrative of *Spare* attempts to reclaim the public image of its author and reposition it against the royal family as ideologically, morally and emotionally superior. However, from the title suggesting the main grievance and plot-pattern, to the use of royal title in the copyrighting of the book – albeit the populist attitudes promoted throughout, and the allegations of mistreatment, neglect, favoritism, racism, and so on – all contrasted to apparent privilege, Prince Harry exposes the very process of the creation of *his* discursive reality. The author's metafictional experimentation focuses not on the questioning of the process itself, as it might seem due to the journey-metaphor permeating the discourse. Rather, metafiction, as the instrument of textual narcissism, is employed only for its formal properties, imposing its ideological content onto the reader. Whereas textual narcissism is inherently present in *Spare* for its modality – memoir, its consistent rejection of self-analysis and (emphatic) consideration of other *characters* featuring the memoir reveals figural narcissism. The argument for the loose employment of the term *character* is premised on the idea that if the author fictionalizes their own identity, then invariably, the identities of others must be highly subjective interpretations. As Walsh suggests, "the psychoanalytic project reminds us that as soon as we put an account of ourselves into story form, we risk speaking beyond our means" (Walsh, 2017; 76). The project of self-narrativization easily becomes excessive in its insistence to claim the truth of one's own experience at the expense of others'. Ideally, the convention of the autobiography implies a merging of the implied author – as the real person, and the narrator – the storyteller, into a single entity. Yet, due to the narrative strategies employed and overall unreliable narration, this autobiography does not directly tell us

about the experiences or identity of the private person who purports to present himself in the function of the author-narrator. Indirectly, the reader, as the recipient of the incongruous discourse, must scrutinize the narrative in order to extrapolate the potential interpretations, as well as motivations for the direction of the fictionalization of the author's identity.

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### NEPOUZDANOST PRIPOVEDAČKE STRATEGIJE U AUTOBIOGRAFIJI – SLUČAJ MEMOARA REZERVA AUTORA PRINCA HARIJA

Rad problematizuje nepouzdanu pripovedanje u autobiografiji, i ispituje način na koji efekti koji nastaju u procesu narativizacije izlaze iz okvira konvencija žanra u pogledu relativizacije objektivne realnosti subjektivnom interpretacijom. Diskordno i otuđujuće pripovedanje analiziraju se kao posledica tekstualnih efekata i retoričkog poslojavanja od strane autora-pripovedača. Teorijski okvir za ispitivanje tipova nepouzdanog pripovedanja uključuje diskusije o fikcionalizaciji autora, o ulozi fikcionalnosti kao retoričkom sloju koji povezuje priču i diskurs, i tekstualnom i figuralnom narcizmu. Memoar *Rezerva* (2023), autora Princa Harija, Vojvode od Saseksa, i Dž. R. Moringera – kao ghostwritera, odabran je za ilustrovanje nepouzdanog pripovedanja sa otuđujućim efektom.

**Ključne reči:** nepouzdanu pripovedanje, metafikcija, autobiografija, memoar, tekstualni narcizam, figuralni narcizam, fikcionalnost, , dokumentarna književnost



## WORLD COFFEE CULTURE: COFFEE HOUSES AND CAFÉS LITTÉRAIRES – FOCUS ON ITALY

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For *Marianna*, My inspiring coffee lover *Muse*.

**Abstract:** The idea to write this article was inspired by a Ugandan-born English writer, Anthony Capella, who is the author of the novel *The Various Flavours of Coffee* (2008), in which coffee flavours are compared with the varying ‘flavours’ of love depending on the protagonist’s many flirts. I will argue that coffee traditionally accompanies emotional experiences to fight against stress and moodiness or it can be seen as a shelter or a facilitator of relationships. As widely acknowledged, coffee is some sort of ritual enjoyed, first in the morning for a caffeine boost to power your day, during coffee breaks, and after meals. We will see how such functions represent the role coffee had throughout history. Initially, coffee houses grew as meeting places for discussing business and matters of high historic and social relevance. Then, they acquired a key role in the literature world, and became literary cafés. Thus, it is not incidental that poems, short stories, music compositions, and even novels have been dedicated to coffee and cafés have been used as the ideal place where stories were set. Besides referring to some leading world writers and artists, I will focus on some of the most prominent Italian examples, including Goldoni’s *La bottega del caffè* (1750), Luigi Pirandello’s *L’ultimo caffè* (1912), and among contemporary writers to Luciano De Crescenzo with *Il caffè sospeso* (2017). You can bump into a ‘caffè letterario’ even in the remotest areas of the country.

**Keywords:** coffee, coffee house, literary café, literature, relationship, flavour, culture, energiser.

### **Historical background to the diffusion of coffee**

Capella’s *The Various Flavours of Coffee* is a novel serving multiple purposes. On the one hand, it is particularly suitable to explore the growth in the demand for coffee and its appreciation in early twentieth-century London, on the other hand, it may function as a brief introduction to the history of coffee. It deals with the impact that this beverage had on the economy and the social relations in the western

world, while opening up an unknown scenario over a mysterious far-away country as ancient Abyssinia, notably modern Ethiopia.

Robert Wallis, the protagonist of the novel, a would-be poet and dandy, accepts a commission from Samuel Pinker, a coffee merchant who asks him to categorise the different tastes of coffee to compile a guide to global coffee beans. This job reveals a world of its own which drives to ecstasy the people who can discern the slightest differences in taste, aroma, and mouthfeel. Or, as suggested by the title given to the Brazilian translation of this novel, *Os Various Sabores Da Vida* ("The Various Tastes of Life," 2008), the story is also about the varying aspects of life, including love. Wallis accomplishes his job, resulting in the Wallis-Pinker coffee codifier: "At last the Guide was complete. The perfumer had made up a dozen stout mahogany boxes, which opened at the side to reveal an ingenious series of shelves holding thirty-six glass-stoppered bottles of aroma" (Capella, 2008: 110). That was an absolute achievement which persuaded Pinker to coax Wallis to go and start up a new coffee plantation in a particular spot of ancient Abyssinia, Kaffa, widely considered as the birthplace of the word 'coffee' and as having the best growing conditions to produce the legendary Arab Mocca. Historically speaking, it appears that the uncultivated coffee bean spread from Ethiopia to Yemen, Mecca, and Egypt. But as reported by an old legend, coffee has been around since the 9<sup>th</sup> century when a shepherd in the desert of Yemen realised that coffee beans had a very stimulating effect on his goats, which could not sleep and jumped all night. He decided to follow his herd and saw that the goats got excited after eating some berries. So, he took them to the Imam who refused to believe his story until he tried their effect on himself. Then, it did not take long before some Islamic clerics began to cultivate the beans, making coffee very popular among their communities. By the 15<sup>th</sup> century, coffee reached Turkey where as early as 1475 "Kiva Han" was the first public place serving coffee in Constantinople (now Istanbul). Regarding coffee-houses in Turkey, Ellis quotes a certain English traveller Biddulph who said:

Their most common drinke is Coffa, which is a black kind of drinke made of a kind of Pulse like Pease, called Coaua; which being grownd in the mill, and boiled in water, they drinke it as hot as they can suffer it; which they Find to agree very well with them against their crudities and feeding on herbs and rawe meates. Their coffa houses are more common than ale-houses in England [...] if there be any news; it is talked there. (Ellis, 2014: 8)

The Italian Pietro Della Valle (1586-1652), a Roman nobleman who travelled all over the Ottoman Empire, India, and Persia from 1614 until 1626, sailed from Venice to the East with ten people, including two servants and a painter. He stopped in Constantinople for a year where he was introduced to coffee, a beverage unknown in Italy until then. He associated the black brew to a plant called *Nepenthes*, which had the characteristic of relieving pain and making one fall into oblivion. Della Valle argued that coffee was the 'nepenthes' (*ne penthos* - 'no grief' - an ancient Greek plant) that, according to Homer is the *Odyssey*, Paris gave to Helen of Troy after he abducted her to make her forget even where she came from.

This new beverage then spread to the Balkans and - via Italy - to the rest of Europe. As it happens, when the Sultan of Egypt authorised its consumption, the Muslim religious leaders in Mecca and Cairo forbade it as they considered it dangerous for people's health. Consequently, when coffee was first brought to Christian Europe was greeted with great suspicion because it was seen as the favourite drink of Muslims, with whom Christians had been at war for centuries. Sam Guzman maintains that some 'fanatics' even called it 'Satan's drink.' Quite surprisingly, when they introduced it to Pope Clement VIII (1536-1605), although some high-ranking clergy tried to convince him in advance to ban the drink to the faithful, the Pope had a taste of it and ironically declared: 'This devil's drink is delicious. We should cheat the devil by baptizing it' (Guzman, 2014: 8). As a result, coffee drinking quickly spread throughout Europe and eventually around the world where it remains a uniquely popular drink.

### **Spreading of coffee houses and literary cafés**

The first European coffee house was established in Hungary in 1526 and in Vienna a year later. Then came Leghorn in 1632 and Venice in 1640 in Italy. Regarding England, the Queen's Lane appeared in Oxford in 1651. But according to Pasqua Rosée, the servant of Daniel Edwards, an importer of Turkish goods, he was helped by this businessman to start up a new establishment on St Michael's Alley, off Cornhill London in 1652 because his master's depot, known as "Edwards' Home," could no longer host the increasing number of customers eager to taste the new, exotic beverage.



Fig. 1: Plaque on display in St Michael's Alley, London.

All the above is confirmed by John Aubrey (1625-1697) in the notes on the history of London coffee-houses that he collected in his *Brief Lives* in the early 1680s. He maintains that

The first coffee house in London was in St Michael's Alley in Cornhill opposite to the church, which was sett up by one ... Bowman (Coachman to Mr Hodges, a Turkey-merchant, who putt him upon it) in or about the year 1652. 'Twas four yeares before any other was sett up, and that was by Mr. Far. Jonathan Paynter, opposite to St Michael's Church, was the first apprentice to the trade: viz. to Bowman. (Aubrey, 2000, xxii-xxiii)

As specified by the news-sheet writer Henry Muddiman, coffee was first brought into England at a time when there was an absolute craze for coffee and Oliver Cromwell's revolutionary ideas and the establishment of his Commonwealth. An anonymous satirist said that explicitly in a short poem in 1665:

*Coffee and Commonwealth* begin  
 With one letter both came in,  
 Together for a *Reformation*  
 To make's a free and sober *Nation*.<sup>1</sup>

The fast diffusion of coffee houses in the following years caused great worry that King Charles II (1660-1685) tried to close them down for fear of conspiracy. Indeed, they became favourite meeting places, especially with the middle- and upper- classes that usually had two back rooms at their disposal where the growing bourgeoisie met to discuss their ideas about politics, religion, society, and later also literature. But

women were excluded from all those lively activities. Actually, they even became suspicious about the negative effect that coffee had on the virility of their men, and, perhaps to vindicate themselves, produced *The Women's Petition against Coffee*, reading:

<sup>1</sup> *The Character of a Coffee-House. Wherein is Contained a Description of the Persons usually frequenting it with their Discourse and Humours. By an Eye and Ear Witness. London: no publisher, 1665, p. 6.*

[...] we find of late a very sensible Decay of that true old English vigor; our Gallants being every way so Frenchified, that they are become mere Cock-sparrows, but they are not able to stand to it, and in the very first charge fall down flat. [...] The occasion of which such insufferable Disaster [...] we can attribute to nothing more than to the excessive use of that Newfangled Abominable Heathenish Liquor called coffee.

(Anonymous, 1674, n. p.)

Men replied accordingly with *The Men's Answer to the Women's* document, where they, on defending the good qualities of coffee, stressed that 'it collects and settles the spirits, makes the erection more Vigorous, and the Ejaculation more full [...]' (Anonymous, 1674, n. p.) Meanwhile, coffee houses became ideal venues for trading, known as "penny universities," such as that run by Edward Lloyd (1648-1713), who by 1688 founded the world known Lloyd's of London insurance company. Professor Markman Ellis best summarises the function of coffee-houses as follows:

Their success was incredible, there were about 3,000 coffee houses only in the city of London by the end of the 18th century. Coffee-houses accomplished what the theatre in the Renaissance England did for the public. The periodicals were new dramatic plays and the coffee-houses were virtual stages. (Ellis, 2014: 156)

The ale sellers feared that coffee was becoming very popular in rich and private houses. This made the ale sellers fear that that could damage their trade and petitioned Pasqua Rosée for not being a freeman. On this purpose the English historian Lord Macauley (1800-59) wrote in his five-volume study, *The History of England*, covering the 17-year period from 1685 to 1702:

Foreigners remarked that the coffee-house was that which especially distinguished London from all other cities... that the coffee-house was the Londoners' home, and that

those who wished to find a gentleman commonly asked not whether he lived in Fleet Street or Chancery Lane, but whether he frequented the Grecian or the Rainbow. (Macauley, 1848, n. p.)

Then, legend has it that Rosée himself opened the first café at the fair of Place Saint-Germain in 1672. However, venues like that did not become popular until the “Café de la Regence” was not opened in Rue Saint Honoré in 1681, under the name ‘Café du Palais Royale,’ boasting among its clients Voltaire and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. (Note that it is still one of the most elegant venues in the heart of Paris.) Its major competitor was the “Café Procope,” established by the Sicilian François Procope dei Coltelli in 1689. This ‘institution,’ located in ‘Rue de l’Ancienne Comédie became a favourite meeting place with playwrights, actors, writers, and musicians.



Fig. 2: Café Procope, Paris.

The Court did not ignore “Café Procope” either. Following certain records of the time, coffee was introduced to France in 1669 by Suleyman Aga, the ambassador to the court of Louis XIV, le Roi Soleil. The monarchy’s interest in the “Café Procope” continued with the King’s successors, Louis XV, and his grandson Louis XVI in 1774. Most interestingly, even during the turbulent days of 1789, you could find sitting at the tables such leaders of the French Revolution as Marat, Robespierre, and Danton, drinking coffee and discussing crucial affairs regarding the impending destiny of the country. It will suffice to consider that during the reign of Louis

XV, there were 600 and by 1843 there were more than 3000. They say that even Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) was held as an example of the beneficial effect of coffee. Like many teetotalers, he enjoyed coffee at any time of the day.

The next country that we will consider is Germany. Coffee was introduced there in 1670 when it became a substitute for beer and wine drinking at the end of meals. There was such a craze for this beverage that the royal family had to spend a lot of money to import it. Hence, King Frederick II (1740-1786) increased its price to make it affordable only for the richest layers of society. But the lower classes took that move as social discrimination, meant to deprive them of the drink they liked most. Consequently, the authorities, supported by doctors, launched a campaign against coffee, and while saying that they were just trying to help them, declared: "You had better leave it alone. Anyhow, it's bad for you because it causes sterility" (Ukers, 1922: Ch. VIII, 46). But, instead of convincing them to stop protesting, that initiative raged them more and prompted them to continue. It is here that Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) comes into play. By 1720, he was the musical director of the *collegium musicum* for hymn writing in Leipzig which was near *Zimmermannsches Kaffeehaus* (Zimmermann's Coffeehouse), a most popular venue with middle- and working-class people in town, where Bach enjoyed spending a lot of free time himself. He decided to give the protesters a hand by composing a comic opera with the collaboration of his friend Christian Friedrich Henrici, who wrote the words for *Kaffeekantate* ("Coffee Cantata," 1732) whose protagonist a young woman called Lieschen sings: "Mmm! How sweet the coffee tastes, more delicious than a thousand kisses, mellower than muscatel wine. Coffee, coffee I must have, and if someone wishes to give me a treat, ah, then pour me some coffee!" (Translation of 'libretto' by Dmitri Matheny).

In the German-speaking area, Austria is another important country, whose coffee houses are considered a world cultural heritage by UNESCO. Unlike Bach, Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), who lived there when he was a young member of the Habsburg Empire's court orchestra, though he was hardly ever seen in a coffee house, he was known to be a true coffee lover.

On concluding this paramount presentation, we will turn to Italy where coffee was first brought to Venice by the Paduan Prospero Alpino as early as 1570. No wonder then that the oldest coffee bar in the world is "Caffé Florian," which was opened by Floriano Francesconi on 29 December 1720, with the name "Alla Venezia Trionfante" ("To the Triumphant Venice"), though it is still known after the name of its owner,

Floriàn in the Venetian dialect. Afterwards, coffee in Italy was associated with a cultural-political institution, the “Accademia dei Pugni” that was founded in Milan in 1761, and, from 1764, even published a journal called *Il Caffè*. This publication was modelled on Joseph Addison’ and Richard Steele’s *The Spectator*, creating a fictional narrative situation within which the various articles were presented. Similarly, we know that the journalists pretended to report the customers’ conversations in a coffee shop to avoid the strict Austrian censorship which tried to prevent the spreading of the emerging ideas of French Enlightenment philosophers. In his *L’Introduzione al “Café (Introduction to the “Café”)*, Pietro Verri, one of the co-founders of the “Accademia dei Pugni” (“The Punches Academy”) explains why he and a few other intellectuals, including his brother Alessandro, got the idea to found this institution in 1761, saying that they called it like that because they meant to fight on behalf of the community both in a metaphorical and, if needed, also in a physical sense. “In there you can mainly drink coffee which deserves to be called so; coffee real coffee from the East [...]” But in 1766, due to the progressive socio-political opinions of Cesare Beccaria and the Verris, “Accademia dei Pugni” broke up and *Il Caffè*, which had appeared as many as 74 times in only two years, stopped its activity, too. (See AA.VV. 2018. Roma-Bari: Giuseppe Laterza & Figli).

As we will see in the next section, following the unique example set by the “Accademia dei Pugni,” many coffee establishments sprung up. But besides being a hub for political issues, they also became common places for discussions on intellectual and literary matters, and even everyday life situations, such as love affairs, as in Goldoni’s *La bottega del caffè*. In short, literature began to boast the role that coffee traditionally had in society through poems, fiction, and essays which were increasingly dedicated to this lovable drink. So, in Venice as in many other European cities, it was thanks to the Enlightenment movement that the “literary cafés” took culture out of traditional meeting places and far away from elitist ideas.



Fig. 3: A. Perego: *Accademia dei Pugni* (meeting of founding members from left): A. Longo, A. Verri, G.B. Biffi, C. Beccaria, L. Lambertenghi, P. Verri, G. Visconti.

It is self-evident that coffee houses had an enormous impact on the English and the Italian socio-cultural environment, but France did set an exceptional example of its own. Indeed, starting from the early days, the joy of coffee drinking in the Age of Enlightenment is highly represented by some leading cultural members of the French milieu as, the above-mentioned Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), who once said: “Ah, that is a perfume in which I delight; when they roast coffee near my house, I hasten to open the door to take in all the aroma.” (See *Sitography*). And his friend, the philosopher Voltaire (1694-1778), who, as the legend goes, drank about 50 cups of a blend of coffee and chocolate daily. His doctor used to tell him that if he continued to abuse coffee, he would kill himself, to which he ironically answered: “if it is like that, I have been trying to poison myself for 80 years!” Another coffee addict at the time, was the writer Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850) who, like Voltaire, drank over 50 cups of coffee a day, corresponding to the period when he wrote his *Comédie Humaine* (“The Human Comedy”), a multi-volume collection connecting novels and stories from 1815 to 1848. According to his biographer Anton Schindler, he had a personal ‘magic formula, consisting of 60 coffee beans, corresponding to about eight grams of grounded coffee. To prepare that, he invariably used his famous white Limoges coffee pot, received from the French author Zulma Carraud in 1833.



Fig. 4: Balzac's Coffee Pot, currently exhibited at the Maison Musée Balzac, Paris.

No wonder that, following such an amazing tradition, at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was a plethora of “café littéraires” in Paris, amongst which the emerging one was “Le Deux Magots,” founded in 1914, at 6 Place Saint Germain-des-Prés. This, still highly fashionable venue, boasted the early presence of Rimbaud, Verlaine, and Mallarmè, who were followed by André Gide, Jean Giraudoux, Picasso, Jacques Prévert, Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, and also the American writer Ernest Hemingway, who even used it as a favourite venue in *The Sun Also Rises* (1926). Mainly to show that such tradition of setting stories at literary cafés is going onto our day, let us just refer to another novel *Dans le café de la jeunesse perdue* (2007) (“In the Café of the Lost Youth”, 2012), in which the Frenchwriter Patrick Modiano (1945-), Noble Prize winner in Literature 2014, sets the story at the Parisien ‘Café Condé,’ where a group of students meet regularly in a bohemian ambience every night.



Fig. 5: Café Deux Magots (Café Littéraire), Paris.

As we have said from the beginning, on turning to Britain, we find that there was a long-standing connection between Coffee and Literature from the early days of coffee-houses, anticipating by and large today's Foyles, Waterstones or Barnes & Nobles where you can sit down and enjoy a cup of coffee while leafing through a book. However different they are, these bookshops lead us back to the Scriblerus Club, which was an informal association of authors established in London at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. They called themselves Scriblerians and included the playwright John Gay (1685-1732), author of the famous *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), the satirist and essayist Jonathan Swift (1667-1745) who, unlike other fellow writers, was very moderate and found coffee so invigorating that he said he needed to have some at least once a week:

The best Maxim I know in this life is, to drink your Coffee when you can, and when you cannot, to be easy without it. While you continue to be splenetic, count upon it I will always preach. Thus much I sympathise with you that I am not cheerful enough to write, for I believe Coffee once a week is necessary to that. (Swift, 1950, 47)

And also, the poet and satirist Alexander Pope (1688-1764) who, in his famous poem *The rape of the Lock*, about the popular new beverage said:

Coffee (which makes the politicians wise,  
And see through all things with his half-shut eyes)  
Sent up in vapours to the Baron's brain  
New stratagems, the radiant Lock to gain.  
(Pope, 1986, Canto 3, ll. 117-120, 1119)

Given the clear link between past and present that the examples offered above offer us, we can move on to our times, right where this article started from, Cappella's *The Various Flavours of Coffee*. Thus, we come across a Scottish writer Joanne K. Rowling (1965- ), who has greatly contributed to the popularity of coffee bars as she began to write on a serviette the story of her world-famous character Harry Potter at the 'Elephant House' in Edinburgh (Scotland). This venue has become an iconic place where people go and sip a cup of coffee to feel the atmosphere of Rowling's magic stories. Another contemporary good example is represented by *The Devil's Cup: A History of the World According to Coffee* (1999), an intriguing story, partly historical and partly travelogue, through which the English writer and stand-up comedian Stewart Lee Allen (1968-) shows how coffee emerged as the popular beverage the vast majority of us consume every day. Allen, like the protagonist of Cappella's novel, travels almost all over the world for about a year wondering about the role that coffee had in the development of the history of mankind. He goes from the remote areas of Southern Yemen, moving to a coffee house in Calcutta (India) and from there to the famous Parisian *cafés* where, as we have seen above, he is right on claiming that the French Revolution was conceived. Eventually, he ends his journey at an American Starbucks. Particularly intriguing is the fact that Allen intends to prove that - through coffee - the planet was provided with some sort of web well before the Internet was invented.

On turning to the United States, coffee was introduced there around the 1670s. Interestingly, the drink was not popular until the Boston Tea Party of 1773 when switching from tea to coffee became a patriotic duty. The tradition began with John Adams, the second President of the United States (1797-1801) and his wife Martha became addicted to coffee by drinking it regularly. Curiously enough, J. F. Kennedy (1961-63) and his wife Jacqueline, to support his Senate campaign in 1952, staged the so called 'Coffee with the Kennedys' by sharing the beverage with people interested. Among the most prominent American literary figures, we cannot miss out for loving coffee, the American-born author, who acquired the British citizenship, T. S. Eliot, who with the famous line from *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* (1915), "I have measured out my life with coffee spoons" (Eliot, 1963: 14) shows how coffee was widely consumed, especially by the bourgeoisie.

Another relevant writer is Lula Carson Smith alias Carson McCullers (1917-1967) with his novella, *The Ballad of the Sad Café* (1951), which was first adapted into a successful play, on the bill for 123 reruns at the

Martin Beck Theatre in Broadway (NY) between 1963-64, and then into a film in 1991. This story is particularly suitable for the purposes of this article, showing the continuing traditional social function of coffee. The place is as sad and lonesome as one can imagine. The story introduces a daring, striking central character, Miss Amelia Evans, who transforms the general store inherited from her father into a lively coffee bar called “Sad Café” where the locals can meet and socialise.

The café expanded in a gradual way. [...] Within two years the place was a store no longer, but had been converted into a proper café, open every evening from six until twelve o’clock. [...] The café itself proved profitable and was the only place of pleasure for many miles around. (McCullers, 2005, 13-14).

To close this roundup of international writers, we cannot but conclude with Brazil, which boasts a unique ‘literary café’ (a bar-restaurant), “Garota de Ipanema.,” located in Rua Montenegro, Rio de Janeiro. The name of this venue is associated with the world-famous poet Vinicius de Moraes (1913-1980), and his friend, the musician Antonio Jobim (1927-1994), who by uniting their respective arts invented bossa nova, resulting from a mixture of poetry, music, and coffee. In this must-go place, they conceived the world-renown poem/song *Garota de Ipanema* (“The Girl from Ipanema”).



Fig. 6: Landmark of Bar at Ipanema Beach. Fig.7: Original score of *Garota de Ipanema*. Rio de Janeiro.

### Italian ‘Caffè Letterari’ and literature

Here I will argue that the coffee drinking tradition in Italy is deeply rooted in society as in literature. Like everywhere else in Europe when coffee first appeared it contributed to draw a line between aristocrats, who were originally consumers of chocolate, and the emerging bourgeoisie, which enjoyed the exotic beverage, whereas the rest of the

population kept on drinking wine or at times beer. Most importantly, this varied social environment favoured the creation of certain typical characters and caricatures that represented a wide picture of Italian society. Carlo Goldoni with *Le femmine puntigliose* (*The Stubborn Females*, 1754), and his more famous *La bottega del caffè* (*The Coffee Shop*), both written and represented in Mantua in the same year, showed how coffee shops gradually became a pivotal meeting centre. The protagonist Don Marzio, a Neapolitan nobleman, wastes his time away sitting at a table drinking coffee and gossiping to ruin people's reputations. The opening scene of the comedy introduces us into the colourful and lively atmosphere that one could enjoy in coffee shops. They were vivacious meeting places for people from all walks of life. Rodolfo, the shop owner, is talking to Trappola, a young man who helps him in the business:

RIDOLFO. Come on boys, behave yourselves; be quick and ready to serve our customers civilly and politely. You know that the reputation of a bar depends on the waiters' good manners.

TRAPPOLA. Dear master, to tell you the truth, getting up so early is not good for my health.

RIDOLFO. And yet, one needs to get up early. We need to serve everybody. Those who come here betimes are workers, boatmen, and sailors. They get up early in the morning.

TRAPPOLA. It cracks me up seeing that even porters come here for their coffee.

RIDOLFO. Everybody tries to do what everybody else does. In the old days *grappa* used to flow, while coffee is popular today.

TRAPPOLA. And the lady, to whom I deliver the coffee every morning, almost always asks me to buy her four *soldi* of wood, yet she wants to drink her coffee.

RIDOLFO. Gluttony is a never-ending vice, and it is that kind of vice that grows with age.

[...]

RIDOLFO. Oh now! go roast the coffee to make a fresh pot.

TRAPPOLA. Shan't I warm yesterday's coffee grounds?

RIDOLFO. No, make it good.

TRAPPOLA. Sir I have a short memory. When did you open this shop?

RIDOLFO. You know well. It must be about six months.

TRAPPOLA. It's time for a change, then.

RIDOLFO. What do you mean?

TRAPPOLA. When a new shop opens, they make an excellent coffee. In no longer than six months, hot water and wish-wash. [Exit.]

RIDOLFO. He is a pleasant fellow. I hope he'll do my shop well. People like going to a shop where there is a clown helping. (Goldoni, 1984: Sc. i., 4. *My translation*).

Equally interesting is what Ridolfo says to one of his regulars, Pandolfo, a gambler whom he reproaches for ruining young people's lives, while he was very happy with what he earned just by selling coffee: 'No, no, coffee, coffee; since with coffee one earns 50%; how much better than that would you like to make?' (Goldoni, Sc. ii, 9. *My translation*).

This is how a long-standing tradition started, making places like "Floriàn" an unmissable venue, especially if you wanted to enjoy a coffee in a lavish and elegant atmosphere where enthusiastic coffee drinkers as Casanova, Goethe, Mann, Monet, De Chirico, Chanel, Mastroianni, and many other celebrities used to hang out. In 1775, 'Caffè Quadri' was opened in Piazza San Marco (Venice), and praised among its customers the English Romantic poet Byron, who in a note to *Child Harold*, he jeeringly says of his valet Fletcher's liking tea, though he did not really disdain it himself: "*Tis pity wine should be so deleterious, / for tea and coffee leave us much more serious.*" (Summer, 1863, 48) Among other artists, who used to spend a lot of time at the 'Quadri,' there were the French Alexandre Dumas, Stendhal, Proust, the German composer Richard Wagner, and the American film director and actor Woody Allen. In Padua, near Venice, 'Caffè Pedrocchi' kept its doors open from its inauguration in 1831 until 1916. It became the meeting place of patriots and artists as Ippolito Nievo, Giovanni Prati, Alfred De Musset, George Sand, Eleonora Duse, and Marinetti. Today it remains one of the symbols of the city where they hold poetry readings and present new books.

Then in Tuscany we find the 'Caffè le Giubbe Rosse,' which was established in Florence in 1897 and became a favourite venue for artists as Pietro Verri and Marinetti, Carrà and Boccioni. In the 1930s, Giuseppe Ungaretti (1888-1970), Salvatore Quasimodo (1901-1968) and Elio Vittorini (1908-1966) became regulars. One more memorable place in Central Italy is the *Antico Caffè Greco*, the second oldest coffee shop in Italy, opened in Rome in 1760. It boasted among its many famous customers great artists like Byron, Shelley, Keats, Stendhal, Wagner, Liszt, Rossini, Toscanini, Ibsen, Joyce, Mann, Guttuso, and Mark Twain.



Fig. 8 'Antico Caffè Greco' (1760), via Condotti, Roma.

*Caffè letterari* such as those just mentioned are still a distinguishing landmark also in cities like Trieste, as is the case with the historic *Caffè Tommaseo*, (1830) and *Caffè Pasticceria Stella Polare* (1848) which used to offer an ideal environment to intellectuals and patriots. The latter was the favourite haunt of James Joyce and his Italian friend, Italo Svevo, as well as Umberto Saba and Franz Kafka, who loved spending long hours there discussing literature. Incidentally, it was in Trieste that the founder of the futurist movement, Filippo Tommaso (1876-1944) and his friend Fillia (1904-1936), declared that, on 12 January 1910, they had a meal starting from coffee to celebrate the first futurist event at the "Teatro Rossetti." That was the famous *cena a rovescio* ("backwards dinner"), where the conventional order of serving a meal was inverted: "coffee and cakes first, followed by roast mummies with teachers' livers, ... to end with demolition starters and vermouth." (Marinetti & Fillia, 38). In Marinetti's opinion, coffee was a booster to modernity on the advent of coffee machines. He even thought that this beverage could 'free' Europe from the 'idolatry of the past.' Indeed, he was ironically nicknamed "Europe's Caffeine" for the energy he applied to disseminate his new ideas.

In the same period there were other great artists as the 1934 Noble Prize winner, the Sicilian, Luigi Pirandello (1867-1936), who was renowned for being particularly fond of coffee. In some of his works, he brings this beverage up at several different points in his works. However, the coffee experience is often a moment of profound introversion unlike the function it has in Goldoni's plays. Although Pirandello is most known as a playwright, he was also a life-long poet. He dedicated "L'ultimo caffè" ("The Last Coffee"), first published in *La Riviera Ligure* in June 1912, nr. 6, to be revised later in 1933. Pirandello praises the virtues of coffee in this poem, where having a coffee is described as a moment of

introspectiveness during the sleepless night of an old man, who, being aware of his imminent death, indulges in drinking what could be his last cup of coffee:

Being unable to sleep,  
is for old people, a bad sign  
of death approaching:  
it means that  
the vital device  
is messed up.

Alone  
on the roof  
of the old house opposite  
a chimney exhales  
a light smoke  
in spirals  
in the clammy and colourless  
dawn.

Opposite  
lives an old little man  
who is certainly in the kitchen  
for his coffee.

(Death  
is near  
those who can't sleep.)

Bent over the fire  
the old man fans vigorously;  
then the usual white cup  
he prepares:  
three little bits  
of sugar, as coffee always bitter  
tastes to him.  
The fire is sparkling.

(Dear little old man,  
perhaps you weren't expecting me.  
Yet, in a while  
You'll come with me.)

[...] Here he is: behind

the balcony panes, dead slowly  
now  
the good old man  
his hot coffee sips.  
Before sipping  
he blows on it; he closes his eyes:  
who knows what he may recall!  
Perhaps last night's  
foolish dreams.  
[...]

Come on, come on another sip,  
little old man don't worry.  
Why are you looking around?  
Silence. The clock strikes the hours.

It's five. Who's waiting for you?  
It's daytime, can you see?  
It's already a clear day.  
Finish your coffee.  
("Then, dear little old man,  
take courage,  
you'll come with me"). (Pirandello, 123; *My translation*)

An equally interesting piece of work is the one-act play *L'uomo dal fiore in bocca* (*The Man with the Flower in His Mouth*) (1923), which Pirandello based on his novella *La morte addosso* (*Bring Death Upon You*) (1918), whose original title was *Caffè Notturmo* (*Night Coffee Bar*). The story takes place in a provincial, little coffee bar station where the man with the flower, that represents a painful end – the man knows he has cancer, after missing his train home, which he will be missing indefinitely, sits at a table on his own until another person joins him. They start chatting about everything around them and the value of life itself, and he eventually tells him about his terrible problem. Thus, Pirandello makes a public place the ideal psychological setting for people to meet and socialise.



Fig. 9: Literary Café “Luigi Pirandello” in Agrigento, Pirandello’s hometown.

Another coffee fanatic is Eduardo De Filippo (1900-1984), the world-famous Neapolitan playwright, who, in the comedy film, *Fantasma a Roma* (1961), featuring some of the greatest Italian actors, Marcello Mastroianni, Vittorio Gassman, utters the famous cue: “Quando moriró, tu portami il caffè, e vedrai che io resuscito come Lazzaro” (“When I am dead please bring me a cup of coffee, and I’ll raise from the dead like Lazarus!” *My translation*). The message here sounds obvious: coffee is such a powerful energiser, an irresistible pleasure, an excuse to spend time together. Finally, we come across one of the most haunting scenes from one of De Filippo’s plays, the opening of Act II of *Questi Fantasma* (*These Ghosts*, 1945). In a lengthy monologue, one of the characters, Pasquale Lojacono explains to professor Santanna, his neighbour across the balcony, who never appears nor speaks, the secrets of true Neapolitan coffee: the philosophy of its preparation, with advice and tricks to make coffee even better and more flavoured:

Depriving us Neapolitans of this little relief out here on the balcony... Take me, for example, I would give anything up except drinking in peace this little cup of coffee on the balcony, after dozing off for half an hour after lunch. And I need to make it myself, with my hands. This is a four-cup coffeemaker, but you can get even six, and, if the cups are small even as many as eight... when friends pop in... on the other hand coffee is so expensive... (*He listens, then*) My wife does not honour me ... [with her collaboration; *My addition*] she doesn’t understand such things. You know, she is much younger than me, and the new generation has lost these habits which, to me, from a certain point of view, are life’s poetry! Because, besides making one pass the time, they give some peace of mind as well. Anyway, excuse me?... Who could ever make me a cup of

coffee like I do, with the same zeal, with the same care?... I'm sure you'll understand that, as I need to help myself, I follow the real experiences and don't neglect anything. [...] This paper top seems useless but has its function. [He places it on the spout; *My addition*]. Yeah, because the thick smoke of the coffee coming up first, which is the most intense, is not lost. On the contrary, it remains inside and impregnates the environment, preparing it to receive the substance, the coffee. Moreover, professor, before you pour the water, which needs to boil for at least three or four minutes, into the internal part of the perforated capsule, first you need to sprinkle a half coffee spoon of freshly ground coffee powder. That's a little secret! Because when the water is in full boil it gets flavoured on its own as you pour it. Professor, you too have fun sometimes, because I see you out on the balcony celebrating the same rite as me. (*He listens*) And me too. Actually, as I've told you, my wife does not collaborate, I roast it myself... (*Listens*) You too, professor? ... You do the right thing... Because that's the hardest thing: guessing the right roasting point, the colour... A monk's coat... Monk-coat colour. [...] (*By then the coffee is ready*). Professor, it's done. (*Pours the coffee in the cup and begins drinking*) Are you ok? ... Thanks. (*Drinks*) Woh, this is coffee... (*He declares*) It is chocolate. See how little it takes to make a man happy: a half cup of coffee taken out in peace on the balcony, a little fresh air... with a pleasant neighbour living opposite... you are nice professor... You see, I save half a cup, I'll drink it between cigarettes. (*Goes on drinking*) (De Filippo 261-262; *my translation*).



Fig. 10: Traditional Neapolitan coffeemaker like that described by E. De Filippo in the monologue.

Today, Luciano De Crescenzo (1928-2019) is one more Neapolitan author, who wrote about the special relationship that his fellow citizens have with their favourite drink. His last work, *Il caffè sospeso: Saggezza quotidiana in piccoli sorsi (Pre-paid Coffee: Daily Wisdom in Little Sips)* (2017) deals with a very original local custom that is pretty common in Southern Italy. But before proceeding, it takes an explanation for a better understanding of the book. At the elegant *Gran Caffè Gambrinus*, established in Naples in 1860, boasting among its clients Oscar Wilde, Gabriele D'Annunzio, and even Empress Sisy of Austria, its regulars introduced the custom of pre-paying a coffee for anyone who could not afford it. Today, on entering the *Gambrinus*, you can still see a huge coffee machine where customers used to leave the so-called *scontrini sospesi* (i. e. receipts of a pre-paid coffee). This practice even reached the United States, especially amongst the Italian community. This tradition has inspired De Crescenzo to write stories and anecdotes, in which he imagines conversations with Plato and Aristotle about local places and events. He suggests leafing through his book while sipping a nice cup of coffee if you really want to enjoy it. Indeed, De Crescenzo says that wisdom is often hidden in simple daily gestures such as tasting a good coffee. That is how he gathers reflections that he magically turns into food for thought.



Figure 11: Bar at Spaccanapoli, Naples. Poster featuring Totò and Peppino, two of the greatest Neapolitan comedians.

However, while Naples is an incredibly throbbing cultural centre, south of it there are hardly any literary cafés. The ‘Gran Caffè Renzelli’ (1803), in Cosenza (Calabria), is an exception. Legend has it that on 9 March 1844, when it was still called “Caffè Gallicchio,” the patriots Domenico Frugiuele and Gianfelice Petrassi organised a rebellion against the Bourbon regime. Unfortunately, the rising failed and the leaders of the revolt, the Venetian brothers Attilio and Emilio Bandiera were executed, after being allowed to have coffee at the bar. Mr Gallicchio wished to offer patriots and intellectuals alike the possibility to meet in two little rooms in the back of the bar. In 1910, Mr Renzelli bought the bar, hoping to create the literary cafés tradition, which has never really taken off the ground. Yet only 45 kilometres north of Cosenza, there is a small town, Santa Sofia d’Epiro, where quite surprisingly, there is a coffee bar with an amazing liberty atmosphere, dating back to 1899. This venue has been lending itself to a rather new function as a literary café, when the offspring of the family, a local historian, Giuseppe Baffa, besides organising the presentation of books, such as the well-attended *Peppino Impastato. La memoria difficile* (Ed. P. Manzella) in July 2023, set up a permanent exhibition of old photographs and books about eminent local and national figures.

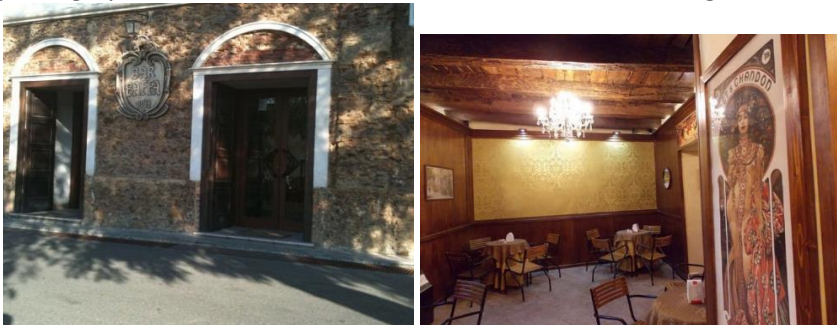


Fig. 12: Front doors ‘Bar Baffa.’ Fig. 13: “Bar Baffa,” indoor. S. Sofia d’Epiro.

Before ending our fascinating literary trip through Italy, we will pass to Sicily where we find some great authors, who have given coffee and food an important role in some of their works. Apart from Pirandello, who has already been amply quoted above, there is the poet Salvatore Quasimodo, the 1959 Nobel Prize in Literature, who in his young days used to give talks at the ‘Antico Caffé Galante’ (1908) in Patti (Messina.). In relation to Quasimodo, it is worth saying that the Sicilian poet and literary critic Domenico Pisana had the brilliant idea of inviting authors at the newly opened ‘Caffè Letterario Quasimodo,’ a literary café bearing the name of the great poet, established in the town of Modica

in 2006. Particularly successful are the ‘Literary Saturdays’ open to anyone wishing to listen to poets, critics, and musicians. On concluding our visit to Sicily, we come across Andrea Camilleri (1925-2019) whose claim to world fame is the creation of the chief inspector Montalbano. Camilleri had more than 10 million copies sold since 1992 that have been translated into 36 languages. As stated by Stefania Campo, Montalbano is a gourmet and a refined connoisseur of coffee that he buys straight from Puerto Rico. He considers coffee a must to end his famous meals. Such is the case at *Casa Vigata* (the location where his stories take place), a restaurant in rue Léon-Frot, Paris, where the chef offers a menu, based on the dishes present in Camilleri’s books, that always ends with a good strong ‘espresso’ in Montalbano’s style.



Fig. 14: Antico Caffè Galante. Patti

### Conclusion

This article has been set out to illustrate how coffee has played a central role both in literature and society, thus becoming a prominent protagonist in our world. As you could see, Coffee has taken an increasingly active role, as if it were a living character, in the works and lives of many authors. In this respect, it will be certainly interesting to learn that, according to the findings of a team of Italian Universities researchers as the title of their co-authored goes “Caffeine Improves Text Reading and Global Perception.” But to conclude I will leave the last word to the American soprano Barbara A. Daniels (1946) who says, “Life is a beautiful and endless journey in search of the perfect cup.” Likewise, I must say that in my experience, I have found that the “journey” is even more involving and demanding if you are also searching for the link

between that “cup” and literature, which makes an article like this an unending job.



Fig. 15: Espresso coffee machine in action at Bar ‘Cottini,’ Roma.



Fig. 16: Home capsule coffee machine. Fig. 17: Traditional 4-cup coffeemaker.

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### Illustrations:

Fig. 1: Plaque in St Michael's Alley, London.

Fig. 2: "Café Procope", Paris.

Fig. 3: A. Perego, *Accademia dei Pagni*.  
([https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Accademia\\_dei\\_Pagni](https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Accademia_dei_Pagni)).

Fig. 4: Balzac's Coffee Pot, Maison Musée Balzac, Paris.

Fig. 5: Café Deux Magots (Café Littéraire), Paris.

Fig. 6: Landmark of Bar at Ipanema Beach.

Fig. 7: Original score of *Garota de Ipanema*. Rio de Janeiro.

Fig. 8: 'Antico Caffè Greco' (1760), via Condotti, Roma.

Fig. 9: *Caffè letterario* ('literary café') "Luigi Pirandello" in Agrigento, Pirandello's hometown.

(Web. 3 Mar. 2020).

Fig. 10: Traditional Neapolitan coffeemaker like that used by E. de Filippo in the monologue

Fig. 11: Bar at Spaccanapoli, Naples.

Fig. 12 & 13: "Bar Baffa," indoor & front doors (courtesy of Umberto and Giuseppe Baffa).

Fig. 14: Antico Caffè Galante, Patti.  
(<https://www.facebook.com/caffegalante/photos/a.200139843342197/200139846675530/> )

Fig. 15: Espresso coffee machine at Bar 'Cottini,' Roma.

Fig. 16: Capsule coffee machine.

Fig. 17: Traditional 4-cup coffeemaker.

NB All the photographs above have been taken by myself, unless otherwise stated (e.g. except for Fig. 3: retrieved on January 2024 [https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Accademia\\_dei\\_Pagni](https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Accademia_dei_Pagni) )

***Language Studies***

***Nauka o jeziku***



## **MANY FACES OF A CHATBOT: THE USE OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN ARGUMENTATIVE COMMUNICATION WITH A CHATBOT**

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**Abstract:** With the ever-growing development of artificial intelligence, communication and argumentation processes are no longer limited to face-to-face and computer-mediated communication with other humans. They now involve communication with machines. This fact has given rise to chatbots, computer programs trained to produce human-like communication through the use of highly specified algorithms. The aim of this study was to determine whether a chatbot has been trained in accordance with positive and negative face wants, which were a part of the politeness theory introduced by Brown and Levinson. More specifically, the aim was to determine whether positive and negative politeness strategies would affect the quality of answers a chatbot produces. The chatbot was asked 10 questions in total, grouped into five sets of questions that prompted answers followed by argumentation. Each set contained two questions on the same topic, one question asked utilizing positive politeness strategies, and the other question asked using negative politeness strategies. The results show that 1) there were no significant differences in the answers given to the two types of questions, 2) the chatbot did not select only one type of politeness strategies, 3) more elaborate answers to one of the questions from the sets were produced in relation to the topic of that question rather than the politeness strategies. The most dominant argumentation structure is based on coordinative arguments, with causal schemes appearing most frequently. All of the answers are acceptable in the sense that they give coherent arguments for a standpoint, except for one answer where the opposite standpoints were provided.

**Keywords:** argumentation, politeness theory, positive and negative politeness strategies, chatbot, artificial intelligence

### **1. Introduction**

With the constant development of computer software and artificial intelligence, everyday communication has shifted from being exclusively face-to-face toward computer-mediated conversation, and now we can

even conduct a fully-fledged conversation with AI-based computer programs known as chatbots. The term *chatbot*, or *chatterbot*, was first introduced by Michael L. Mauldin in 1994 (Molnár and Szűts 197). It is defined as a computer program that, in a conversation, responds like an intelligent entity (Khanna et al. 277). A chatbot can recognize and interpret human language through the information fed to it (Khanna et al. 277). More precisely, it relies on a *Knowledge Base* as a set of questions and answers triggered according to certain keywords noticed in a conversation (El Azhari et al.).

The first chatbots appeared during the mid-20th century, with two notable examples being ELIZA, from 1966, which played the role of a psychotherapist, and ALICE (Artificial Linguistic Internet Computer Entity), from 1995 until 2000 (Molnár and Szűts 197). Nowadays, chatbots have wide applications spanning various fields, including media, healthcare, medicine, and education, with a predominant interest in language learning. The 2020s are characterized by a great deal of research on the topic of communication between chatbots and humans. Additionally, novel variants of such programs are produced with different purposes, but also to ensure that more reliable information is obtained for a chatbot conversation (Mavrodieva 23).

Current research is interested in the argumentation abilities of AI-powered chatbots, as seen in Section 2.3. More precisely, it is mostly interested in the processes through which chatbots are trained to produce argumentative answers. This paper is interested in the other side of the coin. Namely, the aim is to determine the quality of the argumentation produced by a chatbot, as related to the use of different politeness strategies.

## **2. Theoretical framework**

### **2.1. Argumentation theory**

The main interest of argumentation theory lies in the term *argument*. Here, *argument* has a specialized sense and refers to the process of giving reasons for the support or criticism of a claim, also known as a standpoint, which can be questioned or doubted (Walton 1). A successful argument, thus, means that good reasons to support or criticize a standpoint are stated. Walton (1) continues that this process implies two sides being involved in an argument which takes the form of a dialogue. A dialogue represents a “type of goal-directed conversation in which two participants (in the minimal case) are participating by taking turns” (Walton 2). Thus, it is suitable for the argumentative processes where one side puts forward reasons for supporting a claim, while the other side offers their reasons for doubting this claim.

Dialogues, besides arguments, can also be in the form of explanations, instructions for doing something, etc. Parties must take turns in a dialog so that argumentation is successful (Walton 1-2).

As defined by Walton (1), argumentation is a dynamic process in which arguments are connected for a certain purpose in a dialogue. Van Eemeren and Henkemans (1) offer the following definition:

Argumentation is a verbal, social, and rational activity aimed at convincing a reasonable critic of the acceptability of a certain opinion by advancing one or more propositions designed to justify that standpoint.

More precisely, argumentation happens as a response or anticipation of an opinion difference, either real or merely imagined. Argumentation, however, does not have to take the form of a fully-fledged dispute or a conflict. It can include cases when the other party only doubts a standpoint. The moment the defense of this view is not shared by all parties, argumentation comes into play. It is, of course, presumed that the other party has not been convinced yet when arguments are put forward. Otherwise, argumentation would be pointless (Van Eemeren et al. 2). Additionally, argumentation is a “communicative and interactional act complex” and, for its success, the rational reasoning of a judge, or here, the party doubting a standpoint, is of the utmost importance (Van Eemeren et al. 7).

According to its structure, argumentation can consist of single, multiple, coordinative and subordinative arguments (Van Eemeren and Henkemans 55). In *single argumentation*, in the most basic case, a single argument is given for the defense of a standpoint, or several single arguments can be combined in different ways. *Multiple argumentation* includes alternative arguments for the same standpoint, without them being dependent on one another. *Coordinative argumentation* is a set of arguments that must be taken together to defend a standpoint successfully. Finally, in *subordinative argumentation*, the defense of a standpoint is made in layers. Namely, each of the arguments is supported by an argument on the lower level (Van Eemeren and Henkemans 55-60).

As regards the *argument scheme*, it represents how the argument and the standpoint are connected. There are three types of argumentation schemes: symptomatic, causal, and argumentation based on analogy (Van Eemeren and Henkemans 83-84).

Argumentation in artificial intelligence has proved to be a very important topic. This interaction found its way into areas such as law, medicine, e-government, debating, etc. Nowadays, research is pointed

towards the production of certain persuasion systems, which would help in everyday decision-making. In the further work of integrating argumentation with artificial intelligence, there are plans to develop artificial agents communicating with other agents, just as two humans can argue about a particular standpoint (Atkinson et al. 34-35).

## 2.2. Brown and Levinson's politeness theory

In most general terms, as defined by the *Online Cambridge Dictionary of English*, politeness is "behaviour that is socially correct and shows understanding of and care for other people's feelings".<sup>1</sup> Politeness has been exhaustively researched in areas such as sociolinguistics, pragmatics, applied linguistics, anthropology, conversation analysis, etc. (Brown and Levinson 2). It is indeed a topic producing very different opinions. Some see it as a superficial characteristic of human language (Leech xi). Others, however, including Leech (ix), see it as a deeper phenomenon essential for human communication. Namely, politeness is a social phenomenon expressed largely through language, present in human behavior from the earliest childhood. Thus, we believe that politeness, as an essential characteristic of human communication, also has to be present in the interaction with AI, especially to increase its credibility and trustworthiness.

Brown and Levinson's view on politeness is based on the notion of *face* as introduced by Goffman in 1967. Namely, face represents a public image every member of society claims for themselves, or, more simply, how they want to be seen by others. To prevent face loss, that is humiliation and embarrassment, people cooperate and assume other people's cooperation in maintaining face in interaction. If a person threatens somebody else's face, then they risk having their own face threatened, and, thus, face maintenance is in everybody's best interest (Brown and Levinson 61).

Instead of seeing face as a set of social norms and values, it is rather treated as basic wants desired by every member of society. Therefore, face wants can be seen as negative face and positive face. Negative face does not necessarily imply anything bad, but rather a want of an individual that their actions are unimpeded by others. In other words, other society members are to respect this individual's independence so as not to threaten their face, and this is a politeness of a more formal

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<sup>1</sup> Information retrieved from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/politeness>, accessed on 12 April 2024.

kind. On the other hand, positive face means that an individual's wants should be accepted and shared with at least someone (Brown and Levinson 62).

Besides expressing positive or negative on-record politeness, off-record politeness is also possible, based on a communicative act to which it is not possible to attribute one clear communicative intention (Brown and Levinson 211). A set of strategies is offered for each type of politeness (Brown and Levinson 91-227). Since this paper is interested in positive and negative on-record politeness, only those strategies will be mentioned. Positive politeness includes the following strategies pointed at the individual whose face is to be saved:

- 1) Notice, attend to their interests, wants, etc.
- 2) Exaggerate interests, approval, sympathy with them
- 3) Intensify interest to them
- 4) Use in-group identity markers
- 5) Seek agreement
- 6) Avoid disagreement
- 7) Presuppose/raise/assert common ground
- 8) Joke
- 9) Assert or presuppose knowledge of and concern for their wants
- 10) Offer, promise
- 11) Be optimistic
- 12) Include both us and them in the activity
- 13) Give (or ask for) reasons
- 14) Assume or assert reciprocity
- 15) Give them gifts (goods, sympathy, understanding). (Brown and Levinson 103-129).

Negative politeness toward somebody else's face wants is achieved through the following strategies:

- 1) Be conventionally indirect
- 2) Question, hedge
- 3) Be pessimistic
- 4) Minimize the imposition
- 5) Give defense
- 6) Apologize
- 7) Impersonalize us and them
- 8) State the face-threatening act (FTA) as a general rule
- 9) Nominalize
- 10) Go on record as incurring a debt, or as not indebted them. (Brown and Levinson 129-211).

Before the appearance of interaction with AI, politeness theory, besides face-to-face communication, found its way into computer-mediated communication (CMC) between humans. The main interest in this area is rooted in determining how classical postulates of different politeness theories, developed before CMC evolved, can be applied to this specialized way of communication, along with all of its characteristics. For example, one of the topics covered is how politeness is achieved where non-verbal cues are not as obvious or are completely invisible, unlike in face-to-face communication (Taleghani-Nikazm; Pratama).

### **2.3. Previous research**

As for more recent research in the area of positive and negative politeness strategies use, a lot of research was based in the EFL classroom. One such type of research was done by Mahmud, who was interested in the way university students of the English literature program in Indonesia utilize politeness strategies in the language recorder during their presentations. The conclusion was that both positive and negative politeness strategies had often been used by the students. Saleem and Anjum wanted to determine whether there exist certain differences in politeness strategies used by Pakistani Urdu speakers as compared to British speakers in apologizing. According to the results, Pakistanis mostly use positive strategies, with the British using a combination of the two.

An attempt to study politeness within argumentation was made by Ferenčík, who looked at whether interruption in radio call-ins can always be considered impolite. The findings were that in certain situations interruption in the argumentation process was seen as a discursive device. More precisely, interruption appears to constrain the other party's options, to control the content size of the talk, and, possibly, exercise power.

Before the increasing development of communication with AI, there was also a lot of interest in how politeness functions in computer-mediated communication, namely, the communication happening between human beings with the help of a computer. Therefore, Park (2008a, 2008b) set out to see what kind of politeness strategies were used in online peer groups. The results showed that since peers had already been acquainted with one another, they attempted to achieve even more social closeness through the use of mostly bold-on-record speech acts or positive politeness strategies. Wardoyo was interested in CMC in YouTube comments and realized that the politeness strategies used were usually influenced by an already existing comment.

Additionally, it appeared that the higher the level of disagreement was, the impoliteness became higher.

In studying the importance of politeness in human-machine interaction, through the literature review on this topic, Ribino concluded that, on the one hand, socially competent machines were more acceptable, while, on the other hand, once people interacted with machines sending social clues, people themselves implemented basic social norms and rules, partially in need of retaining their own positive face. Similarly, Burton and Gaskin set out to determine whether the level of politeness towards intelligent digital assistance would in any way affect human-to-human interaction in terms of politeness. The finding showed that, even though digital assistants were personified to a lesser degree, the interaction type with them would not affect the politeness levels existing in face-to-face human communication.

Most of the interest in AI language-related issues is based on the process of training AI, primarily chatbots, to produce human-like language. For example, Mukherjee, Hudeček and Dušek worked on training a chatbot to increase politeness in dialogue models. Furthermore, Dietz, Kakas and Michael proposed that the importance of training machines in argumentation leads to the development of human-centric AI. Chalaguine et al. were determined to train a chatbot in a persuasive argumentation to see whether persuasion produced by AI would affect people's beliefs about healthy lifestyle choices. The findings were such that arguments addressing the user's concerns have a more positive impact on changing their attitudes. Herbets de Sousa et al. believe that for a chatbot to produce successful argumentation, it must be trained to and, subsequently, it must be able to recognize argumentation schemes or patterns. The research, however, showed that chatbots can recognize only a limited number of argumentation schemes.

Mavrodieva, in analyzing human-machine rhetorical communication, concluded that chatbots are not sufficiently developed to give argumentation based on critical thinking and to transfer general information into popular language since they cannot use figurative language. Finally, Hinton and Wagemans, interested in how persuasive GPT 3 is, realized that an argument created by a chatbot is often unacceptable.

## **Analysis**

### **3.1. Methodology**

This research is based on the analysis of the answers provided by a chatbot. The questions were expected to be followed by argumentation.

As regards the questions, the analysis included ten questions divided into five sets. Each set contained a pair of questions on the same topic, one structured with negative politeness strategies, and the other with positive politeness strategies. Five question sets were interested in 1) whether using AI is beneficial; 2) whether AI is useful in scientific research; 3) whether it is important to train AI in argumentation; 4) whether politeness is important in communication with AI; and 5) whether politeness is important in the argumentation process.

The chatbot that served as a tool in this research is *TalkAI*<sup>2</sup>, a free chatbot service, utilizing ChatGPT 3.5 technology. As regards the appearance of this program, it most closely resembles a text-messaging application. More precisely, a space for inputting questions and requests can be seen at the bottom of the screen. The remaining part of the screen is where the results produced by the chatbot are seen. In this research, those were argumentative answers.

The aim is to determine whether the questions that have the same meaning but different forms according to either positive or negative politeness strategies lead to different answers produced by the chatbot. In relation to this, the research focuses on 1) the similarities and differences between the answers given to the questions with the two types of politeness strategies; 2) the types of argumentation structures and schemes; and 3) the acceptability of answers in the sense that coherent arguments for a standpoint were given.

### 3.2. Chatbot answer analysis

The first pair of questions was interested in looking into the chatbot's standpoint and the following argumentation as regards the issue whether using artificial intelligence is beneficial. The question designed in line with negative politeness was based on utilizing an indirect speech act and hedging to lower the expectations we had from the chatbot. The question had the following form:

*Q1n*<sup>3</sup>: Do you mind telling me whether there are benefits to using artificial intelligence?

The answer was in the form of a list, rather than a concise answer.

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<sup>2</sup> Talk AI: <https://talkai.info/>, accessed on 10 May 2024.

<sup>3</sup> *Q1n* and *A1n* refer to the question structured according to the negative politeness strategies and the answer to that question respectively. *Q1p* and *A1p*, on the other hand, stand for the question based on the positive politeness strategies and its answer. The numbers would change based on the number of the general question/topic being referred to.

A1n: Sure! There are several benefits to using artificial intelligence technology, including:

1. Improved efficiency and productivity: AI can perform repetitive tasks much faster and more accurately than humans, saving time and increasing productivity.
2. Cost savings: By automating tasks, AI can lead to cost savings by reducing the need for human labor and increasing efficiency in processes.
3. Enhanced decision-making: AI can analyze and process large amounts of data quickly to provide insights and recommendations for making more informed decisions.
4. Personalization and customization: AI can help businesses personalize their products and services to better meet the needs and preferences of individual customers.
5. Enhanced customer service: AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants can provide instant support to customers, improving the overall customer experience.
6. Predictive analytics: AI can use predictive analytics to forecast trends and patterns, helping businesses make more accurate predictions and better plan for the future.

Overall, the use of artificial intelligence can help businesses and individuals streamline operations, make better decisions, and improve overall efficiency and effectiveness.

The characteristic of this answer is that, first of all, it can be seen that the chatbot noted our usage of negative strategies and gave a positive reaction by means of the expression *sure*. Then, it goes straight to the argumentation of why AI is beneficial. As for the argumentation structure, even though it might be assumed that this argumentation consists of multiple arguments, with each accounting for the benefits of AI, this structure is rather made of coordinative arguments, as all of which are needed for persuasion, having in mind the beliefs commonly held towards AI. As far as the argumentation scheme is concerned, the chatbot relies on the causal scheme as each of the arguments offers the cause or the reason why using AI can be beneficial.

The chatbot was asked the same question again, but this time structured using positive politeness strategies, in this case, an in-group identity marker, the inclusive *we*. The question had the following form:

Q1p: Can we collectively benefit from using artificial intelligence?

This question yielded an answer that differed in form as compared to the answer given to the negative politeness question.

*A1p*: Yes, we can collectively benefit from using artificial intelligence in a variety of ways. AI has the potential to improve efficiency in various industries, streamline processes, provide more personalized services, and even contribute to solving complex problems such as disease diagnosis, climate change, and resource management. By harnessing the power of AI, we can create new opportunities for economic growth, innovation, and overall societal advancement. However, it is important to also consider the ethical implications and potential risks associated with the widespread adoption of AI to ensure that its benefits are realized in a responsible and sustainable manner.

The first difference that can be noticed is that this answer is not merely a list, as is the case with negative politeness, but an answer characterized more by everyday conversational style. In this answer, the standpoint that using AI can be beneficial is stated in a single *yes*. Another significance is that arguments represent more generalized benefits, unlike the list with specified areas where AI can be helpful. The argumentation structure is here based on coordinative arguments, with each argument having a causal scheme. Additionally, the positive politeness led to the chatbot offering a warning of possible AI misuse.

The second topic the chatbot was questioned about was related to the possible assistance of AI in scientific research. The question posed in line with negative politeness strategies again relied on the combination of hedging and indirect speech.

*Q2n*: Perhaps you could tell me whether artificial intelligence can be helpful in scientific research?

The answer provided by the chatbot was not presented as a list but as a paragraph resembling an everyday communicative style.

*A2n*: Yes, artificial intelligence can be very helpful in scientific research. AI can assist researchers in analyzing large amounts of data, identifying patterns, making predictions, and even suggesting new hypotheses to pursue. This can help accelerate the pace of scientific discovery and lead to new breakthroughs in various fields. AI tools can also help automate repetitive tasks, freeing up researchers to focus on more complex and creative aspects of their work. Overall, AI has the potential to revolutionize the way scientific research is conducted and to drive innovation in many disciplines.

Within this argumentative answer, a standpoint, that AI is helpful in scientific research, is given directly. As far as the structure is concerned, two of the arguments, analyzing large amounts of data and automating the research process, are in coordination. The first of the two arguments is further followed by a subordinative argument supporting it. As regards the scheme, the arguments are causal. Finally, a generalized conclusion is proposed.

The question on the same topic, in line with positive politeness strategies, included noticing the chatbot's effort to answer our questions, and a slight exaggeration to show appreciation for the previous answer.

*Q2p:* That was an excellent answer. How about telling me whether artificial intelligence is helpful in scientific research?

This question was followed by an answer that was not strikingly different from that to a negative politeness question.

*A2p:* Artificial intelligence can be extremely helpful in scientific research. It has the ability to process huge amounts of data much faster than humans can, making it a powerful tool for tasks such as analyzing complex datasets, identifying patterns and trends, and even formulating hypotheses. AI can also assist in drug discovery, genomics, and other areas of research where large amounts of data need to be analyzed and interpreted. Overall, artificial intelligence has the potential to revolutionize scientific research by accelerating the pace of discovery and enabling breakthroughs that may not have been possible otherwise.

As previously mentioned, this answer does not differ much from the negative politeness answer. The standpoint is presented directly but mirrors the exaggeration from the question with the adverb *extremely*. The arguments are characterized by the coordinative structure, with the final argument being an overall conclusion of the whole argumentation process. As for the scheme, the first and the concluding arguments are causal. The second argument, however, does not point to the causes for AI benefits in scientific research but suggests the areas where it might be helpful. Since AI is characterized by the ability to analyze large amounts of data, this might be seen as a symptomatic argument, rather than a causal one, or one based on comparison.

In the third set of questions, our interest was based on the importance of training artificial intelligence in quality argumentation. Quality argumentation is based on the premises relevant to support a

standpoint, which are individually acceptable, and which are together sufficient enough to defend a standpoint (Blair 87). In the question rooted in negative politeness, hedging strategies were used. This included being pessimistic, a question tag and the form *I suppose*.

*Q3n*: I don't suppose you could tell me whether training artificial intelligence in quality argumentation is important, could you?

This question yielded a three-paragraph answer, unlike the majority of the previous answers containing a single paragraph.

*A3n*: Training artificial intelligence in quality argumentation is important for several reasons. Firstly, it helps AI systems to better understand and engage in complex reasoning and decision-making processes. By teaching AI how to craft and evaluate arguments effectively, we can improve its ability to analyze information, consider different perspectives, and make more informed choices.

Additionally, quality argumentation training can help AI systems to communicate their reasoning more clearly and persuasively to human users. This is crucial for building trust and collaboration between humans and AI, as it allows for better communication and understanding between the two parties.

Overall, by investing in training AI in quality argumentation, we can improve the capabilities and reliability of AI systems, leading to more efficient and ethical use of AI technology in various industries and applications.

In this answer, the standpoint is given indirectly as important reasons for its defense are stated. This means that the standpoint is identified in the argumentation process where the reasons for the importance of training AI in quality argumentation are given. There are two coordinative arguments, each followed by a subordinative argument, further reassuring the audience about this standpoint. It can be assumed that the arguments have a causal relation with the standpoint that training AI in argumentation leads to different benefits. Similarly to the three previous answers, a general conclusion can be drawn from this answer. However, what is peculiar in this particular answer is that the chatbot uses the inclusive *we* to refer to humankind, while the AI, including this chatbot, is referred to by *it*. This example shows that the chatbot is trained to resemble a human being, thus, referring to AI by *it*.

The positive politeness question is made by employing an in-group identity marker and the strategy of being optimistic.

*Q3p*: Hey buddy, I hope you can tell me whether it is important to train artificial intelligence in quality argumentation?

The answer, however, was not as extensive as that given to the question rooted in the negative politeness strategies.

*A3p*: Yes, it is important to train artificial intelligence in quality argumentation as it can help improve the overall accuracy and effectiveness of AI systems. By teaching AI to reason and formulate coherent arguments, it can better understand and respond to complex information and provide more insightful and nuanced solutions to problems. Additionally, teaching AI to engage in quality argumentation can help prevent biased or erroneous decision-making, leading to more reliable and ethical AI systems.

Again, the standpoint that the training of AI in quality argumentation is important is expressed by a single *yes*. The structure of the arguments is coordinative, with the first argument proposing more general benefits. The scheme, as in all of the previous answers, is causal since the arguments state what AI training in argumentation can lead to.

The fourth topic regarded the importance of politeness in communication with AI. The negative politeness question was based on an indirect speech act and pessimism.

*Q4n*: Wouldn't it be a bother to tell me whether politeness is important in communication with artificial intelligence?

The answer is not so elaborate, and the argumentation seems contradictory.

*A4n*: Politeness is not essential in communication with artificial intelligence as they do not have feelings or emotions. However, maintaining a respectful and courteous tone can help create a more positive and productive interaction. Ultimately, the level of politeness required may vary depending on the context and the specific goals of the conversation.

Here, it appears that the standpoint is not in favor of implementing politeness in communication with AI. This is supported by a single symptomatic argument that AI has no feelings or emotions. What follows is the conjunction *however*, and a casual argument supporting the opposite standpoint. Finally, the answer shows that the chatbot is in favor of both using and not using politeness, depending on the context and the situation of the context.

The positive politeness question was developed by means of ellipsis. It was followed by a more coherent answer.

*Q4p*: Mind if you tell me whether politeness is important in communication with artificial intelligence?

The answer the chatbot gave to this question seems more elaborate and better structured compared to the question using negative politeness strategies.

*A4p*: While politeness is not necessary in the same way it is when interacting with other humans, it is still important to treat artificial intelligence with respect and courtesy. Being polite can help foster a positive interaction and build trust between you and the AI. Additionally, being courteous in your communication can improve the overall experience and make it easier for the AI to understand and respond to your requests. Ultimately, while not required, using polite language when interacting with artificial intelligence can help create a more pleasant and effective exchange.

Even though it is stated that treating AI with politeness is not a prerequisite, the standpoint given here is that it is indeed important to do so. The standpoint is supported by causal coordinative arguments, without giving arguments for the opposing standpoint. In this case, the chatbot appears to be able to “understand” the communicative roles as it refers to the audience, that is the reader of the question, with the pronoun *you*.

The final topic was based on the importance of utilizing politeness in the argumentation process. The strategies employed in the negative politeness question were based on apologizing, hedging and an indirect speech act.

*Q5n*: I’m sorry for asking many questions, but would you mind telling me whether politeness is important in the argumentation process?

The question is followed by the answer in which a reaction to one of the negative strategies can be noticed.

*A5n*: It's okay to ask questions! Yes, politeness is important in the argumentation process. Maintaining a respectful and courteous tone can help establish a constructive dialogue, foster understanding, and avoid unnecessary conflict. Politeness can also help to create a more open and receptive atmosphere, making it easier for both parties to listen to each other's perspectives and reach a mutual understanding or agreement. In argumentation, it's essential to be assertive and confident in presenting your thoughts and ideas, but it's also crucial to do so in a respectful and considerate manner.

Firstly, the chatbot reacts well to the apology for many questions, pointing out that it is not bothered. The standpoint in favor of politeness being important in the argumentation process is clearly stated. It is followed by two coordinative arguments with a causal scheme. What seems like the final argument is rather only the repetition of the standpoint defended, with the argumentation process described in more detail.

Through seeking agreement and presupposing common ground, the positive politeness question interested in the importance of politeness in argumentation was created.

*Q5p*: How about politeness in argumentation? Is it important to be polite in the argumentation process?

A question utilizing positive politeness strategies seemed to have produced a more elaborate answer on this topic.

*A5p*: Yes, it is important to be polite in the argumentation process. Politeness helps to maintain a respectful and productive dialogue, allowing for a more constructive exchange of ideas. Being polite shows that you value the other person's opinion, even if you disagree with it, and helps to build mutual trust and understanding. Additionally, a polite approach can help to de-escalate tension and prevent conflicts from becoming personal or hostile. Ultimately, being polite in argumentation can lead to more effective communication and better outcomes for all parties involved.

In this case, the chatbot produced the answer with a clearly stated standpoint that politeness is important in the argumentation process. This standpoint is very well supported with four coordinative

arguments, each referring to what using politeness in argumentation can cause (maintaining a respectful and productive dialogue, showing that you value the other person's opinion, de-escalating tension and preventing conflicts). Compared to the answer given to the negative politeness question, this one is more elaborate and offers more detail, thus, providing a more persuasive response.

### Discussion

The analysis shows that there are no significant differences in the responses to the two types of questions. Firstly, the chatbot products do not seem to vary much in argument structure. All of them contain a standpoint, either direct or indirect, with a set of arguments, usually coordinative, supporting the standpoint. On some occasions, we received even a generalized conclusion of the argumentation process. Secondly, neither positive nor negative politeness appeared in every answer. However, more coherent and elaborate answers depended on the topic of the question. Just to illustrate, the first three questions, interested in 1) whether using AI is beneficial, 2) whether it is useful in scientific research, and 3) whether it is important to train AI in argumentation, seem to have received more quality and elaborate answers to the negative politeness questions. The fourth question concerning politeness in AI and the fifth question concerning politeness in argumentation had more coherent answers where positive politeness strategies were utilized. This was also confirmed by the chatbot itself in the answer to the fourth question based on negative politeness strategies (see *A4n*). Namely, the chatbot answered that politeness directed towards AI depends on the context and the expected goals of a conversation.

As regards the argumentation type, most of the argumentation structures seem to be based on coordinative arguments rather than multiple independent arguments. The reason for this is that the topics covered in this research are important and highly applicable to the area of AI. More specifically, since the chatbot wrote that the public does not fully appreciate the benefits of AI, as seen in *A3n* and *A4p*, it seems that the chatbot "understands" the need for listing all of these arguments as necessary to support its standpoints. Two instances of subordinative arguments appeared in the answers to the questions containing negative politeness strategies. The majority of arguments had a causal scheme as they explained what each standpoint would lead to. Only two arguments were symptomatic. Finally, nine out of ten answers were completely acceptable in the sense that they gave coherent arguments

for a standpoint. Only once, in answer *A4n*, did the chatbot shift from its standpoint toward the opposing standpoint.

### **5. Conclusion**

This research showed that the chatbot is capable of producing quality argumentation when it gives answers to the questions based both on positive and negative politeness strategies. Furthermore, the *TalkAI* chatbot did not select answers in accordance with negative or positive politeness strategies. Rather, it can be concluded that the answers depended on the topic of interest. To illustrate, when asked about the benefits and the usage of AI, the chatbot produced better answers to the questions utilizing negative politeness strategies. Moreover, once the topic shifted toward the importance of politeness, the questions with positive politeness strategies led to more elaborate answers. Coordinative argumentation was the most common type of argumentation, and as regards the argumentation scheme, causal type was the most frequent type of argumentation. Except for one case where the chatbot provided contradictory standpoints toward the same question, all of the remaining answers were coherent.

There are, of course, some limitations to this research. First, it was based on short instances of communication with a chatbot. Future research can give further insight into long strings of conversations with AI to determine possible reoccurrences in argumentation and politeness patterns. Second, the research was interested in a single version of a chatbot, *TalkAI*, based on Chat GPT version 3.5. Further studies can also compare either different chatbots or multiple versions of a single chatbot to see whether there are certain advances in the usage of politeness within an argumentative conversation with AI. Finally, the interest of this research was directed towards the analysis of language produced by AI. Extensive interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary studies, which would combine both linguistics and IT sciences, should be conducted to first enhance the AI's ability of politeness and argumentation, as important features of human communication, to come as close as possible to the human ability and then analyze the language produced, not only from the pragmatic point of view but also from any of the other linguistic disciplines.

Although this is a small-scale study, it can serve as a starting point for those interested in how politeness strategies function in argumentative communication with AI. Additionally, it might present inspiration for further research in the process of training AI to produce argumentation as close as possible to that of humans and in the

importance of politeness not only in AI argumentation but in AI communication in general.

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**MNOGA LICA ČETBOTA: UPOTREBA POZITIVNIH I NEGATIVNIH STRATEGIJA UČTIVOSTI U ARGUMENTACIJSKOJ KOMUNIKACIJI SA ČETBOTOM**

Sa konstantnim razvojem veštačke inteligencije, procesi komunikacije i argumentacije više nisu ograničeni na komunikaciju između ljudskih bića, uživo, ili uz pomoć računara. Oni sada uključuju i komunikaciju sa mašinama. Ova činjenica dovela je do razvoja četbotova, računarskih programa obučeni da komuniciraju na način sličan ljudima kroz upotrebu visoko specifikovanih algoritama. Cilj ovog istraživanja bio je utvrditi da li je četbot obučen u skladu sa pozitivnim i negativnim strategijama učtivosti, koje, kao deo teorije učtivosti, prvi put spominju Braun i Levinson. Preciznije, cilj je bio utvrditi da li ove strategije utiču na kvalitet odgovora koje četbot daje. Četbotu je postavljeno 10 pitanja ukupno, podeljenih u 5 grupa pitanja koja su zahtevala odgovore praćene argumentacijom. Svaka grupa brojala je po dva pitanja na istu temu, jedno sastavljeno uz pomoć pozitivnih strategija učtivosti, a drugo uz pomoć negativnih strategija. Rezultati pokazuju da 1) nema značajnih razlika u odgovorima na dve vrste pitanja, 2) četbot se nije opredelio za jednu vrstu strategija učtivosti, 3) opširniji odgovori na jedno pitanje iz grupe dati su na osnovu teme kojom se pitanje bavi, a ne na osnovu strategija učtivosti. Najdominantnija struktura argumentacije zasniva se na koordiniranim argumentima, dok je kauzalna shema najčešća. Svi odgovori četbota su prihvatljivi u smislu da daju koherentne argumente za određeno stanovište, sem jednog odgovora u kome su data suprotstavljena stanovišta.

**Ključne reči:** argumentacija, teorija učtivosti, pozitivne i negativne strategije učtivosti, četbot, veštačka inteligencija

## **КОНЦЕПТУАЛЬНАЯ МЕТАФОРА В ХОРВАТСКОМ И РУССКОМ ЮРИДИЧЕСКОМ ДИСКУРСЕ<sup>1</sup>**

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**Аннотация:** В статье представлены результаты исследования концептуальной метафоры в хорватском и русском юридическом дискурсе с точки зрения современной когнитивной семантики. На материале корпуса судебных решений хорватских и российских судов посредством сопоставительного анализа сравнивается использование концептуальных метафор в хорватском и русском правовых регистрах. Цель состоит в том, чтобы исследовать, в какой степени совпадают базовые концептуальные основы метафоры в хорватском и русском юридическом дискурсе, и какие различия и сходства существуют в их языковых реализациях в хорватском и русском юридическом тексте. Поскольку хорватский и русский являются славянскими языками, принадлежащими одному и тому же культурному кругу, и правовые системы тоже основаны на схожих правовых традициях, сопоставительный анализ, как и ожидалось, выявил высокую степень совпадения в примерах. В статье также рассматривается педагогическое применение использования метафоры, а также значение полученных результатов для перевода юридических текстов.

**Ключевые слова:** хорватский и русский языки, сопоставительный анализ, концептуальная метафора, юридический дискурс, судебные решения

*“Argument is war!”*

(Lakoff & Johnson, 1980)

### **1. Введение**

Концептуальная метафора (англ. conceptual metaphor) является одним из важнейших когнитивных механизмов, основанных на установлении связей между концептами, относящимися к разным областям знания (доменам). Метафора – это «понимание и

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переживание сущности одного вида в терминах сущности другого вида» (Лакофф, Джонсон 1980: 5; 2008), и метафоры способны на глубинное формирование нашего мышления. Традиционное, лингвистическое, понимание метафоры определяет ее как слово, риторическую фигуру или выражение, употребляемые в переносном значении, в основе которого лежит сравнение предмета или явления с каким-либо другим предметом или явлением на основании их общего признака. Особенность метафоры обнаруживается в ее полифункциональности и многозначности. Одной из функций метафоры (наряду с номинативной, прагматической и коммуникативной) является когнитивная функция, которая рассматривает ее как инструмент познания и включает в себя получение новых знаний об окружающем мире (Маккормак, 1990). Концептуальная метафора в интерпретации Джорджа Лакоффа и других исследователей является универсальным свойством мышления. Она не принадлежит только сфере языка и может выражаться как вербальными средствами, так и невербально, т.е. в жестах, в музыке, в живописи и т.д. Теория концептуальной метафоры рассматривает ее как процесс, происходящий на уровне человеческого мышления, а затем находящий отражение в языковых структурах. Характер семантики метафоры обусловлен контекстом и ситуацией, т.е. «в речи учитываются конкретные условия номинации, совершается отбор, связанный с ситуацией общения. Переносное обозначение семантизируется по определенным правилам» (Дубровина, Саковец, 2020: 86; по словам Никитина, 1979: 99).

Метафора отражает картину мира, специфические национальные и культурные особенности способов концептуализации действительности, и в разных языках метафоры могут быть разными, а «мы действуем в соответствии с тем, как мы понимаем вещи» (“we act according to how we conceive of things”, Лакофф и Джонсон, 1980). Концептуальные метафоры могут принадлежать разным культурам, и многие являются универсальными.

Предшествующие исследования метафоры показывают, что метафора неизбежна и в языке права и часто встречается в юридическом дискурсе (Morra, Rossi i Bazzanella, 2006; Палашевская, 2010; Husines, 2011; Константинова, 2011; Черданцев, 2012; Богачева, 2021; Ярощук, 2022 и др.). Современная риторика юридического дискурса все чаще вводит метафоры, потому что

юридический текст в таком случае становится более живым и более понятным широкому кругу пользователей.

Юридический дискурс – это своеобразный код, который используется в институциональной среде (суд, прокуратура, нотариат, адвокатура, парламент, полиция, тюрьма), это нормативно-правовые тексты, юридические документы, правовые научные и учебные тексты, тексты и речи в рамках судопроизводства (речи участников судебного процесса: судей, адвокатов, прокуроров, свидетелей и др.). Юридический дискурс имеет свою целостность, а именно – целостность содержания, лексики, грамматики, логики. И его компоненты создают иерархически устроенную систему в целях правового регулирования и реализации права. Юридический дискурс используют в общении прокуроры, судьи, адвокаты, нотариусы, полиция и др., в тюрьме, в суде, в нотариате и др.

Характеристики юридического дискурса следующие:

1. используется в области права;
2. подчиняется норме: тема и мотив юридического дискурса – закон и его содержание, соблюдение закона и соответствие закону (напр., оценка действий; поступки или поведение людей и др.);
3. регулирует общественные отношения, и в этом проявляется коммуникативная характеристика юридического дискурса;
4. содержит юридические термины и концепты.

Кроме того, в юриспруденции и в судопроизводстве, в котором представлены участники разных стран и носители разных языков, важную роль играет переводчик и его юридический перевод. Юридический перевод – это не просто перевод текста с одного языка на другой, но передача знаний юридической профессии в другую правовую систему (Микулац, 2020). Главные признаки качественного перевода – адекватность и эквивалентность. Адекватность достигается знанием языка и права исходного языка, а также знанием языка перевода. Адекватный перевод обеспечивает общение между источником (отправителем) и адресатом (исходный текст и текст перевода). Эквивалент – это межъязыковой синоним, не зависящий от контекста, языковой единицы перевода и исходного языка, между которыми существует постоянная синонимия. Эквивалентность – это тождественность языковых единиц разных языковых систем или частей текста оригинала (исходного языка) и перевода. Семантическая

эквивалентность – это тождественность содержательного плана языковой единицы языка перевода и языка исходного текста (Семенов 2013: 208–210). Переводчик должен подчиниться концепту, который является эквивалентным концептом для целевого языка (языка перевода), включая контекст в исходном и целевом текстах, и не игнорирует межкультурный прагматизм (Wierbicka, 2003).

Цель настоящего исследования – выяснить, какие концептуальные метафоры используются в хорватских и русских юридических документах (конкретно, в решениях) и установить их лингвистическую реализацию, т.е. как посредством юридического перевода можно найти соответствующее решение и создать точный, правильный и адекватный смысл, что непосредственно, может быть использовано и в педагогических целях. Такой перевод способен улучшить понимание юридического дискурса, обогатить словарный запас и тем самым повысить компетентность в языке для специальных целей, расширить профессиональную лексику (конкретно, в языке права), и, следовательно, помочь студентам осознать факт наличия в юридическом дискурсе метафор и освоить типы концептуальных метафор и их схожие или различные реализации в хорватском и русском юридическом языке.

Когнитивный подход к языку помогает лингвистическому исследованию. Такой подход направлен на изучение терминологии и фразеологии, в данном случае в области права, потому что термин характеризуется точной и ясной структурой знания. Язык права отличается точностью, ясностью и достоверностью, он должен преобладать над двусмысленностью в понимании различных юридических правил и понятий (Богачева, 2021). Следует отметить, что язык права и его терминология эволюционировали, менялись в течение веков как менялось общество и человеческие отношения, но поведение человека не менялось, и правовое регулирование всегда служило ограничению поведения человека. Язык права является носителем памяти истории, человеческого мышления. Поскольку мы мыслим метафорически и наши когнитивные системы являются результатом нашего жизненного опыта и культуры, в которой мы выросли, в этом смысле закон проявляет сходство с сущностью человеческого познания.

Концептуальная метафора в юридическом дискурсе в аспекте сопоставительного анализ в хорватском и русском языках до сих пор не рассматривалась. Таким образом, настоящее исследование позволяет нам обратиться к юридическому дискурсу, раскрыть мир

концептуальной метафоры и сферу ее функционирования в юридическом дискурсе, что и определяет актуальность темы.

## 2. Методы исследования

Предметом исследования является метафора как когнитивный концепт в юридическом дискурсе, в жанре текстов судебных решений. Цель данной работы – определить в какой степени основные концептуальные основания метафоры в хорватском и русском юридическом дискурсе совпадают, какие различия существуют в их языковых реализациях в хорватском и русском юридическом тексте, учитывая факт, что хорватский и русский являются славянскими языками, принадлежащими одному и тому же культурному кругу и правовым системам. В статье представлены результаты исследования концептуальной метафоры в хорватском и русском юридическом дискурсе с точки зрения современной когнитивной семантики. В работе на материале корпуса судебных решений хорватских и российских судов посредством сопоставительного анализа сравнивается использование концептуальных метафор в хорватском и русском правовых регистрах. Хорватский корпус включает 30 судебных решений Верховного суда Республики Хорватия по уголовным и гражданским делам и судебных решений Административного суда общим объемом 24720 слов. Русский корпус состоит из 21 судебного решения и определения Верховного суда Российской Федерации по уголовным и гражданским делам общим объемом 25095 слов. Тексты решений в русском корпусе длиннее, чем в хорватском, поэтому число решений в исследовании не равномерно, и не обеспечивает одинакового количества слов в обоих корпусах. Решения и определения приняты в период с 1993 по 2019 год. Выбор решений был случайным на основе поиска ключевых слов. Поиском ключевых слов в корпусе определились способы реализации действительности, различия и сходства в хорватском и русском языках.

## 3. Результаты

Сопоставительным анализом метафор выявлена самая частотная в хорватском и в русском юридическом корпусах концептуальная метафора, которую находим также в других языках и западноевропейских культурах. Обратим внимание на концептуальную метафору судопроизводства как *поле боя*, *поле битвы* или *поле сражения*.

Одним из самых важных принципов судопроизводства является принцип *состязательности сторон*. Идея состязательности сторон основана на защите одной стороны от другой. Стороны называются *branitelj, odvjetnik* (*защитник, адвокат*), с одной стороны, и *državni odvjetnik, državna odvjetnica* (*прокурор*), с другой стороны. В хорватском юридическом дискурсе *branitelj* употребляется в значении защитника прав обвиняемого и подсудимого, но этот термин пришел в юридическую терминологию из военной терминологии и относится к терминам битвы, сражения. *Branitelj* в военной терминологии обозначает лицо, которое организовало и участвовало в защите независимости, территориальной целостности и суверенитета Республики Хорватия. В русском языке *защитник* имеет более широкое семантическое поле. Используется в юриспруденции, но кроме того, и в сфере спорта в значении игрока в командных видах спорта. В хорватском языке в спортивной терминологии *защитник* переводится как *branič* (позиция игрока защиты, напр. *lijevi branič, desni branič* и др.). Прокуроры и адвокаты должны своими аргументами убедить судью, кто прав, следовательно, *выиграть* в суде, т.е., так же как в бою, одна сторона *выигрывает*, а другая *проигрывает* (напр. ответчик не может быть признан стороной, *выигравшей спор*). Стороны соперничают с противоположных сторон, и формулируют речь на основе выступлений свидетелей по ходу судопроизводства. Зал суда поэтому можно назвать *полем битвы*, и адвокат ведёт словесную битву за интересы своего подозреваемого, обвиняемого или подсудимого.

Термины, которые используются в юридических документах, свидетельствуют о наличии *сражения*, динамического процесса в зале суда, поэтому глаголы – самые эффективные и подходящие слова для выражения динамики. Частотное в качестве гиперонима битвы используемое слово в судопроизводстве – это *конфликт* (напр., конфликт интересов, потенциал конфликта и др.).

Глагол *ustati (ustati protiv)* (*встать* или *встать против*) очень часто используется в решениях и представляет фигуративное значение «восстания», потому что глагол «встать» существует в общеупотребительной лексике, например: *встать со стула (ustati sa stolice)* и др. В судебных решениях глагол *ustati* сочетается с существительными и вступает с ними в коллокации (устойчивые словосочетания), например, *ustati (s) tužbom, ustati s prijedlogom*. Кроме того, часто в окружении глагола находится наречие *protiv: ustati protiv* (напр. *ustao je tužbom protiv tuženika*).

В русском юридическом дискурсе глагол *встать* не используется в этом значении. Соответствующий глагол для адекватного перевода – это *предъявить* (напр. *предъявить обвинение* и эквивалент *podignuti optužnicu*). Наоборот, в хорватском языке глагол *podignuti* имеет значение *поднять*, но было бы неадекватно переводить этим глаголом, а не глаголом *предъявить*.

В русском дискурсе есть и глагол *подать* (напр. он *подал иск против* ответчика; он *подал в суд* свое собственноручно написанное заявление; *подал в суд ходатайство* об ускорении рассмотрения данного заявления и др.). Можно заключить, что конструкции коллокаций одинаковы в хорватском и в русском языках. Они складываются из глагола + имя существительное: *предъявить обвинение*, *podignuti optužnicu*, из глагола + имя существительное + наречие *против* + имя существительное, например: *ustati tužbom protiv tuženika*, *подать иск против ответчика*. В русском языке дополнительно есть коллокация с предлогом *в*: глагол + предлог *в* + имя существительное (*подать в суд*).

Перевод с русского на хорватский язык может привести к ошибке и, соответственно, к неадекватности перевода, потому что значение глагола *предъявить* в хорватском языке переводится как 'показать, представить в подтверждение чего-либо' (хорв. *predstaviti*). Таких случаев много, и адекватность, как и эквивалентность переводческих единиц, становится важнейшей составляющей переводческого процесса.

Кроме того, наименования сторон в переводе судопроизводства часто не эквиваленты. Термин *обвиняемый/okrivljenik* находим в уголовном праве, но в гражданском праве он звучит как *ответчик/tuženik*, что явно сужает его семантическое поле в гражданском праве. Однако в хорватско-русских словарях они переводятся как синонимы, что не соответствует правилу четкости и определенности термина. В гражданском праве зафиксированы такие термины, как *истец/tužitelj* с одной стороны, и *ответчик/tuženik* с другой стороны. В судопроизводстве участники *истец/tužitelj* определяются как «тот, кто по профессии, должности и служебным обязанностям от имени государства или общества подает обвинительный акт в судебный орган; *прокурор* (в хорватском языке *državni odvjetnik*)», а другое значение: «тот, кто подает в суд» (Anić 2004: 1638).

Значение термина *ответчик/tuženik*: «тот, против кого подан иск, против которого возбуждено дело» («Словарь хорватского языка») (Anić 2004: 1638), а синонимом термина *tuženik* указывается термин *обвиняемый*. «Юридический словарь» (Gačić 2010: 1404) перечисляет синонимы: *ispitanik*; *sudionik ankete*; *respondent* (заимствованное слово от англ. *respondent*; участник опроса). В русско-хорватском словаре (Полянец 1966: 560) *ответчик* переведен словами: *optuženik*, *okrivljenik*, *odgovorno lice*/подсудимый, обвиняемый, ответственное лицо. Термины *tužitelj/истец* и *tuženik/ответчик* относятся к терминологии гражданского, а не уголовного права, поэтому было бы неправильно переводить или помещать в контекст гражданского права термин *okrivljenik/обвиняемый*.

Различие между хорватским и русским языками проявляется и в том, что хорватский язык использует феминативы (имена существительные женского рода, образованные от однокоренных существительных мужского рода). В хорватском языке образование феминативов с помощью суффиксов *-ica*, *-ka* и *-inja* является продуктивным в существительных, обозначающих профессии или этническую принадлежность: *slikar-ica/художница*, *talijan-ka/итальянка*, *pjesnik-inja/поэтесса*, *kandidat-kinja/фем. от кандидат* (Barić 1987: 12).

Феминативы в русском языке образуются с помощью десяти суффиксов, которые присоединяются к основе мужского рода (Русская грамматика, 1980; Ефремова, 2006), но наиболее продуктивные (Прохорова 2012: 292-295): *-к-* (студент → студентка), *-щиц-* (банщик → банщица) и *-ниц-* (писатель → писательница) (Микулац 2021: 532). Однако образование феминативов в русском языке во многих случаях ограничено.

Таким образом, в юридическом дискурсе в хорватском языке в отличие от юридического дискурса в русском языке используются термины и женского рода, называющие лица женского пола: *tužena* (от мужского рода *tuženik*), *braniteljica* (от мужского рода *branitelj*), *ispitanica* (от мужского рода *ispitanik*) и др.

Термины *нападение* и *защита* – тоже часть судопроизводства (как и в военных действиях) (напр., не давая ему возможности отобрать нож у *нападавшего* и *защищаться*, как потом выяснилось, нападавшими были П. и К.; процессуальный механизм направлен на создание условий равной *правовой защиты*; восстановление и *защита нарушенных прав* и др.). В хорватском языке – это *napad* и *obrana* (*postoji razmjernost između napada i obrane*, tj. da li je poduzeti način *obrane* od strane optuženog; istodobni i protupravni *napad*

oštećenika, te da postoji razmjernost između *napada i obrane*; интензитета и опасности *napada i obrane*; средство при одбијанју *napada* искључује *nužnu obranu* и др.).

Защитити/защитити можно право (хорв. *štititi/zaštiti prava*), а *защитити се* можно од напада (хорв. *braniti se od napada*) (напр. *защитити се* од его напада; Х. *сопротивлялся, защищался* ногама и рукама). В хорватском языке глагол *защитити се* переводится как *braniti se* и используется равноценно в значении *защитити се* од напада, *защитити се* частью тела (ногама, рукама) или *хранити молчание*: *braniti se šutnjom* (напр. *braniti se dijelom tijela: nogom, rukom, rukom ispred glave; braniti se šutnjom, braniti se sam, branio se od napada tužiteljice, braniti se od napada, od oštećenika, braniti da nađe posao, od napada zaštitara, braniti suprugu, braniti se nogama, braniti se sa slobode*).

Следующее сопоставление процесса судопроизводства, сравниваемое с битвой, с частью каждого поля битвы, скорее даже последствием сражения – это то, что проигравших участников победители обычно убивают или заключают в тюрьму. С этим связаны примеры в судопроизводстве: *mjere pritvora* (određen je pritvor, određen je *pritvor protiv optuženog I.J.*); *zadržati u pritvoru do okončanja tog postupka; izdržavanje kazne zatvora; određivanje istražnog zatvora* и др. В русском языке: *меры пресечения, меры пресечения в виде заключения под стражу; меры содержания под стражей* (напр., «вынесено решение о заключении под стражу», «содержание под стражей»); *держат под стражей; отбывание тюремного заключения; определение предварительного заключения* и т.д.

Кроме терминов и коллокаций, связанных с терминами, в которых содержатся слова *тюрьма, заключение под стражу, следственная тюрьма*, существуют глаголы, у которых фигуративный признак. Так, например, от хорватского глагола *robijati* образуется пассивное причастие *robijan* (напр., и *robijanom rješenju*). Глагол *robijati* несовершенного вида, а глагол *robiti* совершенного вида. В словарях хорватского языка находим синоним – глагол совершенного вида *poUbijati*, все глаголы в значении *убить*; *убить всех по очереди; лишить кого-либо жизни*. Глаголы *robiti, roubijati* могут ввести переводчика в заблуждение, но в рамках права используется глагол *robiti* и также часто используется в коллокации *robiti rješenje* (в русском языке *отменить решение*). Неправильное употребление глагола *roubijati* в коллокации *roubijati rješenje* было бы ошибкой.

Одним из следствий сравнения со сражением является термин *повреждение* (*povreda*), но существует разница между хорватским и русским пониманием этого термина в юридическом дискурсе, поэтому следует определить само понятие и предложить адекватный перевод. *Povreda prava* с хорватского на русский язык переводится словосочетанием *нарушение прав*. Такое лингвистическое выражение на хорватском языке уже можно рассматривать как персонификацию, потому что *pravo* может быть *rovrijeđeno* («повреждено» так же, как и человек). Нельзя в юридических документах переводить существительное *povreda* как вред, ущерб. В дословном значении *povreda* имеет значение повреждение, *ранение*. *Povreda* появляется и в дублетной форме в юридическом дискурсе – это *kršenje* (напр. *nije bilo kršenja mjera opreza od strane P. K.; kršenje radne obveze; kršenje odredaba Zakona o radu* и др.). Существует и другое словосочетание *nanositi štetu* (напр. *na način da su nanosili štetu vlasniku stana – tužitelju*), которое необходимо переводить эквивалентом в русском языке – *наносить вред*, или *возместить ущерб*. С теми примерами связывается сторона, которой наносится вред: *oštećenik, oštećenica* (потерпевшая сторона).

В войне или в битве, а также и в судопроизводстве, можно *выиграть* или *проиграть*. *Выиграть* в хорватском языке переводится глаголом *pobijediti* (напр. *u ratu, na izborima, u parnici, u sporu, na utakmici, kolektivne interese, pobijediti zlo*). В русском юридическом дискурсе примеры следующие: ответчик не может быть признан стороной, *выигравшей* спор; договор заключается с лицом, *выигравшим* торги; *выиграл* тендер на право выполнения инновационного проекта и др.

*Победитель* называется *pobjednik* (напр. *pobjednik natječaja, izborni pobjednik*). В русском языке слово *победитель* может быть в разных контекстах: в споре в качестве ответчика победителя торгов; цены контракта, предложенной победителем аукциона; образцы дипломов победителей и призеров и др.

Следующий глагол – это *проиграть*. Так, в хорватском языке *izgubiti* (напр., *izgubiti parnicu, pravo na studij, studentska prava, stan, posao, dijete, svijest, izgubiti pravnu stranu, izgubiti pravni učinak; život, izgubiti pravo potraživati naknadu, izgubiti djelotvornost, izgubila svojstvo javnog puta, izgubiti svojstvo vojne osobe, izgubiti na zaradi, izgubio povjerenje u tužiteljicu; izgubila se svrha, samostalnost, izgubio je pola kuće, izgubili stanarsko pravo, izgubio vlast nad vozilom i sletio s kolnika, izgubila putnu ispravu, izgubila pravni učinak ovršne isprave, izgubiti zaradu, izgubio povjerenje u efikasnost i nepristranost toga*

suda). В русском дискурсе находим этот глагол в форме действительного причастия совершенного вида прошедшего времени: истец не является *проигравшей* стороной по спору; судебные расходы подлежат компенсации за счет *проигравшей* стороны; руководствуясь положениями статей 106, 110 АПК РФ отнесли на ответчиков, *проигравших* спор, расходы на оплату судебной экспертизы и др.

Помимо слова *проиграть* в русском языке существует глагол *терять*, который переводим на хорватский язык тоже глаголом *izgubiti*, напр., термин *izgubiti pravni učinak* надо перевести как глагол *терять*: *терять юридическую силу* (напр., *теряет юридическую силу* в случае истечения срока действия положительного заключения; доводы жалобы об *утрате* юридической силы указанным приказом подлежат отклонению). Неадекватно было бы на русский язык перевести как *проиграть юридическую силу*. Безусловно, можно *проиграть суд* (*izgubiti parnicu* или *izgubiti na sudu*), а не юридическую силу. Термин *проигравшая сторона* в хорватском языке дословно переводится как *gubitnička strana*, он существует в общеупотребительной лексике, но этот термин мы не находим в юридическом дискурсе. В судопроизводстве называется иначе – *gubitnik* (напр. *pravo na pristup sudu samom primjenom načela „gubitnik plaća“ iz čl. 154. st. 1. Zakona o parničnom postupku; troškove stranke u postupku te se poziva na načelo „gubitnik plaća“*). Таким образом, русский язык демонстрирует богатство и разнообразие лексики, что в переводе позволяет облегчить как четкость выражения, так и четкость понимания.

Лингвистическая реализация концептуальной метафоры «судопроизводство как поле битвы» представлена с примерами в таблице.

**Таблица 1. Судопроизводство – поле битвы.**

Хорватский образец	
термины (символ + обозначает различие между языками)	примеры в решениях и определениях
<i>protustranke</i>	protiv <i>protustranke</i> , u žalbi <i>protustranke</i> , podnesenom žalbom pobija <i>protustranka</i>

<p><i>tužitelj</i> ← <i>tuženik</i> + <i>tužiteljica</i>    <i>tužena</i></p>	<p><i>tužitelj</i> nije znao za tu bolest <i>tužene</i> do vremena kada je ona napustila bračnu zajednicu, pa je pokrenuo postupak za pokušaj mirenja prije nego li je htio <i>ustati tužbom</i> za razvod braka</p>
<p><i>branitelj</i> → <i>branjenik</i> + <i>braniteljica</i></p>	<p>okrivljenik sam izabere drugog <i>branitelja</i> ili kada postavljeni <i>branitelj</i> traži vlastito razrješenje; nije kontaktirao sa svojim <i>branjenikom</i> koji se nalazi u pritvoru; povjerenje okrivljenika u <i>braniteljicu</i>; u statusu <i>braniteljice</i> po službenoj dužnosti</p>
<p><i>oštećenik</i> + <i>oštećenica</i></p>	<p>popravi štetu <i>oštećenicima</i>, i to <i>oštećenju</i> Z. M.; u glavu upućen od strane optuženika <i>oštećeniku</i> u svojim iskazima spominju <i>oštećeni</i>; okrivljeni i <i>oštećenica</i></p>
<p><i>pobijediti</i></p>	<p>u ratu, na izborima, u parnici, u sporu, na utakmici, kolektivne interese, <i>pobijediti</i> zlo</p>
<p><i>pobjednik</i></p>	<p>natječaja, izborni <i>pobjednik</i></p>
<p><i>izgubiti</i></p>	<p><i>izgubiti</i> parnicu, pravo na studij, studentska prava, stan, posao, dijete, svijest, izgubiti pravnu stranu, život, izgubiti pravo potraživati naknadu, izgubiti djelotvornost, izgubila svojstvo javnog puta, izgubiti svojstvo vojne osobe, izgubiti na zaradi, izgubio povjerenje u tužiteljicu; izgubila se svrha, samostalnost, izgubio je pola kuće, izgubili stanarsko pravo, izgubio vlast nad vozilom i sletio s kolnika, izgubila putnu ispravu, izgubila pravni učinak ovršne isprave, izgubiti zaradu, izgubio povjerenje u efikasnost i nepristranost toga suda</p>
<p><i>gubitnik</i></p>	<p>pravo na pristup sudu samom primjenom načela „gubitnik plaća“ iz čl. 154. st. 1. Zakona o parničnom postupku; troškove stranke u</p>

	postupku te se poziva na načelo „gubitnik plaća“
<i>napad i obrana</i>	postoji razmjernost između <i>napada i obrane</i> , tj. da li je poduzeti način obrane od strane optuženog; istodobni i protupravni <i>napad</i> oštećenika, te da postoji razmjernost između <i>napada i obrane</i> ; intenziteta i opasnosti <i>napada i obrane</i> ; sredstvo pri odbijanju <i>napada</i> isključuje nužnu <i>obranu</i>
<i>zaštita prava</i>	sudski postupak na koji se odnosi zahtjev za <i>zaštitu prava</i> na suđenje; povodom zahtjeva za <i>zaštitu prava</i>
<i>braniti se</i> šutnjom, od nekoga, ili nekoga predmeta; <i>braniti se</i> dijelom tijela: nogom, rukom, rukom ispred glave	šutnjom, <i>braniti se</i> sam, <i>branio se</i> od napada tužiteljice, <i>braniti se</i> od napada, od oštećenika, <i>braniti</i> da nađe posao, od napada zaštitara, <i>braniti</i> suprugu, <i>braniti se</i> nogama, <i>braniti se</i> sa slobode
+ глагол <i>ustati</i>	kad su ovršenici <i>ustali s prijedlogom</i> za protuovrhu <i>ustati s tužbom</i> i pokrenuti parnicu Predlagateljica je protiv ovog rješenja <i>ustala s pravovremenom žalbom</i> ; <i>ustala s prijedlogom</i> za priznanje strane sudske odluke, predlagateljica <i>ustala s prijedlogom protiv</i> preminule osobe Prednik tužitelja <i>ustao je tužbom protiv</i> tuženika tužitelj je <i>ustao (hipotekarnom) tužbom</i> ; <i>ustali tužbom</i> protiv Općinskog suda
+ глагол <i>podignuti</i>	<i>podignuti optužnicu</i>
<i>protiv</i>	<i>protiv</i> optuženika, okrivljenika, tuženika, pritvor protiv njega, protiv

	rješenja (Županijskog suda), protiv odluke, presude; protiv žalitelja
<b>Русский образец</b>	
<b>термины</b>	<b>примеры в решениях и определениях</b>
<i>противоположные стороны</i>	Довод заявителя о пропуске <i>противоположной стороной</i> срока обращения в суд; относится к стороне, которая их понесла, и возмещению за счет <i>противоположной стороны</i> не подлежит, если <i>одна из сторон</i> подаст иск <i>против стороны</i> с местонахождением в г. Н. (ответчик); <i>против стороны</i> обвинения
<i>истец</i> ← → <i>ответчик</i>	по необоснованному вызову <i>ответчика</i> ; суд обязал <i>истца</i> вызвать <i>ответчика</i> на сверку расчетов; подтверждается факт совершения <i>ответчиком</i> действий; с учетом неявки <i>ответчика</i> ; с <i>истцом</i> подлежат отклонению, поскольку из настоящей жалобы и из содержания судебных актов не следует, что <i>ответчик</i> ссылался на возникновение спорных убытков у иного против <i>истца</i> лица; <i>ответчик</i> извещал <i>истца</i> о нарушении им предусмотренного договором срока
<i>защитник</i> → <i>ответчик</i> (защитник или законный представитель) (в гражданском праве <i>ответчик</i> ; <i>подозреваемый</i> , <i>обвиняемый</i> в уголовном праве в смысле <i>branjenik</i> )	осуществлять лично либо с помощью <i>защитника</i> и (или) <i>законного представителя</i> ; жалоба <i>защитников</i> ;
<i>потерпевшая сторона</i>	накладывая только на <i>потерпевшую сторону</i> (истца)

	бремя; восстановить права потерпевшей стороны
<i>выиграть</i>	ответчик не может быть признан <i>стороной, выигравшей спор</i> ; договор заключается с лицом, <i>выигравшим</i> торги; <i>выиграл тендер</i> на право выполнения инновационного проекта
<i>победитель</i>	в споре в качестве ответчика <i>победителя</i> торгов; цены контракта, предложенной <i>победителем</i> аукциона; образцы дипломов <i>победителей</i> и призеров
<i>проиграть</i> (хорв. <i>izgubiti</i> ), <i>проигравшая</i> <i>сторона</i>	истец не является <i>проигравшей стороной</i> по спору; судебные расходы подлежат компенсации за счет <i>проигравшей</i> стороны; руководствуясь положениями статей 106, 110 АПК РФ отнесли на ответчиков, <i>проигравших спор</i> , расходы на оплату судебной экспертизы
+ <i>терять</i> (хорв. <i>gubiti</i> )	<i>теряет</i> юридическую силу в случае истечения срока действия положительного заключения; доводы жалобы об <i>утрате юридической силы</i> указанным приказом подлежат отклонению
<i>нападение и защита</i>	не давая ему возможности отобрать нож у <i>нападавшего</i> и <i>защищаться</i> , как потом выяснилось, <i>нападавшими</i> были П. и К.; процессуальный механизм направлен на создание условий равной <i>правовой защиты</i> ; восстановление и <i>защита</i> нарушенных прав;
<i>защита прав</i>	

защитаться от нападения (хорв. <i>braniti se od napada</i> )	защищаясь от его нападения; Х. сопротивлялся, <i>защищался ногами и руками</i>
+ <i>хранить молчание</i> (хорв. <i>braniti se šutnjom</i> )	Присутствие адвоката К. на допросе заявителя (дата) не являлось достаточной гарантией для защиты прав заявителя, в частности права пользоваться помощью адвоката по своему выбору, а также не свидетельствовать против самого себя и <i>хранить молчание</i> <i>šutnjom, braniti se sam, branio se od napada tužiteljice, braniti se od napada, od oštećenika, braniti da nađe posao, od napada zaštitara, braniti suprugu, braniti se nogama, braniti se sa slobode</i>
<i>предъявить</i>	По этому уголовному делу окончательное <i>обвинение</i> было <i>предъявлено</i> гражданам; истец знал об оспариваемых сделках и наличии оснований для <i>предъявления иска</i>
+ <i>подать</i>	он <i>подал иск</i> против ответчика; он <i>подал в суд</i> свое собственноручно написанное заявление; <i>подал в суд ходатайство</i> об ускорении рассмотрения данного заявления; <i>подача</i> предложения, заявления или жалобы;
<i>против</i>	<i>против</i> ответчика; обвиняемого, подсудимого; возражая <i>против выводов судов</i> о недоказанности совершения всех возможных и зависящих от ответчика действий; <i>против</i> удовлетворения кассационной жалобы

Таким образом, в обоих языках судебное разбирательство концептуализируется через известный опыт битвы. Хотя битва,

происходящая в зале суда, не является физической, судебное разбирательство частично структурировано, и мы его понимаем через концепцию войны. Подобно концептуальной метафоре «Спор – это война!» (Лакофф, Джонсон, 1980: 61, 62), она также основана на том факте, что мы обнаруживаем физический конфликт в окружающем нас мире и поэтому легко его понимаем. В процессе развития человеческой цивилизации люди придумали ряд изощренных способов борьбы за то, чего они хотят и хотят без физического конфликта. Опыт физической борьбы переносится на различные другие области человеческой жизни, в которых человек «борется», «выигрывает», «защищается» и т.д. Таким образом, основной смысл упомянутых терминов находится в области физического, и из этой области он переносится в другие области, в которых эти термины обозначают абстрактную борьбу, в том числе и ту, которая происходит в зале суда. Другими словами, когда мы связываем абстрактную идею, например аргумент, с конкретной, допустим, физической борьбой, на наше понимание абстрактной идеи влияет то, что мы знаем о конкретной идее. Основная концептуальная метафора битвы в нашем корпусе встречается в способах лингвистической реализации, некоторые из которых одинаковы в хорватском и в русском языках, а некоторые мы находим только в одном из языков.

#### 4. Педагогическое применение концептуальной метафоры

Фигуративный язык может вызвать большие проблемы в понимании и в переводе юридического текста. Использование метафоры в дословном переводе может привести к непониманию текста. Несмотря на то, что хорватский и русский языки славянские, они разные и у них сложились разные лингвистические выражения для концептуальных метафор. В юридическом дискурсе *защитник* переводится как *branitelj/braniteljica*, *ответчик* как *tuženik/tužena*, *отменить решение* как *robiti rješenje*, *нарушение прав* как *povreda prava* и др. Студентам важно осознать использование метафоры в юридическом дискурсе, чтобы они могли их еще и запомнить. Такая работа по освоению терминов и повышению знаний осуществляется через разработанную систему упражнений. Наличие сходства между языками может быть использовано в обучении юридической терминологии студентов-переводчиков, и в понимании ими различий между разными лексическими реализациями.

## 5. Выводы

Анализ хорватских и русских примеров концептуальной метафоры «судопроизводство как поле битвы» в судебных решениях и определениях показал, что и хорватский, и русский юридический дискурс использует один и тот же тип концептуальной метафоры с одинаковой или схожей лингвистической реализацией, а также и с разными языковыми выражениями. В русском языке обнаружили различные глаголы для выражения одного и того же концепта (напр., глагол *izgubiti* в хорватском языке обладает большим количеством значений, тогда как в русском языке существуют разные глаголы, напр., *предъявить* и *подать*). Другое различие проявляется в том, что хорватский язык использует в наименовании лиц, участников в судебном разбирательстве форму женского рода (феминативы) (м.р. *branitelj*, ж.р. *braniteljica*). Причиной большого сходства в использовании метафоры, является тот факт, что хорватский и русский – это два родственных славянских языка индоевропейской семьи языков, принадлежащих романо-германской правовой семье (праву континентальной Европы) и западному культурному кругу.

Существование концептуальной метафоры в хорватских юридических текстах, безусловно, должно быть дополнительно подтверждено дальнейшими систематическими исследованиями более крупных корпусов, а также расширено и распространено на концептуальные метафоры, как например, на такое судопроизводство, как медицинский осмотр (*pravni lijek, uzrok*, средство правовой защиты, причина), путешествие (*tijek rasprave, zaročnje parnica*, начало судебного процесса), взвешивание (*opteretio, težina dokaza*, обременение, весомость доказательств), персонификация (в хорватском языке часто употребляется *rovreda zakona, prava*) и др. В дальнейших исследованиях было бы полезно провести более детальный контрастивный анализ языковых особенностей юридического дискурса или юридических жанров (нормативные акты, договоры, научные статьи, юридическая периодика) с целью получения более полного представления о степени совпадения.

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## CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR IN CROATIAN AND RUSSIAN LEGAL DISCOURSE

The conceptual metaphor is one of the most important cognitive mechanisms, based on establishing connections between concepts belonging to different areas of knowledge (domains). A metaphor is defined as "understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 5; 2008), and metaphors have the capacity to profoundly shape our thinking. The traditional linguistic understanding of metaphor defines it as a word, rhetorical figure, or expression used in a figurative sense, which is based on the comparison of one object or phenomenon with another based on a shared characteristic. The unique feature of metaphor lies in its multifunctionality and polysemy. One of its functions (alongside nominative, pragmatic, and communicative) is the cognitive function, which views metaphor as a tool for knowledge acquisition and involves gaining new insights about the surrounding world (McCormack, 1990).

In George Lakoff's interpretation, and that of other researchers, conceptual metaphor is considered a universal feature of human thought. It is not limited solely to the realm of language and can be expressed both verbally and non-verbally, such as through gestures, music, or visual arts. Conceptual metaphor theory views it as a process occurring at the level of human cognition, which is then reflected in linguistic structures. The semantics of a metaphor is influenced by context and situation, i.e., "in speech, specific conditions of nomination are considered, and selection occurs based on the communication situation. Figurative designation is semantized according to specific rules" (Dubrovina & Sakovets, 2020: 86; citing Nikitin, 1979: 99).

Metaphors reflect a worldview, embodying specific national and cultural characteristics of how reality is conceptualized. While metaphors may differ across languages, "we act according to how we conceive of things" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Conceptual metaphors can belong to different cultures, and many are universal.

Previous research demonstrates that metaphor is unavoidable in legal language and is often found in legal discourse (Morra, Rossi & Bazzanella, 2006; Palashevskaya, 2010; Husinec, 2011; Konstantinova, 2011; Cherdantsev, 2012; Bogacheva, 2021; Yaroshchuk, 2022, among others). Modern rhetoric of legal discourse increasingly incorporates metaphors, making legal texts more vivid and comprehensible to a broader audience.

Legal discourse functions as a unique code used within institutional environments (courtrooms, prosecution offices, notaries, legal practices, parliaments, police, prisons). It encompasses normative texts, legal documents, academic and instructional legal texts, and court proceedings, including the speeches of participants such as judges, lawyers, prosecutors, and witnesses. Legal discourse is characterized by its coherence—its unity in content, lexicon, grammar, and logic. Its components form a hierarchically structured system aimed at legal regulation and the realization of law. Legal discourse is employed by prosecutors, judges, lawyers, notaries, police officers, and others in various settings like courts, prisons, and legal offices.

**Characteristics of Legal Discourse:**

1. It operates within the field of law.
2. It adheres to norms: the themes and motives of legal discourse center around the law, its content, compliance, and alignment with legal standards (e.g., evaluating actions, behaviors, or conduct).
3. It regulates social relationships, thereby exhibiting its communicative function.
4. It contains legal terms and concepts.

Moreover, in legal proceedings involving participants from different countries and language backgrounds, translators and legal translations play a crucial role. Legal translation is not merely the conversion of text from one language to another but also the transfer of legal knowledge into another legal system (Mikulaco, 2020). The primary qualities of a good translation are adequacy and equivalence. Adequacy is achieved through knowledge of both the language and the legal system of the source text, as well as the target

language. An adequate translation ensures effective communication between the source (author) and the recipient (the source text and the translated text).

Equivalence refers to interlingual synonyms that do not depend on context, establishing a consistent synonymy between the translation and the source language. Semantic equivalence implies identical meaning between linguistic units of the source and target languages (Semenov, 2013: 208–210). A translator must adhere to the concept that is equivalent for the target language, considering both the context of the source and target texts while also accounting for intercultural pragmatics (Wierbicka, 2003).

### **Objective of the Study**

The aim of this study is to identify which conceptual metaphors are used in Croatian and Russian legal documents (specifically, court decisions) and determine their linguistic implementation. The goal is to understand how legal translation can provide suitable solutions and create accurate, precise, and meaningful interpretations, which can be directly applied for pedagogical purposes. Such translations enhance the understanding of legal discourse, enrich vocabulary, and thereby improve proficiency in specialized legal language, broadening professional lexicon (especially within legal terminology). Consequently, this helps students recognize the presence of metaphors in legal discourse and master the types of conceptual metaphors along with their similar or different implementations in Croatian and Russian legal languages.

A cognitive approach to language supports linguistic research, focusing on studying terminology and phraseology, particularly in law. Legal terminology is characterized by its precision and clarity in structuring knowledge. Legal language is designed to ensure unambiguity in understanding legal rules and concepts (Bogacheva, 2021). Over centuries, legal language and terminology have evolved alongside changes in society and human relationships. However, human behavior remains constant, and legal regulation has consistently aimed to limit and guide it. Legal language serves as a repository of historical memory and human thought. Since human cognition is metaphorical, and cognitive systems result from life experiences and the culture in which we grow, law mirrors the essence of human cognition.

The application of conceptual metaphors within the comparative analysis of Croatian and Russian legal discourse has not been thoroughly examined before. This study addresses this gap, exploring the role and functioning of conceptual metaphors in legal discourse, thereby establishing the relevance of the topic.

The research investigates the conceptual metaphors present in Croatian and Russian legal documents, specifically court decisions. It examines the similarities and differences in metaphorical usage between the two languages, the linguistic realizations of these metaphors in legal discourse and the implications of these findings for legal translation and pedagogy.

Since both languages are Slavic and their legal systems share common roots in continental European law, the study hypothesizes significant overlap in metaphorical conceptualization while also anticipating linguistic nuances and cultural variations.

## Theoretical Background and Methodology

### The Role of Metaphor in Legal Discourse

Legal language, though often perceived as rigid and technical, relies heavily on metaphor to articulate abstract principles, describe legal processes, and frame complex arguments. For example, the courtroom is often conceptualized as a battlefield, with opposing sides engaging in strategic "combat" to emerge victorious. This metaphorical framing shapes how legal professionals and laypersons understand the adversarial nature of the justice system.

Metaphors also serve pedagogical purposes, aiding students, translators, and practitioners in grasping intricate legal concepts. By framing abstract legal notions in relatable terms, metaphors facilitate comprehension and foster a deeper understanding of legal principles.

### Methodology

The study employs a comparative analysis of two corpora:

- **Croatian Corpus:** 30 court decisions from the Supreme Court of Croatia, totaling 24,720 words.
- **Russian Corpus:** 21 court decisions from the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, totaling 25,095 words.

Texts were selected using keyword searches to identify metaphorical expressions. The analysis focused on identifying, categorizing, and comparing conceptual metaphors, with an emphasis on linguistic realizations and implications for translation.

### Findings: Legal Proceedings as a Battlefield

A dominant metaphor in both Croatian and Russian legal discourse is "legal proceedings as a battlefield." This metaphor reflects the adversarial nature of legal systems, where opposing parties "fight" for a favorable outcome. The courtroom, in this context, is metaphorically depicted as a site of conflict, with legal practitioners engaging in strategic battles.

### Key Components of the Metaphor

#### 1) Battle Terminology

- Croatian legal discourse frequently employs terms rooted in military or conflict contexts. For example, *branitelj* (defender) derives from military terminology and is used to describe the legal defender of a client. Similarly, *napad* (attack) is used figuratively to describe prosecutorial strategies or allegations.
- Russian legal discourse mirrors this with terms like *защитник* (defender) and *нападение* (attack), reinforcing the combative framing of courtroom dynamics.

#### 2) Strategic Actions

- a. In Croatian, actions like filing a lawsuit are described using dynamic verbs such as *ustati* (to rise) and *podignuti* (to lift), evoking imagery of physical preparation for battle. For example, *ustati s tužbom* (to rise with a lawsuit) suggests readiness to engage in legal conflict.

- b. Russian uses verbs like *предъявить* (to present) and *подать* (to file), which convey similar tactical movements in the legal arena.

### 3) Victory and Defeat

- a. Both languages employ metaphorical language to describe the outcomes of legal battles. Croatian expressions such as *pobijediti u sporu* (to win a dispute) and *izgubiti parnicu* (to lose a case) align with Russian equivalents *выиграть дело* (to win a case) and *проиграть дело* (to lose a case).
- b. The victorious party is metaphorically portrayed as a “winner,” while the losing party assumes the role of the “defeated.”

### 4) Roles of Participants

- a. Croatian legal terminology includes feminized forms, such as *tužiteljica* (female plaintiff), reflecting gender-specific linguistic practices. Russian, in contrast, rarely uses such forms in legal discourse, highlighting a cultural and linguistic divergence.

#### Linguistic Nuances and Challenges

Despite the shared conceptual metaphor, linguistic differences emerge between Croatian and Russian:

- **Verb Usage:** Croatian verbs like *ustati* and *podignuti* have no direct equivalents in Russian, where actions are described using *предъявить* and *подать*. This divergence underscores differing metaphorical framings of legal actions.
- **Gendered Language:** Croatian extensively uses feminized nouns (*braniteljica* for female defender), whereas Russian predominantly employs gender-neutral terms, reflecting cultural differences in professional language.
- **Semantic Variability:** Croatian’s *izgubiti* (to lose) has broader applications than its Russian counterparts, which use distinct verbs like *терять* (to lose something abstract) and *проиграть* (to lose a case).

#### Broader Applications of Metaphors

While “legal proceedings as a battlefield” dominates, other metaphors enrich Croatian and Russian legal discourse:

- **Law as a Journey:**
  - Croatian phrases like *tijek rasprave* (course of the trial) and Russian *ход судебного разбирательства* (course of legal proceedings) frame legal processes as journeys with defined paths and destinations.
- **Law as Weighing Scales:**
  - Croatian’s *težina dokaza* (weight of evidence) and Russian *вес доказательств* reflect the evaluative nature of judicial decision-making.
- **Law as Personification:**

- Croatian's *povreda zakona* (violation of the law) personifies legal statutes, attributing them with human-like qualities of being harmed or violated.

### Pedagogical Implications

Metaphors pose challenges for legal translation, requiring cultural and linguistic sensitivity. Misinterpreting metaphorical expressions can lead to inaccuracies and misunderstandings.

### Educational Strategies

1. **Contextual Training:** Legal translators and students must develop an awareness of metaphorical language and its implications. For example, understanding the nuances of *ustati s tužbom* in Croatian and its Russian equivalent ensures accurate translation.
2. **Practical Exercises:** Exercises comparing metaphorical expressions, such as Croatian *podignuti optužnicu* (to raise an indictment) and Russian *предъявить обвинение* (to present an accusation), enhance students' linguistic and analytical skills.
3. **Expanding Vocabulary:** Teaching metaphors as part of legal terminology enriches students' understanding of legal discourse and improves their ability to articulate complex ideas.

### Conclusions and Future Directions

The analysis of Croatian and Russian examples of the conceptual metaphor "legal proceedings as a battlefield" in court decisions and judgments revealed that both Croatian and Russian legal discourse employs the same type of conceptual metaphor, with identical or similar linguistic realizations, as well as differing linguistic expressions. In Russian, various verbs are used to express the same concept (e.g., the Croatian verb *izgubiti* has a broad range of meanings, whereas in Russian, distinct verbs such as *предъявить* (to present) and *подать* (to file) are used). Another difference lies in the Croatian language's use of feminine forms (feminatives) to denote participants in legal proceedings (e.g., masculine *branitelj* and feminine *braniteljica*).

The substantial similarity in metaphor usage can be attributed to the fact that both Croatian and Russian are related Slavic languages within the Indo-European language family. Additionally, both belong to the Romano-Germanic legal tradition (continental European law) and the Western cultural sphere.

The presence of conceptual metaphors in Croatian legal texts undoubtedly requires further confirmation through systematic studies of larger corpora. These studies should also extend to other conceptual metaphors, such as those framing legal proceedings as a medical examination (*pravni lijek* – legal remedy, *uzrok* – cause), as a journey (*tijek rasprave* – course of the trial, *započinje parnica* – the trial begins), as weighing (*opteretio* – burdened, *težina dokaza* – weight of evidence), or as personification (e.g., the frequent use in Croatian of *povreda zakona, prava* – violation of the law or rights).

Future research would benefit from conducting a more detailed contrastive analysis of the linguistic features of legal discourse or legal genres (e.g., normative acts, contracts, academic articles, legal periodicals) to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the degree of overlap.

**Future Research**

1. Expanding the corpus to include other legal genres, such as contracts and legislation.
2. Exploring additional metaphors, such as “law as medicine” or “law as architecture.”
3. Investigating the pedagogical impact of metaphor-focused language instruction.

By examining conceptual metaphors in legal discourse, this research contributes to the broader understanding of how language shapes legal thought and practice, fostering better cross-linguistic communication and education.

**Keywords:** Croatian and Russian languages, contrastive analysis, conceptual metaphor, legal discourse, court decisions

## **BETWEEN INTIMACY AND ALIENATION: THE PROTOTYPICAL SENSE OF KΣÉNOS IN GREEK AND ITS LITERARY EXPLOITATION IN EPIPHANIUS' SERMON ON HOLY SATURDAY**

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**Abstract:** This work looks at the way the polysemic network of the term *ksénos*, meaning GUEST-FRIEND, HOST and STRANGER in Ancient Greek, is literarily exploited by the 4<sup>th</sup> century Christian writer Epiphanius, in a sermon on Holy Saturday. The text is of particular interest, given that it makes a proliferate use of the term in a passage that occupies a central place in his work. The analysis first gives a representation of the gestaltist theory that underlies the conceptualisation of the term, understanding the latter as an emergent concept within a network of conceptual integration. In turn, it contextualises synchronically the sermon by giving a rather fine-grained semantic coding of the extant instances of the term, found in Greek papyri between 250 and 450 AD. Finally, it looks at the actual uses of the term in Epiphanius' text, locating each of the uses within *ksénos*' integration network and exploring their function at a textual level.

**Keywords:** prototypicality, polysemic network, Ancient Greek, conceptual integration.<sup>1</sup>

### **1. Introduction**

It has been a long-standing realisation that any given lexical term has to be seen not as an autonomous capsule of meaning but as an access point to complex gestaltist theories, called Idealised Cognitive Models (Lakoff, 1987). A typical example to which literature often makes reference is the term *bachelor* (op. cit). The formalisation of its meaning into either

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necessary and sufficient conditions such as [unmarried, adult, male] or even prototypical features such as [uncelibate, independent, socialised, promiscuous] cannot indiscreetly apply to all referents that manifest these characteristics. For instance, the Pope cannot be understood as a BACHELOR, even if he fulfills all seven characteristics. This is because the model that sanctions the understanding of the sense of BACHELOR is MARRIAGE, to which POPE by definition does not belong. It is the cultural knowledge of the interrelation between the two states within a single model, namely before and after marriage, which gives rise to the concept BACHELOR.

In the light of conceptual integration theory, differently *blending* (Fauconnier and Turner, 2002), this multidimensional computation for the meaning of a given term can be understood as the *emergent space* that results from simultaneous access to two – or more- input spaces. For example, in the case of BACHELOR these would be BEFORE\_MARRIAGE and AFTER\_MARRIAGE, with BACHELOR being the concept that emerges from the correspondence between a given entity that satisfies the [male, *unmarried*] characteristics, with his possible and prospective [male, *married*] self, as shown in figure 1.

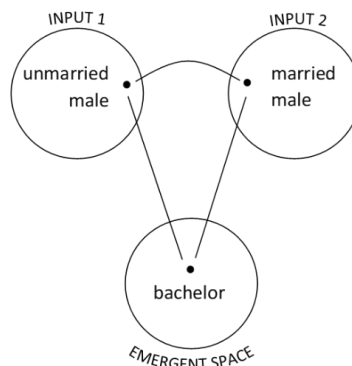


Figure 1. BACHELOR as an emergent concept

Nevertheless, the participation of two input spaces does not mean that their contribution to the whole network is symmetric. Concretely, it is INPUT 1, namely the UNMARRIED MAN space, that serves as the basis for the construction of the network. INPUT 2 can be seen as the PROJECTED REALITY which is built through the *vital relation of identity* (Fauconnier and Turner, 2000) that holds between the elements UNMARRIED MALE and MARRIED MALE, as shown in figure 2.

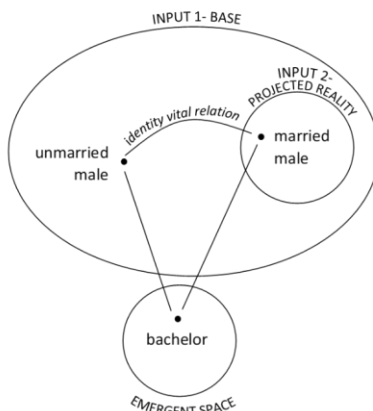


Figure 2. UNMARRIED MALE as the base in the conceptual integration network of BACHELOR

Summarising, it can be argued that the emergent nature of concepts – especially those with a heavy cultural weight such as BACHELOR – is what makes them so resistant to a feature-based definition. This is also the reason why a lexical sense as an autonomous and linguistically encapsulated meaning is bound to remain elusive.

The problem becomes all more vexing for lexical terms in ancient languages. The text-based definition of them, especially in the absence of native-speaker intuitions, resembles a manifold of meanings whose prototypical origin – many times present in the mind of a native speaker – is missing. The point has been made in the relevant literature, with the solution coming from the intuitive tracing of a more schematic conceptual core (Clarke, 2014).

Although a prototype-based approach is plausible and often captures the semantic core for a cluster of related meanings, it also stumbles upon a problem familiar both to gestaltist theories and theories of emergence. The conceptual characteristics that appear to comprise the meaning of a given term many times seem to be resistant to a further reduction into a more schematic and unified nucleus that could trace the term's diachronic origin. As argued above, the problem relates to the cultural embedding of any concept. An ancient Greek term that presents this difficulty is *ksénos*. The term, along with that of *ksenía* understood as an institutionalised relationship of guest-friendship (Belfiore, 1998), occupies an important portion in Classical Greek studies, framed within the greater theme of *reciprocity* (cf. Belfiore, 1994; 1998; Herman, 1987). Reciprocity may also be the notion that schematically lies in the etymologically traced Proto-Indo-European root

of the term, reconstructed in Schwartz (1982; 2003) as *\*ksen-w-*. On the basis of a number of cognates such as Avestan *xšānman-* “substitution”, Ossetic *(æ)xsæŋ* “common”, and Irish *-son* “(inter)change”/“substitution”, he sets the original meaning of the root to mean “exchange”.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, it has been shown that either an analysis based on a historically prior lexical sense or any attempt to trace its polysemic nature into a single schematic core such as an image schema is confronted with challenges (see Ioannou, 2023 and references therein). *Ksénos* displays a semasiological and onomasiological spread that makes it impossible to assign to it an absolute referent, as shown in figure 3.



Figure 3. *Ksénos*' semasiological and onomasiological spread

This spread, especially in the light of the custom of gift exchange in the pragmatic context of *ksenía*, can be more fruitfully analysed from the perspective of distributed cognition, itself part of embodied cognition (cf. Hutchins, 1995). For Mauss (1954), gift exchange involves the giver's acquiring a new identity and, in turn, being distributed through the relationship initiated by the exchange (see also Strathern, 1988). In the light of the distinction between a gift-based and a commodity-based economy, Ioannou (op. cit.) analyses the reciprocal offering between the HOST and the GUEST in the pragmatic context of *ksenía* as mutual partial exchange of identity. The value of the offered POSSESSIONS is symbolically bound as non-alienable to the POSSESSOR and, for that matter, it constitutes a symbol of his identity. In conceptual terms, it sanctions the relation of HAVING as a relation of BEING. This relation has conceptual consequences in the construction of the mental spaces of the participants. An interchange of perspective on the identities of the HOST and the GUEST results in both parts becoming – in part- mutually substitutable as *ksénoi*.

<sup>2</sup> There are also alternative etymologies such as those in Neri (2013), where the underlying PIE root is assumed to be *\*ǵ<sup>h</sup>es-*, also found in the nominal stem *\*ǵ<sup>h</sup>esor-* “hand”. Semantically, the etymology would be linked to the scene of somebody being under the protective hand of a host, an archetypical element within the scene of hospitality.

This intrinsic complexity of the term *ksénos* presents a challenge, given that its use may imply referential vagueness. Referential identification for the specific term represents a cognitive feat for the human mind, given that its inherent polysemy and onomasiological spread hold for the very same context, namely *ksenía*. Hence, they require that the hearer guide their interpretation through subtle shifts of perspective among participants, within a complex integration network.

The exploitation of this network finds application diachronically in Greek literature. For instance, Sophocles in his *Philoctetes* makes an incomparably artful use of the term *ksénos* that encompasses the whole range of its semantic spread along the continuum “enemy”, “stranger”, “friendly stranger”, “guest” and “friend”. The impossibility to always discern the intended sense (cf. Belfiore, 1994) with absolute referential confidence skilfully exploits the inherent lexical ambiguities of *ksénos* and its cognates (i.e. *ksenía*), thus extrapolating narratively the ambiguous relationship between Neoptolemus and Philoctetes. This exploitation continues well into late antiquity, where *ksénos*’ polysemic network appears to inspire Christian writers in a completely different context to that of the city-state of Athens, where *Philoctetes*’ creation would belong. The contextual distance of almost one thousand years that separates classical and late antiquity poses a very interesting question: to what extent does the network of *ksénos*’ online construction survive in later writers? Given that the institutionalised practice of gift-exchange that pragmatically sanctions the conceptualisation of *ksenía* has long gone, what parts of this network are still accessible?

The present work intends to cast a light on this question, by analysing the sermon of St. Epiphanius (310/320-403 AD) – Archbishop of Cyprus- on Holy Saturday, written most probably in late 4<sup>th</sup> century. The choice of the specific text is based on the proliferate use that this makes of the term *ksénos*. This use became archetypical and the sermon was later taken by the Byzantine Greek historian and statesman Georgios Akropolitis (c. 1220 – 1282) and adapted into a poem invested with music, with title *dós moi túton ton ksénon* “give me this stranger”, still heard on Good Friday in orthodox churches and, mainly, monasteries. The present analysis makes use of conceptual integration theory in order to detect the parts of the polysemic network of *ksénos* that are accessible to Epiphanius when he writes his text. Moreover, it seeks to see how the textual organisation of the sermon at large uses the prototypical meaning of *ksénos* as a schematic relational frame, a

kind of textual blueprint, from which more specific textual themes are extrapolated as multiple instantiations that emanate from it.

The paper has the following organisation: section 2 gives a representation of the polysemic network of *ksénos* as an emergent structure of an integration network, within the pragmatic context of *ksenía*; section 3 contextualises synchronically Epiphanius' sermon, giving an account of all uses of the term for the period 250-450 AD found in Greek papyri; section 4 gives an analysis of the sermon, locating the multiple uses of the term *ksénos* within the network of *ksénos* and contrasting its uses to those identified in the papyri. It also sees how these uses resonate in the conceptual organisation of the sermon at large. Conclusions follow in section 5.

## 2. Networking the polysemic spread of the term *ksénos*

The interpretation of *ksénos* as a pragmatically situated conceptualisation presents an interesting patterning that arises across three parallel planes: semantic, social and spatial. For the semantic and social configurations to arise, the mediation of the third is critical. More precisely, *ksenía* emerges through the transcendence of a spatial boundary into the domain of potential "philía", a *quasi*-kinship relation (cf. Konstan, 1996; Gould, 1973). Nevertheless, this relation remains in a super-structure of expectation and potential, to be sanctioned as guest-friendship only through the social convention of gift exchange. Hence, in this light, *ksenía* is prototypically located at the interface between the domain of a FOREIGNER -and for that matter a potential enemy- and that of KIN, as shown in figure 4.

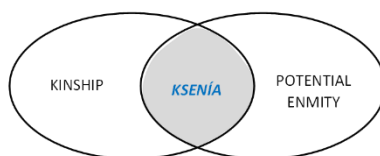


Figure 4. The placement of *ksenía* between ENMITY and KINSHIP

*Ksenía* is socially sanctioned through the ritual of gift and favour offering, which reciprocally generates the mutual binding between the two parts (Herman, 1987) as "owing the favour":

(1) *kháris khárin gar estín hē tiktous' aeí*

“It is the favour that always gives birth to another favour” (*Aias*, 522).

This owed favour is the sense following the distribution of each part’s identity through the dislocation of their non-alienable possessions (see p.3). Taking each *ksénos* as the base from which a mental space is constructed, this dislocation “spreads” their identity into wherever the placement of the other part lies. Hence, to define the sense of *ksénos*, we have to understand it as a relational term, whose interpretation stems from its membership in the model of *ksenía* as a complex gestaltist theory. Essentially, if an incomer is interpreted as “guest-friend”, this occurs because the host also has become *ksénos*, in an act of mental space construction of “partial exchange of identity”. On the other hand, if the potential host does not embrace the incomer, the latter becomes a potential enemy, as does the host himself.

This architecture renders the prototypical meaning of *ksénos* a space that emerges through the integration of other two as projections of two possibilities that have not been as yet realised: the incorporated OTHER as partially identical to the subjectivity of a SELF from whose point of view *ksénos* is construed— a relation of familiarity and intimacy that can be extended in the imagination of the two parts in space and time - and his alienation, where THE\_OTHER becomes the unfamiliar and alienated *ksénos*, and a potential enemy if he tries to trespass into the space of the SELF and potential HOST. Essentially, *ksénos* can be seen as the intersection between two identities. Depending on the stance adopted by the SELF, the emergent space of *ksénos* will be elaborated either into one of STRANGER or even ENEMY or one of an *ad hoc quasi-FRIENDSHIP* or KINSHIP. Derivatively, the identity of the SELF will be accordingly elaborated into one of a *ksénos*-HOST/FRIEND/KIN or one of *ksénos*-ENEMY, as shown in figure 5.

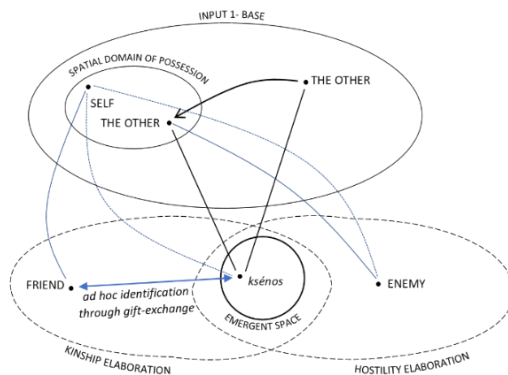


Figure 5. *Ksénos*' elaboration into the scenarios of KINSHIP and ENMITY

We have a network-based online construction of identity relations that explains the polysemic spread of the term *ksénos* presented in figure 3 (cf. Fauconnier and Turner, 2003). This conception of a lexical sense as a point of *multiple and simultaneous access* not only to distinct mental spaces but also to *distinct elements within temporarily distinct stages of the spaces' online construction* is an extraordinary property of the human's capacity for conceptualisation (see Fauconnier, 1994; Fauconnier, 1997; Evans, 2019: III).

### 3. Contextualising Epiphanius' sermon

This section looks at the archetypical meanings of *ksénos*, as manifested in non-literary papyri texts around the years Epiphanius – i.e. c. 250-450 AD – so that we see which parts of the polysemous gestaltist network of the term had survived. What follows are some examples that illustrate the use of the 25 instances found for the period under analysis. All translations are mine, as there is no English translation of the texts available yet.

In the following excerpt taken from a letter of a soldier in Pannonia written to his family in *basp. 49.83* from 3<sup>rd</sup>. c. AD, the soldier complains that they have never returned a single word to his innumerable letters but consider him to be a STRANGER as contrasted to some member of family:

(2) ...humeîs de hoútōs me ékhete hōs ksénon

'...but you think of me as if I were a stranger'.

In another, in *bgu.2.405* of 348 AD, Aurelius from Alexandria declares not to have any claim on, being UNRELATED to, a wheat-grinding machine inherited by himself and his sister:

(3) ...homologô mé ékhein méros eis tēn prolekhtheîsan sitalektikēn mēkhanēn, allá ksénon me eînai kaí allótrion autēs

'I declare not having any right to the aforementioned mill, being unrelated and excluded from its use'

In another one from 359 AD, in *bgu.4.1024*, both locals and STRANGERS, namely the ones that do not belong to the province, manifest their demand to the ruler that Diodemus remain in prison for killing a prostitute:

(4) ...ksénoi kai eparkhiôtai égnōsan tēn kata Diódēmon próthesin

‘...strangers and locals manifested their will about Diodemus’

In another letter in *o.bodl.2.1999* from 2nd-3rd c. AD, *ksénos* denotes the “stranger” in the sense of not being an acquaintance, hence an UNKNOWN. Here, an oil-producer is asked to come to receive some quantity of hay so that this is not given to a stranger:

(5) Hêke pros emé...hína soi...peripoiéō agógia dúo kai mé ksénōi andrī dósō

‘Come to me...so that I give two loads [of hay] to you and not to an unknown’

Finally, in another example in *p.amh.2.152* from 5th c. AD, we find *ksénos* as a FOREIGNER, in a letter where Nonna, a woman from Arsinoe, plans to sell two chambers to a soldier:

(6) Thélei pólêsai ta dúo kállia hautês hē auté Nónna hōs stenōtheîsa tiní stratiōtēi tôn ksénōn

‘This woman Nonna, because she has been in economic distress, she wants to sell her two chambers to some of the foreign soldiers’.

For the totality of the instances found in Greek papyri from that period, found in the APIS, DDbDP, HGV and BP collections, all accessed through the Papyri.info database, we have the following sense distribution, as shown in table 1. The analysis makes a fine-grained distinction of senses, so that the pragmatic context of the texts is inferred better:

foreigner	9	unknown	2
non-local	5	stranger	2
non-familiar	4	incomer	1
non-related	2		

As we can see, almost the totality of them falls in the meaning of somebody or something that “does not belong”, either this is contrasted to a local, to a relative or to something known. The only case that presents some chances for being related to the older notion of an incoming “visitor” is the following excerpt in *p.oxy.67.4628* from 4th c. AD where the term *ksenía* also cooccurs:

(7) Oudépote ēnóklēsa praipositōi dia ksenías tōn boēthōn mou... Sumboúleuson autoîs eltheîn pros emé. Átopon gár estin hubrithēnai hēmās oudépote hubrithéntas epí tōn ksénōn

‘I have never bothered the chief with the hosting of my assistants...Advise them to come to my place. It is absurd that I will be offended in their presence, when I have never been’.

We conclude then that the predominant senses of *ksénos* for the period form a schematic nucleus that denotes the INCOMING\_OTHER, the elsewhere entity different to the domain of the SELF.

#### 4. Epiphanius’ sermon

##### 4.1 Integrating antithetic parts

Epiphanius’ sermon has as its main theme Holy Saturday, the day that stands between Jesus’ passion resurrection. This may appear to be a peculiar moment to be chosen as a theme, given that it constitutes a pause between two other extraordinary moments: the emotionally loaded drama on the cross and the glorious raising from the dead. Nevertheless, such a choice turns out to be most artfully interwoven with the partial scenes that cover the canvas of the text. This pause is profiled as silence, a metonymic reference to the absence of any action, a silent interlude in the drama (all translations are mine):

(8) Sémeron sigé pollé en tēi gēi; sigé pollé kai ēremía loipón; sigé pollé, hōti ho basileús hupnoî.

‘Much silence, today, on earth; much silence and calm, then; much silence, because the king is sleeping’ (l. 440.9-11).

This scene of silence, absence and ceasing of voluntary and conscious action constitutes the main space intended to be filled by a wealth of emerging relations. These relations arise as an interaction between the members of antithetic thematic pairs such as DIE and LIVE, SENTENCE and ABSOLUTION, DAY and NIGHT. These antitheses appear in principle not to leave any space for conciliation, given that the conditions that hold true for one member of the contrasted pair must be necessarily false for the other. Nevertheless, under a closer look, it can be shown that there is always some common space that links them and prepares the emergence of new elements on the basis of the existing ones. Analytically, this space is formulable as the *Generic Space*

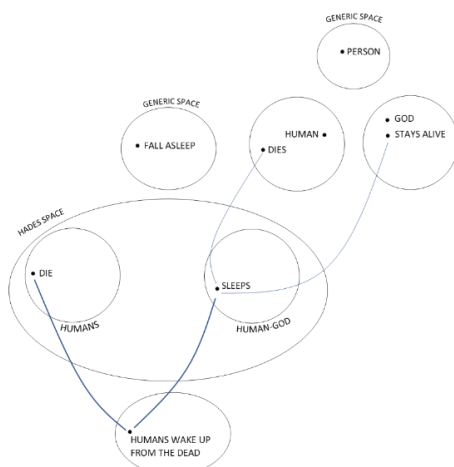
(Fauconnier and Turner, 2002), whose role is precisely the categorisation of the interacting spaces as partially identical in the name of relevant elements that can be commonly found in both.

The first antithesis, for example, that is profiled in the sermon is this of Jesus “falling asleep in flesh” and “the fallen asleep in Hades being woken up”:

(9) *Gê efobêthē kai ēsúkhasen, hōti ho theós sarkí húpno̅se, kai tous ap’ aiōnos hupno̅ntas anéstēsen*

‘The earth feared and kept silent, because God fell asleep in flesh and raised the ones who were sleeping from eons’ (l. 440.11-13).

What we observe here is that, construed from the perspective of HADES as the basic mental space where action takes place, the state of SLEEPING becomes the generic space that links JESUS and HUMANS domains. SLEEP itself as a human condition emerges from the integration between HUMAN and GOD domains and the correspondence between DIE and LIVE/STAY\_ALIVE. From this correspondence, SLEEP emerges as the state that, although closest to death, nevertheless defies it. It is FALL\_ASLEEP then that links the domains of JESUS and HUMANS, lying indecisively and ambiguously between LIFE and DEATH/HADES. It is precisely the phenomenological commonness between the states DEAD and SLEEP – i.e. unconscious state, immobility, closed eyes - that manages to work out the integration between Jesus’ death and humans’ living as if the two were the same entity, as shown in figure 8.



As mentioned earlier, it is interesting that the space where the drama is staged is the silence of a tomb. This constitutes an antithesis at

a super-thematic level, itself reinforced by the state of SLEEP, an ambiguous state between LIFE and DEATH. As will be shown, this ambiguity prepares the ground for the central notion of the sermon to be profiled, namely the equally ambiguous figure of *ksénos* as the intersection of the notions of “belonging” and “not belonging”. The former, on the one hand, emerges through an explicit reference to pairs of situations with a schematic commonness between them, a common denominator that serves as the inferential connection between two situations. Hence, the Angel announcing the birth of Jesus to Mary is juxtaposed to the Angel announcing the re-birth of humanity to Mary Magdalene, through Jesus’ exit from the sealed tomb:

(10) Ἄγγελος μεν τῆι Μαρίᾳ μητρικῆν τοῦ Χριστοῦ  
γενῆσιν ευἔγγελίσατο; Ἄγγελος δε τῆι Μαρίᾳ τῆι Μαγδαλινῆι  
τέν εκ τάφου φρικτῆν αναγενῆσιν ευἔγγελίσατο

‘An Angel announced to Mary Christ’s maternal birth; and  
an Angel announced to Mary Magdalen his shuddering rebirth  
from the tomb’ (l. 440.52-55).

Essentially, what we have in (10) are two almost identical events of an Angel announcing the birth of Christ to some Mary, with the difference that the second portrays this re-birth to take place from inside the tomb. This minimal difference though gives rise to the emergent space of the identification between birth and resurrection. Running the elaboration of the emergent space regarding its inferences brings about the identification of Hades as a maternal womb from which Jesus is re-born, but only after he voluntarily enters in it. Inversely, Mary’s womb becomes a sepulchral place that predestines Jesus’ sacrifice. The imagery of the “place” where the Angel stands emphasizes the parallel womb/tomb (l: 29-34). Mary’s womb sealed by her virginity parallels the tomb’s sealing stone. The comparison underlines the impossibility of the co-existence of two antithetic states<sup>3</sup>, namely GOD\_BE\_BORN, and HUMAN\_BE\_RESURRECTED:

(11) Ἡσπερ γαρ εσφραγισμένῶν τῶν... τῆς παρθενικῆς  
φύσεως Χριστὸς κλειθρῶν εκ παρθένου gegénētai; hoútōs  
adianoíktōn óntōn τῶν τοῦ τάφου σφραγίδῶν ἡ Χριστοῦ  
αναγενῆσις péprakatai.

‘As Christ was born from the virgin with the bolts of her  
virginity sealed, so his rebirth took place with the seals of the  
tomb unopened’ (l. 444. 29-32).

<sup>3</sup> As said above, states whose truth conditions are mutually exclusive.

Similarly, not only the virginal womb but also the cave where Christ was born emerges as a common place between DEATH and BIRTH. This is done through the generic space that constitutes the semantic details that surround the events of newborn and dead care:

(12) Nuktí Khristós en Bēthleém gennâtai; nuktí pálin en tēi Siōn anagennâtai. Spárgana eis génnēsín katadékhetai; spárgana kai entaûtha katatulíttetai.

‘It was night that Christ was born in Bethlehem; and again, night that he was re-born in Sion. It was swaddles that he received at his birth; and it was swaddles that wrapped him here’ (I. 444. 56-58).

The LOCATION wherein Jesus is placed is in both cases a cave-like formation, a stable and a tomb, points marking the departure and endpoint of life, respectively. The INSTRUMENT by which the newborn and the dead Jesus is wrapped are swaddles that underline the baby’s and the dead’s immobility. The TIME of both events takes place in the night, similarly, underlining the emergence of a network of crossing emergent connections between DARKNESS, SILENCE, INACTIVITY and LACK of CONSCIOUSNESS, but also the secret process of GESTATION and SLEEPING. The latter becomes the secret conduit that connects DEATH and LIFE, passing the vital spirit from Jesus “in flesh” to humans “in Hades”.

#### 4.2 Jesus as *ksénos* and his position in the gestaltist network

Spatially, the drama manages to encompass the three tiers of the *divine, human* and *deceased*. As shown above, it is naturally elements that pertain to the middle level, namely HUMAN and EARTH, that play the role of the common ground that connects the other two pairs, namely DIVINE and DECEASED and HEAVENS and UNDERWORLD. For example, in another passage the sun, metaphorising Jesus as LIGHT, transgresses the limits of the horizon, continuing its journey into the underworld. It is a beautiful elaboration on a sunset that can be traced back in Homeric *Odyssey*, where the sun announces his intention to set and light among the dead:

(13) Dúsomai eis Aídao kai en nekúessin faeínō  
 ‘I will set into Hades and bright among the dead’ (*Hom. Od.* 12.384).

(14) Ditté hē katabasis...ap' ouranoû epí tén gēn, apó tēs gēs hypokátō tēs gēs ho theós paragínetai  
 'The descent was of a double nature...From the heavens into the earth, from the earth underneath the earth arrives God' (l. 440. 40-43).

This dual participation of Jesus in contrastive domains that become compatible is ubiquitous in the text, through explicit references to pairs of contrastively complementary spaces, where Jesus himself is depicted as standing "in between": Thus, he is featured as standing between the Father God and the Holy Spirit, between angels and humans, between Romans and Jews, between two thieves on the cross, between the present and future life and, finally, between dead and alive (441. 38-48). This placement functions as a conceptual conjunction between two complementary members of pairs that symbolise the wholeness of the world in its various dimensions as conceived in antiquity. In some sense, Jesus becomes the "common domain" that as an agent on earth brings together the otherwise non-conciliabile realities. Nevertheless, this sense of "belonging" that the text builds up through the conceptual integrations is surprisingly breached with the second part of the sermon. This is prepared with a beautifully crafted passage where a shift in profile takes place from the human to the divine nature of Jesus. The narrative recounts the visit of Josef of Arimathea to Pontius Pilatus, asking for the body of Jesus:

(15) Eisêlthen brotós pros brotón, aitoúmenos labeîn ton theón; pēlós pros pēloû labeîn ton pántōn plastourgón; ho khórtos pará khórtou komísasthai to ouránion pûr; hē stagón hē oiktrá pará stagónos oiktrâs lambáneí tén ábysson. Tís íde? Tís ékouse pópote?

'A mortal came to a mortal, asking for receiving God; Clay came to clay, for receiving the creator of everything; A blade of grass to another, for carrying the celestial fire; A miserable drop from another receives the abyss. Who has seen this? Who has ever heard of it?' (444. 41-45).

What is of interest is that there is a reverse construal to what the analysis has shown up to now. Instead of having disparate domains integrated in the name of a common base, here we have two identical domains with a conceptual base unrelated to both domains. We thus have an attempt to integrate the entities GOD, CREATOR, FIRE, ABYSS into a proposition of transfer as a semantic argument of the latter. Nevertheless, the integration proves to be impossible, partly because

the category to be integrated is inclusive of the agent of the proposition or because pragmatically exceeds the capacity of the agent. Thus, a human cannot “bear” God, the clay cannot act upon its potter (the literal meaning of *plastourgós*) that has given it its form, a blade of grass cannot “bear” a fire, whereas an abyss exceeds unimaginably the capacity of a drop so that the latter cannot contain the former.

Bringing into fore this impossibility prepares the reader for the following inference that becomes the main theme for the second third of the text: God in his human dimension, namely Jesus, does not *belong* to the conceptual frames that constitute the experience of human history. In this sense Jesus takes over another role, that of an “alien”. Nevertheless, an alien that at the same time paradoxically enters and acts within human history. The passage is of the most beautiful of the sermon, written in direct speech form. Josef of Arimathea has come to Pilatus to ask for the dead body of Christ and in an excessively dramatised tone he starts each address with the sentence *give me this stranger*, repeated 12 times. In a short passage of 200 words, the word *ksénos* itself and its derivatives are found 26 times. The petition to Pilatus starts with *ksénos* making allusion to the place of provenance:

(16) Dos moi toûton ton ksénon; tí gar se ôfeleî to sôma  
toútou toû ksénou? Dos moi toûton ton ksénon; Ek makrâs gar  
êlthen ôde tês khôras...

‘Give me this stranger; what would benefit you the body  
of this stranger? Give me this stranger; he came from a place  
far away’ (445.39-41).

The meaning of *ksénos* here, especially in cooccurrence with the phrase *makrâs gar êlthen ôde tês khôras*, profiles the spatial distance between the place that Jesus was known as coming from, Nazareth, and the place of his crucifixion and death, namely Jerusalem. That would be the meaning NON-LOCAL of table 1 above. Nevertheless, the text completes the sentence in a surprising way:

(17) Ek makrâs gar êlthen ôde tês khôras hína sôsēi ton  
ksénon

‘He came from a place far away to save the stranger’ (l.  
445.41-42).

*Ksénos* here, beyond the Agent-subject, extends its denotation onto the Undergoer-object of the sentence. This last use not only extends the semasiological range of *ksénos* beyond the immediately obvious meaning of NON-LOCAL, but also merges it with the latter into

a new emergent meaning. Above, as shown in figure 5, *ksénos* emerges within a gestaltist network primarily as a function of space, where the incomer is found in the domain of a stable SELF that has to make a decision on the accommodation of this new presence. This is the reason why the SELF-domain was taken to be the ground and perspective of *ksénos*' conceptualisation. Nevertheless, here this perspective is paired by a symmetrical point of view, within a proposition that reads "a *ksénos* saves a *ksénos*". This paradoxical pairing creates a conceptual network that profiles a counterfactual: the impossibility for both participants to be at the same time STRANGERS in the same place. In turn, that gives rise to the possibility that *ksénos* in the case of the locals of Jerusalem does not refer to their geographical provenance, but to some place proper only to Jesus, to which they are not participants. In turn, this has a surprising effect: Jesus is STRANGER not because he comes from Nazareth but because he comes from a place to which the locals of Jerusalem do not belong. The emergence of this interpretation, whose network is presented in figure 7, constitutes a surprising shift of perspective, where Jesus becomes the potential HOST in a far-away place. The naturalness with which this artful shift takes place in the mind of the reader reveals that there is a common prototypical core behind the two uses of *ksénos* for Jesus, namely a NON-LOCAL *incomer* and at the same time a far-away RESIDENT. The former implies a relation with a LOCAL, whereas the second implies UNRELATEDNESS. The common schematic core that makes the two terms polysemous and not homonymous is the conceptualisation of *ksénos* as THE\_OTHER. As we saw earlier in figure 5, the concept of THE\_OTHER was shown to be constitutive of the notion of *ksénos* as one of the input spaces in the network. This is a very interesting finding that aligns with a central property of conceptual integration, namely backward projection into the input spaces. According to this property, the blended relations are deconstructible so that the original input spaces are usable in the blend (cf. Fauconnier and Turner, 1998). *Ksénos* as THE\_OTHER would be the incomer, whereas the UNRELATED\_OTHER would be THE\_OTHER before entering the domain of possession of the SELF, as shown in figure 7 repeating figure 5, where only the relevant parts of the blend are shown.

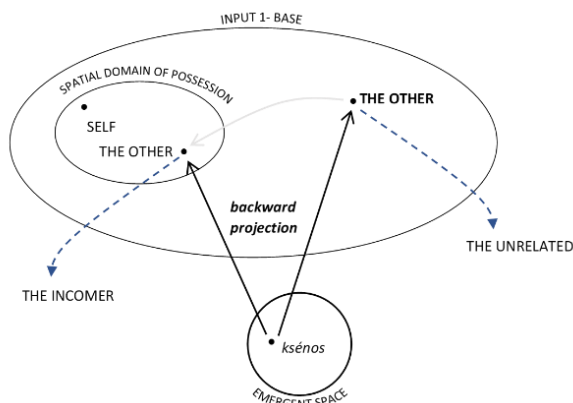


Figure 7. backward projection into the conceptual origin of *ksénos*: THE UNRELATED and the INCOMER

What is the function of this projection at a textual level? The sense of “not belonging” that arises emphasises on the ahistorical provenance of Jesus as a core characteristic of him and as a prerequisite for the possibility of human salvation (Bulgakov, 2008; Florovsky, 1976):<sup>4</sup>

- (18) *Dos moi toûton ton ksénon; hoûtinós tén khóran agnooûmen hoy ksénoi*  
 ‘Give me this stranger whose place we, the strangers, don’t know’ (l. 445.47-48).

Profiling this alienating distance between an ahistorical Christ and the human *ksénos* amplifies the scope of the latter so that it includes not only the locals of Jerusalem but the whole of humanity. The passage continues exploiting the blend between the two conceptualisations of *ksénos* not only in terms of space but also time. Thus, Josef continues his petition that assigns a double meaning to the elements FATHER, PLACE, BIRTH and WAYS. The ignorance that he claims about these elements underlines their second meaning that infers a miraculous provenance and ways of life that the humans not only ignore but they also find it impossible to access logically. The passage continues by grounding Jesus to his historical dimension with a reference to his conditions of birth and his fleeing to Egypt, whereas it completes with another blend that makes use of the successively nested domains of CITY, VILLAGE, HOUSE, LODGE and RELATIVE. Essentially, the alienation of Christ from all possible domains that may signal some terrestrial affinity is emphatically construed for its maximal scope.

<sup>4</sup> I owe thanks to Evaggelos Bartzis for indicating to me the relevant references.

### 4.3 Jesus as ENEMY and HOST in Hades

We saw that Epiphanius' sermon starts with the use of elements that act as a connector between the alive and dead Jesus in his historical dimension. Nevertheless, this connection also prepares the ground for construing his ahistorical provenance, through a sense of "alienation" in an otherwise complete universe. Where else is somebody to be found if not either among the alive or the dead? Where is his origin to be placed if not among the people of some nation? If not one among the thieves, how could his guilt be condemned or absolved? Where does he exactly belong if not in the realm of humans or angels? Is there a "third" place held for him? This sense of alienation, as we saw, culminates into the ultimate inference of Jesus being an a-historical figure, a most decisive presupposition for human's salvation.

The rest of the sermon is a triumphant description of Christ's descent into Hades, that concludes with an integration that parallels the tiers of the divine, human and deceased integrated in the first part, namely those of the heavens, the earth and the underworld. The perspective from which the events are construed is dual: from the personification of Death himself and from the dead that are held captives in it. The proliferation of imagery used is astonishing. Jesus is presented now as an invader that breaks the bolts of Hades' door, kills Death and invites the dead into light. Hades is an underground place with innumerable cells, the deepest of which is the one where Adam himself is securely held:

(19) *Ho Adám ekeínos...endóteros pántōn ékoue tōn toú despótou podōn pros tous desmious eiserchoménōn kai egnōrisen tēn fōnēn autoû...*

'That Adam...in the deepest place of all, was hearing the Lord's footsteps entering towards the captives and recognised his voice' (l. 461.1-4).

From personified Hades and his servants-guards' perspective, Jesus is an enemy. Although the word *ksénos* is no longer used, the construal of his profile as an entity that belongs nowhere maintains its resonance when the reader is confronted with the impossible occurrence of Jesus as Life in Hades as Death. The total alienation of Christ from historically situated reality becomes all more emphatical when he descends into Hades, where he cannot be recognised, being completely unknown to the underworld:

(20) *Tís éstin hoútōs ho vasileús tēs dóksēs, ho en Ádēi poiōn nún ta oudépote en Ádēi genómēna?*

‘Who is this king of glory, doing in Hades what has never been done before?’ (l. 460.12-14).

Nevertheless, the co-occurrence of the conceptualisation of *ksénos* both as a far-away RESIDENT as well as an alienated entity has also its resonance in this part. Christ in the underworld does not appear only as an invading incomer but also as an inviting one. The invitation does not concern the simple revival of the dead but their reconstitution in Jesus’ far-away residence. Very subtly, the passage (19) cited above gives the reader a hint as to what this invitation actually refers to, when Adam is presented hearing and recognising the footsteps and voice of Jesus from the innermost cell of Hades. This scene partially repeats and at the same time inverts the effect of the one from Genesis, when Adam and Eve hear the voice and footsteps of God after they have tasted the tree of knowledge:

(21) Kai ékousan tês fônês toû kuríou toû theoû peripatoúntos en tõi paradeísōi to deilinón kai ekrúbēsan...

‘and they heard the voice of the lord walking in the paradise at dusk and they hid away’ (*Gen.* 3.8).

In a blend of the two scenes where time and space are beautifully integrated, the footsteps and voice of Jesus reach the hidden place of the protoplasts so that what once was a sentence now becomes absolute and the estranged *ksénos* in Hades becomes again a local in Jesus’ realm.

## 5. Conclusion

This work aimed at exploring the literary exploitation of the gestaltist model of the term *ksénos*, understood as a network of integrated domains that gives rise to the polysemic nature of the term. It did so, by examining a relevant passage from Epiphanius’ sermon on Holy Saturday, where related but not identical uses of the term *ksénos* are found in an impressive abundance.

It first looked at the ancient Greek conception of the term as emerging from the integration of the domain of an entity that enters the domain of possession of a SELF. The binary opposition of SELF and THE\_OTHER was shown to be anchored onto SELF’s domain. *Ksénos*’ concept from a SELF’s perspective emerges as a mental projection of two possibilities: the one of a FRIEND and the other of an ENEMY. Each of the realisations collapses this binary possibility that represents the prototypical meaning of the term.

In order to contextualise synchronically Epiphanius' uses, the totality of the attested instances of the term in Greek papyri between 250 and 450 AD were examined. The range of meanings was found to be narrower than that of classical Greek, insofar as the absence of the sense of FRIEND is concerned. Nevertheless, meanings such as those of NON-RELATED and UNKNOWN present a finer-grained elaboration of STRANGER.

Epiphanius' sermon on Holy Saturday presents an impressive abundance of conceptual integrations. These are built around the polysemic network of *ksénos* that functions as the constitutive blueprint of the text and as the conceptual thread that cuts across the domains of the divine, human, and deceased, which parallel the spatial domains of the heavens, the earth and the underworld, respectively. In the first part of the sermon, elements that pertain to the middle level, namely HUMAN and EARTH, are used so that various blends are created between DIVINE and DECEASED. Central position within the elements of the middle level occupies Jesus himself in his human and historical dimension. Nevertheless, this sense of conciliation and belonging that the first part builds is deconstructed in the second, where Jesus is presented as the one who "does not belong": between the alive and dead, Romans and Jews, between two thieves, humans and angels, Jesus is presented as the total estranged. It was shown that this deconstruction is effectuated through backward access to the input spaces of the network of *ksénos*, with the latter used in this part to denote THE\_OTHER. Nevertheless, this total alienation has an interesting effect: the inferential identification of Jesus not as a NON-LOCAL incomer but as a LOCAL\_RESIDENT in his proper domain, to which the whole of humanity is a *ksénos*. In this shift of perspective, Jesus becomes the potential HOST in a far-away place. The naturalness of this shift argues for a common prototypical core behind the two uses of *ksénos* that belong to the same gestalt.

These uses of *ksénos* resonate their inferences in the last part of the sermon, where Jesus enters Hades both as an inviting as well as an invading stranger. Invading as *ksénos* to Death, and inviting as a possessor of a far-away realm that he has never abandoned, albeit a human.

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#### **ENTRE INTIMIDAD Y ALIENACIÓN: EL SENTIDO PROTOTÍPICO DE *KSÉNOS* EN GRIEGO Y SU EXPLOTACIÓN LITERARIA EN EL SERMÓN DE EPIPHANIO SOBRE EL SÁBADO SANTO.**

Este trabajo analiza la forma en que la red polisémica del término *ksénos*, que significa "invitado", "anfitrión" y "extranjero" en griego antiguo, es explotada literalmente por el escritor cristiano del siglo IV Epiphanius, en un sermón sobre el sábado santo. El texto es de particular interés, dado que hace un uso prolífero del término en un pasaje que ocupa un lugar central en su trabajo. El análisis ofrece primero una representación de la teoría gestáltica que subyace la conceptualización del término, comprendiendo este último como un concepto emergente dentro de una red de integración conceptual. A su vez, contextualiza sincrónicamente el sermón al dar una codificación semántica bastante fina de las instancias existentes del término, encontradas en los papiros griegos entre 250 y 450 d. C. Finalmente, analiza los usos concretos del término en el texto de Epiphanius, ubicando cada uno ellos dentro de la red de integración de *ksénos* y explorando su función a nivel textual.

**Palabras clave:** prototipicidad, redes polisémicas, griego antiguo, integración conceptual.

## **THE USE OF PERSIAN LOANWORDS IN ALBANIAN: FOCUSING ON THE REGISTERS OF THE LOW LEVEL OF FORMALITY**

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**Abstract:** This study addresses the use of Persian loanwords in today's Albanian language, focusing on registers with a low level of formality. Persian (Farsi) had an extensive presence in the culture of the Ottoman Empire, which for almost five centuries ruled the Balkan region, where Albanians lived as well. Thus, intercultural relations were established between Albanians and Persians, but with the mediation of the Ottoman Empire. In this way, a large number of Persian words penetrated the Albanian language, many of which, even after many attempts to replace them with Albanian words, have wide use in various registers of this language. Our study addresses the shift of Persian words from high to low-level of registers of formality. This study is conducted using two corpora. The first corpus consists of the lyrics of folk songs, as the genre of the lower level of formality. The second corpus consists of interviews with 100 people interviewed within the project "Oral History of Kosovo". The analysis of the use of this part of the Albanian lexicon was carried out on the basis of the theory of corpus linguistics, the theory of languages in contact and the sociolinguistic approach to language registers. The study relies on multi-functionality and linguistic pluralism, on the basis of which the functionalization of Persian words has been researched and used in different styles.

**Keywords:** Persian words, Albanian vocabulary, styles and registers, cultural impacts

### **1. Introduction**

The almost five-century rule of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkan Peninsula instilled an Oriental culture that, among other influences, introduced numerous Arabic, Persian, and Turkish linguistic elements into the languages of the region. The presence of these linguistic elements in the Balkan languages has been identified in two

planes – the grammatical and the lexical. Indeed, the lexical plane has always been regarded as more important due to the large number of words from these languages in the Balkan lexicon, which were intended to be minimized to allow new lexical developments. In Balkan studies there has been a scientific debate about the use of an appropriate scientific term for the marking of Arabic, Persian and Turkish loanwords in the Balkan languages. Some scholars (Meyer, 1891; Knežević, 1962) and the best known of them, Škaljić (1969; 113), have labeled borrowings of Arabic, Persian and Turkish into Balkan languages *turkisms* arguing that "since the Arabic and Persian words that have come to the Balkans are also extended to the Turkish language and very rarely there are words that directly from Arabic or Persian entered the Serbo-Croatian language, then the use of the term *Turkism* is fairer. On the other hand, Bajraktarević (1964) defends the position that the term *turkism* is not a scientific term and proposes the term "orientalism". According to him,

[...] the etymology of Turkish words is the main problem of Balkan linguists, because they only know Turkish and their knowledge of Arabic and Persian is very limited, so they have faced serious problems in finding the etymology of Turkish words and many times have been forced to make ridiculous comparisons, and thus have made terrible mistakes". (1964; 130)

This is what Desnickaja (1963, 126) argues as well, according to whom,

*Turkism* implies not only the purely Turkish words, but also the Arab and Persian ones, which have penetrated Albanian through Turkish or directly from Arabic and Persian, the knowledge of which was widespread among the educated part of the Muslim population of old Albania. In this sense, the term *orientalism* would be more accurate.

While in Albanian linguistic studies we encounter both notions, recently, the term *turkism* has been more established. But it should be noted that a significant number of *turkisms* are of Persian origin, which have also brought elements of Persian culture and civilization and thus have created cultural contacts between Albanians and Persians.

Although these words of the Albanian lexicon are a legacy of earlier times, their presence still reflects the current world of Albanian speakers. In some of the studies we saw that one of the linguistic functions of the remaining *turkisms* is to use them as stylistic tools in literary works

(Desnickaja, 1963; 126-134). Reinkowski (2002) believes that *turkisms* are losing their formal status and their use borders on the popular language. However, during the review of studies we have noticed that the conclusions regarding *turkisms* have been made with a special focus on standard and literary language. For example, when it is said that they are good stylistic tools, as in Desnickaya's (1963) study, mostly literary styles are explored. The most recent study on the formal and informal status of Turkisms in Albanian is by Rugova & Rugova (2017). They conclude that Turkish loanwords in Albanian are widely used in informal contexts for expressive and directive functions (ibid; 232). Their study primarily utilizes a written corpus from newspapers and publishing houses in Kosovo and Albania. In this study as well, by expanding the registers of speakers of the Albanian language, we aim to reflect on the usage and the status of the formality of *turkisms* with Persian origin, in further text referred to as Persian loanwords. Through this study, we will see if Persian words are still present among informal speakers of the Albanian language. That is why we have seen fit to use two corpora: The first corpus consists of the lyrics of folk songs, as the genre of the lower level of formality. The second corpus consists of interviews with 100 people interviewed within the project *Oral History of Kosovo*.

Our research is built on the principle of linguistic diversity, which we consider an asset that affects the development and expansion of the ontological, epistemological, aesthetic, and social dimensions of people and, as a result, of the creation of closeness and friendship between them. In this case, our study, identifying borrowings of Persian words in the Albanian language argues that peoples in the past, but also today, communicate and receive and give to each other. Thus, this study can contribute to the relativization of ethnocentric reductionist attitudes “about pure languages and races” and “pure ethnic cultures”.

## 2. Methodology

This paper is based on qualitative analysis. The descriptive method is used to explain the theoretical background of historical and social contacts of Albanian and Persian cultures; methods of classifying styles and registers and their importance in defining the meaning of words.

The study was carried out mainly on the basis of corpus linguistics methodology. Corpus linguistics has already been proven to be an appropriate methodology for descriptive, theoretical, psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic, lexical, and lexicographic linguistic analysis. A corpus is a collection of texts used for the purpose of general linguistics. Corpus linguistics is mostly used for function-based linguistic analysis by linguists who regard language as a means of communication. (Meyer,

2002; 19). Corpus linguistics has gained popularity with the promulgation of the theory of generativism, according to which grammatical descriptions can be evaluated on three levels: observational expediency, descriptive expediency, and explanatory expediency. According to Leech, the corpus is the perfect source for verifying the falsity, completeness, simplicity, accuracy, and objectivity of any linguistic hypothesis (Leech: Meyer 2002; 21). In the study, we approached Persian words from different perspectives, addressing the relationship of language and context. Persian words have been analyzed from a semantic point of view in the context of registers and styles. Examples of Persian loanwords contrasted to its synonyms in Albanian are given to clarify the change of meanings and their usages in different styles.

### **2.1. Tools and participants**

The study applied an adjusted and random selection technique. Thus, as a corpus, we have selected two main types of corpora: a) the corpus of folk songs, b) the corpus of texts of *Oral History of Kosovo* projects. We also used the National Corpus of the Albanian Language as a source from which we excerpted specific examples to support the presence of different meanings of Persian loanwords detected in the above-mentioned corpus of spoken variety. The demographic data of the participants are given in the Annex of this paper.

#### **2.1.1. The corpus of folk songs**

As the first corpus, we chose the lyrics of popular songs written and sung in the Albanian language. This register belongs to the low-level. Low-level generalization registers are considered registers which are volumes of short texts that do not contain extensive content (Biber, 1994; 34). They are usually used to convey a message, an emotion, or other purpose to achieve a certain effect to the broader mass of the audience or readers. In this type of registers borrowings are among the frequent language choices that can be heard. For this study we have done the analysis of folk songs, to observe the presence of Persian words and their function. The reason why we chose folk songs is that these songs are still heard by different layers of Albanian speakers and constitute the main lyrics of festive ceremonies and parties of Albanians. The lyrics of the popular songs are taken from the digital corpus [www.teksteshqip.com](http://www.teksteshqip.com). We have read the lyrics of 20 popular songs, which are considered as the most heard and sung among Albanians, and thus we have identified the Persian words in them.

### **2.1.2. The corpus of texts of *Oral History of Kosovo* project<sup>1</sup>**

The corpus consists of interview texts obtained from the OHK project where 100 participants belonging to different ages and socio-economic statuses<sup>2</sup> were interviewed. For an interviewer to be representative, Albanian must be their native language. Knowledge of the Turkish language, although not a mandatory criterion, has been taken into account due to the phenomenon of bilingualism and code change.

This corpus offers the public the opportunity to hear people's voices, pick up on the rhythm and colour of their speech, and see expressions of feelings. Aware that the interviewer, with his/her own presence, influences the interviewee and the recording, and complicates the dynamic between the interviewee and the researchers, the project team has tried to mitigate the problem by selecting interviewers who speak the same dialect as the interviewee, posing broad questions, prioritizing what the interviewee wants to say rather than what they think the interviewer wants to hear. Additional questions were asked to clarify or explain more fully what has been said. The interviewees choose their own words naturally, not losing spontaneity. The interviewers were younger than the interviewees, which removes, to some extent, the need for high-level formality. The interviewees are from different parts of Kosovo. Therefore, the corpus represents more than one sociolect of the Albanian language, among them the two main dialects of the Albanian language, Tosk and Gheg. The density of use has been measured in software developed for Sketch Engine language studies. Sketch Engine is software designed for identifying the most typical, rarest, and most extraordinary features and uses within corpora consisting of millions of words in length.

### **3. Literature review**

The study of languages in contact or linguistic contact is important because it provides both useful theoretical and practical results. Researching the social aspects of linguistic contacts sheds light on intergroup reports and their identities, on how adaptation processes in some circumstances, divergences and conflict have influenced the formation of these reports.

In some cases, the results of language contacts may be only borrowings or with the new terminology replicas of words and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://oralhistorykosovo.org/> (Last retrieved 01.09.2023)

<sup>2</sup> The socio-demographic data of the interviewees are provided in tabular form in Annex 1.

grammatical forms<sup>3</sup>, in other cases completely new languages are formed. In the section where we are presenting the reviewed literature, we see it as useful to initially give a general reflection of the socio-cultural contact of Albanian with Persian (Farsi). Then we will present the theoretical background of the stylistics of the Albanian language in the frameworks of which this study is set.

### 3.1. Linguistic contacts of Albanians with the Persian (Farsi) language

The common geography of the Persians and Turks, and later the creation and expansion of the Ottoman Empire into the Balkan regions, caused these peoples to have close cultural and political contacts with one another, and thus left tremendous influences on each other's thought and cultures. Several causes of the spread and presence of Persian culture can be identified, especially its literature in the Balkan regions.

After the arrival in the region of Persian dervishes and mystics, who in addition to dealing with the spread of Islam, also helped the integration of the inhabitants of the region into the Ottoman Empire, they built *tekkes* and *zawiyas*, in which Persian language was taught and works of Persian poetry and mysticism were read. As an example, we can mention the tekke of Frashëri in Përmet, Albania, whose founder was Baba Tahir Nesibiu from Khorasan in Persia (modern Iran). Evliya Çelebi (1611-1682) mentions that in the Albanian lands he had seen dervishes who learned the Persian language:

[...] In fact, the famous traveler Evliya Çelebi mentions in his notes that there are many people among the inhabitants of the city who learn Persian, honor Ali and his family, and curse Muawiya and Yazid...". (Clayer, 2012; 44)

The Ottoman madrasas were also centers for teaching the Persian language and reading the masterpieces of this literature. (Mehmeti, 2019; 164) Part of the teaching curricula of these madrasas covered the masterpieces of Islamic-Persian poetry and mysticism, such as the *Bostān* and *Gulistān* of Saadi Shirāzi (1210-1292), the *Divan* of Hafiz Shirazi 1325-1390), the *Mathnawi* of Mawlānā Rumi (1207-1273), the *Behāristān* of Jāmi (1414-1492), and various others. The manuscripts of

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<sup>3</sup> Linguistic contact scholars often prefer the term *model* for the form of the word in the source language and the term *replica*, rather than the word *borrowing*, for the form it takes in the receiving language. See Matras (2009), Filipović (1986)

diwans of local poets writing poetry in the Persian language, found in the archives and libraries of cities in Albania, Kosovo and North Macedonia are an undeniable fact that in these areas literature in the Persian language has been read and enjoyed.

While Shemeddin Sami Frashëri (1850-1904), the great Albanian scholar in the Ottoman Empire, in the introduction of the book *Hurdeçin*, writes: "The Persian language was created for poetry, and the poetry was created for Persian language" (Sami, 1885; 3). The presence and importance of Persian language in the Balkan region is best documented by Ashik Çelebi (1520) who in his work *Senses of Poets* (*Meşairü 'ş-Şuārā*) writes:

It is recounted that when a child is born in Prizren, before giving him a name, they give him a *mahlas* (pseudonym). The child who is born in the Jenice of Vardar, uses the Persian word 'mama' for bread. A child born in Prishtina keeps a seal around his belt. Therefore, all this means that Prizren is a place of poets, Jenice of Vardar a place of Persian language, and Prishtina is a place of administration. (Recepoğlu, 2000; 44)

In the Albanian regions there lived several poets who had managed to write poetry and *diwans* (complete collection of poems) in the Persian language. (See also: Rexhepi, 2018) An example can be shown by Nezim Frakulla (1685-1760), the Albanian poet, who speaks about the influences and the models of his poetic creativity:

Unë Urfi-i i zemanit	I'm the 'Orfi of all time,
unë Firdusi hakani	I'm strong like Ferdowsi,
unë sahibi maani (meani)	I'm the possessor of meaning,
ti më je ihsani enam	You are my provider of goodness,
Ti më je oll shahi pyrnaz	You are my king of compliments,
ti më je sirr, ti më je raz	You are my secret, you are my
unë jam Hafëzi Shiraz	mystery,
unë jam Saadi-i ejam.	I'm Hafiz-i Shiraz
	I'm the Saadi of this time.

(Frakulla 2006, 56)

So, Nezimi compares himself to the Persian poets, Orfi (1555-1591) and Ferdowsi (940-1019), and says that he possesses the meanings of things, which God has told him. Moreover, addressing the Loved one, he says that you are obsessed with me, and you are my secret and mystery, although I am Hafiz Shirazi and the Saadi of this time. It is clear that he

wants to identify himself with the poetry of the Persian poets. None other than the national poet of the Albanian people, Naim Frashëri (1846-1900), wrote a grammar of the Persian language, which was published twice in Istanbul. Naim called his grammar "*Qawā'id-e Fārsiye Ber Tarzi Novīn*" (Persian Rules by the New Method).

The interest of Albanians in learning Persian lasted until the beginning of the 20th century, that is, until the creation of the Albanian state. But, because of this presence of Persian in the tekkes, madrasas and in the intellectual and literary circles of the Albanians, many Persian elements managed to penetrate the Albanian language. Many of the Persian words that have penetrated the Albanian language have already remained only in texts of different genres and in dictionaries, but a significant number of them are still used today, either in Albanian folk songs or in the everyday speech of Albanians.

### **3.2. The importance of language varieties for the study of Persian words in Albanian language**

The aforementioned historical, literary and sociological facts create a suitable basis for the study of Persian words in the context of sociolinguistics and stylistics.

The analysis of the use of Persian words in this paper relies on the heterogeneity of language. The concept of varieties has been treated along with other concepts such as linguistic units and language communities in sociolinguistic studies. Linguistic varieties have been approached within the framework of various theories.

According to the functions of language, we identify three: an informational function, an expressive function, and an action-inducing function. The information function includes 3 separate styles: the illustrative style, the comparative style and the technical style; the expressive function includes 2 styles: the ironic style, the hyperbolic style and the metaphorical style; finally, the inducement function includes 3 different styles: the evocative style, the appreciative style and the devaluing style.

Persian words represent a special part of the lexicon of the Albanian language which has drawn the interest of scholars, especially in the context of language purification. During the formation of the standard variant of the Albanian language, attempts were made to exclude them from the vocabulary and were used rarely in the spoken and written version of the standard Albanian language. Scholars (Reinkowski 2012; Kazazis 1969) consider that the number of Turkish (and thus Persian) origin words is decreasing and that when they are used, it is as stylistic tools in the literary language. They also believe that their presence in the

popular language will continue. Based on these findings, as well as sociolinguistic studies of varieties of the language, we assume that Persian words will appear as compulsory as well as free language choices in written and spoken varieties of the Albanian language. All Persian words already recorded in the lexicography of the Albanian language can be treated as compulsory elections,<sup>4</sup> because they are already accepted and recorded. However, we consider that a significant number of Persian words have been a) moved to the registers of the low level of formality of the Albanian language; and as such are b) functionalized by the Albanian speakers depending on the needs of the social and linguistic context, the purpose of the speaker not only in the language of the literary texts, but also in the spoken language. Therefore, we have made our analysis of the variety of Albanian spoken and written language, where speakers speak at a low level of formality.

#### 4. Analysis of the use of Persian words in the registers of the low level of formality

##### 4.1. Persian words in Albanian folk songs

The people of the Balkans have a rich heritage of folk songs, often with similar elements, concepts, archetypes and figures. Recently, several volumes of this heritage in the Albanian language have been recorded and published. Folk songs are also referred to as "jare/yäre" (from the Persian *yār*, beloved, friend, companion). A large number of the lyrics and melodies of these songs are collected in the "www.teksteshqip" database. This corpus of the Albanian language has managed to mostly preserve the Persian words, because according to Çabej (1976; 64), "Turkish influence on folklore has been one of the main factors that have caused borrowings, which has left a lexical legacy that cannot be easily eradicated through external efforts."

It should be noted that some of these songs are written within the poetic forms of the Persian-Turkish Gazelle. Thus, out of the 20 lyrics of these songs that we have studied, we have managed to identify 45 Persian words: *aseman*, *bahçe*, *behar*, *bylbyl/bilbil*, *çare*, *çeshme*, *derman*, *dert*, *derja*, *dost*, *ferman*, *hem*, *gonxhe*, *gjyl*, *gjylistan*, *gjymbysh*, *jare*, *jaran*, *mejdan*, *manushaqe*, *menekshe*, *myzhde*, *namaz*, *namazli*, *nishane*, *padishah*, *Pazar*, *perçë*, *qerpaze*, *sejmen*, *selvie*, *shah*, *shejh/sheh*, *pervane*, *xham*, *xhan*, *xhanan*, *zehër*, *zylyf/zulluf*, *zilifqar*, *zindan*, *zing*, and *zyba*. The source forms in Persian and their meaning

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<sup>4</sup>For this study, the following dictionaries of the modern Albanian language were considered: Fjalori i Gjuhës Shqipe (1981), Fjalori i Gjuhës Shqipe (2006); Fjalori Etimologjik i Gjuhës Shqipe (2017)

are given in tabular form in the annex to this paper.

For illustrative purposes, below we provide some examples of the texts of these songs.

*Example (1)*

Aman ja *dost*,  
Ej Elif, ma mirë me dekë,  
Se ja mërrimë ktij vilajeti;  
Be, bilahi, s'e kujtova,  
Para 'nej na munoi, devleti,  
-Ja dost, hej *dost!* [...]

Aman ja *dost*,  
Zi edhe *zehër* nau mush kjo jetë  
Edhe u çue merhameti,  
Sin s'kan frigë se donë me dekë,  
Kabul s'i ban Hazredi Muhammedi,  
-Haj-haj, medet medet. [...]

Aman ja *dost*  
Kaf, Kur'ani qi po shkruen,  
Edhe ish ardhë pej Perenisë  
Qef, *qerpaze* na jemi ba,  
Tuk se shkeli kama e jezidies,  
-Haj-haj, medet-medet. [...]

Ze zybaja e jote, more *bylbyl*,  
Je ni *gonxhez hem* drandafil  
Ej Halil, *perçën* jafet,  
Sen sifatin ty ta kan gjetë  
Ishe kanë, ne t'ba hyqymet.

(Krasniqi, Salih & Feriz, 2007).

The song "Aman, ja dost" is one of the most popular songs in Kosovo and among the Albanians of North Macedonia. This song is sung by the most famous folk singers of this genre of folk music. The song has 15 stanzas and addresses the plight of the Albanian people in the last days of Ottoman rule. The song, as its title implies, is full of Turkish, Arabic and Persian words. In the verses that we brought here, the Persian words are, *dost* (*dūst*), *zehër* (*zahr*), *qerpaze* (*qabāde*), *zyba-ja* (*zibā*),

*bylbyl (bolbol), gonxhe (ğhonçe). hem (ham), and perçë (parçeh).*

*Example (2)*

Dal e dal po na vjen *behari*  
 Lum kush asht ashik!  
 O me lule na u mbushke djali  
 Me kumash jeshil.  
 O me tanuz, fesin në ballë  
 Po m'gjezdis nëpër *Pazar*.  
 O açik m'i ke sy e vetlla  
*Aseman* more djalë!  
 Zenel Aga mor shka' t'kam bo  
 Që m'ke marr mëni?  
 O me vuxhud o jam ograshtisë  
 Ai po m'hjek zingji.  
 E me vuxhud o bre je i vogël  
 Kërkush hallin s'ma din.  
 Për Zotin o që asht rrahim  
 Ashki yt më dogj!

(Tekste shqip. Web. Këngë gjakovare: Dal e dal po na vjen behari)

Here, we find the Persian words *behar (behār)*,  *pazar (bazār)*, *Aseman (āsamān)*, and *zingji (zeng)*.

The above-mentioned Persian words are mainly used in styles with the inducing and informative function. They are functionalized as inducement tools being used in the evocative style and as informational tools being used in the technical style.

Country songs are structured around the motives and lyrical worldviews of the Perso-Turkish Gazelle, “traces of which are still observed in the popular cultures of the peoples of the East” (Andrews & Kalpaklı, 2005; 195). The wide presence of these songs in the music culture of Albanians shows that they still have fun with the lyrics of the Perso-Turkish Gazelle, and thus cultivate their aesthetic feelings. Persian words here play an important role in the expression of that atmosphere, because they are cultural borrowings that will be present in the language of popular song cultivated by the people. As can be seen, the spirit of the Persian-Turkish gazelle that came to the Balkans through the Ottoman tradition has not only continued to be created and sung to this day, but has managed to extend its influence across the deeper

dimensions of the spiritual and intellectual life of Albanians and still today a large number of people continue to experience and enjoy this culture. This poem and, as a result, this intellectual tradition continues to influence the epistemological and ontological dimensions of a large proportion of the Albanian people. Through the Persian words of country songs, today Albanians can create emotional and intellectual connections with both Persian and Turkish culture, and in this way, they have the opportunity to enjoy the same lyrical concepts and metaphors as the Persians and Turks.

#### 4.2. The use of Persian words by the interviewees of the Oral History of Kosovo

The HGK corpus consists of 402,883 words and records more than 100 Persian words that are also present in the Dictionary of the Albanian Language. These are:

*abdes, aga, ah, aheng, ahër, akshami, aman, ashiqare, avash, avaz, axha, axhallarë, badihava, bahçe, bahçebanxhi, barabartë, barazi, barabarësi, barem, bare, bazhderana, behari, bylbylat, çadër, ombrellë, çardak, çarçafi, çarshi, çejez, çeshme, çeshme, çift, çifteli, çoban, çorape, dada, dem baba dem, dert, dervish, dollap, duvar, ferman, ferman, filan fistekja, filan fisteku, gjaur (serb), gebr, gjoja (se), gjynah/gjyha, hambar, hava, henëz, hiç (bile), hosh-geldiniz, jaran, karavan saraj, llaf, fjalë, lāf, llafazani, llafosem, madem, mehane, mejdanet, mezë, name, nami (u bojke), nari, naz, nazlije, odë, papuçe, pare, pazar, peçe, penxhere, perdja, peshkir, pishman (i bijke), qare, qelibari, qofte, qilim, qira, qorr, qosh, rast, rastësisht, serbes, shadërvan, shegërt, taze, telash, turshi, vishnje, xham, xhambazë, zehr, zor, and zorshëm*

Most of the Persian words used here, although not found in the dictionaries of today's Albanian language, are an inseparable part of the spoken register. All are registered in the informal style. Some of these words are hybrids formed with Turkish and Albanian words or suffixes:

barabar (pers. adverb)+si (alb. suffix),  
 rast (pers. noun)+[ë]+sisht (alb. suffix),  
 zor (pers. adjective)+shëm (alb. suffix).

Based on the results of the analysis of the spoken register, we found that the spoken language is increasingly similar to the written version. This is shown by the use of a set of Persian words in both registers: *rastësisht* (accidentally), *vishnje* (sour cherry), *odë* (chamber) and so on.

Persian words, which are a powerful tool in styles with expressive function (irony, metaphor, ) keep the dynamism of their use in the formal version (eg: nam-i-nām, denbabaden-dam be dam). The use of Persian

words by interviewees of different ages and categories of Kosovar society proves that these Persian words have not yet managed to be replaced with other Albanian words. The use of these words is recorded among speakers who have used the formal variant and the Gheg dialect<sup>5</sup>. Some speakers using the Tosk variant<sup>6</sup> (formal dialect), although showing rare use of Persian, in certain cases during the use of explanatory-comparative and technical style are obliged to use them.

In cases where the speaker uses formal-level styles or registers, the presence of Persian words is recorded in the styles with the informational function. That is, they are irreplaceable when the speaker uses the illustrative-comparative style and the technical style. When the speaker speaks on topics of the type of childhood narrative in describing the city or house, traditions or when Persian words constitute a specific terminology such as: family terminology, architectural, urban terms, musical, that of Sufism or of various technical means. For example: *qifteli/joft-tel (li)* (a type of musical instrument), *çarshi/çahârsû* (Eng. bazaar, market, downtown), and so on.

This lexicon consists of words that have no substitute in the Albanian language or can be replaced with words that will not create a relationship with the listener and speaker on the emotional and intellectual level.

*Example (3): Countering Persian word with its Albanian synonym:*  
*çarshi – treg*

Formal style: treg, shesh (today's shopping center)

Informal style: treg, çarshi

Evocative Style: çarshi

Comparative illustrative style: çarshi

Technical style: çarshi

Metaphorical style: çarshi (audience, opinion)

According to FGJSH (ASHSH, 2006), the word *çarshi* has the

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<sup>5</sup> The Albanian language develops into two main dialects, Tosk and Gheg which are geographically divided by the Shkumbini River. Gheg dialect encompasses the northern Gheg and southern Gheg which are roughly separated by the river Mat. (Demiraj, 2013) Gheg is spoken by Gheg Albanians in northern Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, as well as Serbia and Montenegro.

<sup>6</sup> The Tosk encompasses the northern and southern Tosk that are roughly separated by the Vjosa River. The sub-dialects of the Tosk are Arberesh and Arvanit dialects. (Demiraj, 2013) Tosk is spoken in southern Albania, a small part of Macedonia, Greece and southern Italy by Arbëresh.

following characteristics:

çarshi,-a: noun, feminine; (obsolete); a covered market; streets with shops on both sides: the city bazaar. FGJSH (ASHSH, 2006)

From this definition we understand that this word is obsolete, which means that it should not be found in the formal style. The speaker once used the word for places where he could trade. However, when we look at the informal style, the word *çarshi* shows a more frequent use among older people and the inhabitants of the cities where this type of square or city street has been preserved even today, as we have seen from the analysis of the HGK corpus. To further clarify the scope of the meaning of this word, we have taken some examples from the national corpus of the Albanian language<sup>7</sup>:

“u mbush *çarshia* me lafe se KTV-ja do të ndëshkohej [...]”  
/ Eng. “The *çarshi* was filled with rumours that KTV would be punished [...]”

Zëri, 2013.04.15

“Të rreshtuar dhe të heshtur vazhdojnë ecjen rrugëve të *çarshisë*.”/eng. “Aligned and silent, they continue walking the streets of the *çarshi*.”

Kim Mehmeti, 1900–2014

In technical style it is also used in the high level of formality, in literature and in various descriptions of old architecture.

“Nga ora tre, më thirrën në telefon, po t’thom e kisha telefonin me numër të shtetit tjetër, edhe po m’lajmrojnë që e kanë kallë Çarshinë e Madhë në Gjakovë, edhe kanë vra Doktor Izet.... kanë vra një aktivist,...”/ “At three o'clock, they called me on the phone. I'm telling you, I had the phone with a number from another country, and they're telling me that they set the Grand Bazaar in Gjakova on fire, and they killed Doctor Izet... they killed an activist...”

OHK, *Interview with Vjosa Dobruna*, 3.07.2013-  
11.07.2013

As such this word also evokes a certain group of speakers who would understand the oriental atmosphere and environment that can be

<sup>7</sup> The national corpus of the Albanian language registered 340 uses of the word *çarshi* in 186 different documents. <http://web-corpora.net/AlbanianCorpus/search/> (last retrieved on 15.09.2023)

found in the specific locations of the cities of the Ottoman Empire. It can be heard in certain groups, so the Albanian speakers who are residents of these cities, the Albanian speakers from the diaspora who have not used the Albanian words *treg*, and so on.

An example of the use of Persian words with expressive function is the Albanian word *terezi* (per. tarāzū ترازو is derived from the Middle Persian word *tarāzūk*, which holds the same meaning.)

Me terezi (ngadalë, me kujdes, me hamendje), *vë gjërat në terezi*: e kam vu punën në terezi, për fije, mbarë, i merr fjalët skalapurri *nuk je në terezi* : *s'jam në terezi*; *s'jam në rregull, në gjendje*, (Dizdari, 2005:1023), *s'e prish kur terezinë*: i merr punët shtruar, nuk shqetësohet) etj. (DAL, 2006).

Example (4): *Countering Persian word with its Albanian synonym*:  
terezi – peshore (Eng. scales)

Formal style: peshore

Informal style: peshore

Metaphorical style: terezi

Technical style: peshore, terezi (obsolete)

Persian words are certainly indicative of the different social identities of Albanian speakers such as age, background, religious affiliation, etc. *terezi* is used more among older people, the meaning depends on the origin as well. For example, the expression '*me terezi*' means 'carefully, without shaking', but in the city of Ulcinj, Montenegro, 'probably, presumptuously, presumptuously' (Dizdari, 2005:2013). It is not used in formal styles. The word '*terezi*' evokes the old tradition, technically it expresses an old tool which today has been replaced with new digital tools. It cannot be replaced because it constitutes the backbone of certain figurative expressions without which no new meanings could be expressed. For illustration purposes, let's take an example from ANC:

"Dhe e çmonin edhe më tepër që s'e prishte kurrë *terezi* në."/ Eng. He never use to lose his coolness, and they respected him more for that.

Kalemi's trans. of "Madam Bovary"

"Unë terezitem më mirë në karrige." Eng. I concentrate better on the chair.

Marku's novel "Në ballkonin e mbrëmjes"

The last two usages show that the word *terezi* is far from its main meaning of weighing machine or scales, and is transpositioned from noun to verb thereby depicts new meanings such as:

*Terezitem. intr. verb, colloquial* To think deeply, to think carefully, to measure a lot before doing something; to think and concentrate a lot when doing something, To not be in a hurry; to plan to measure oneself to do something. *Terezitej t'i fliste.* (Eng. He was thinking of talking to him.) (DAL, 2006)

*Example (7): Countering Persian word pazar (بازار) with its Albanian synonyms: treg (Eng. market), shitblerje (Eng. shopping), negociata, negocioj (Eng. bargain)*

Formal style: treg

Informal style: pazar

Metaphorical style: pazar

Dictionaries give three different meanings of the word *pazar*. When countered with its Albanian synonyms one can easily come to conclusion that it is often used as a strong linguistic tool for metaphorical style. Here are some examples excerpted from ANC that support this view:

Djali i vetë ka thonë, 'Ani n'rregull, a bon qët' vendim... a bon t'shtunën?' Ishte *ditë pazari*, 'A bon t'shtunën me komuniku?' Ky i thotë, 'Po, edhe mblidhen krejt populli. / Eng. His son said, 'Alright, is it okay if we... is it okay to do it on Saturday?' It was *sales day*, 'Is it okay to communicate on Saturday?' He replied, 'Yes, and everyone will gather.'

OHK, *Interview with Riza Krasniqi*, 30.01.2016

Ato janë të mbushura me fibra, ndaj mos harroni t'i vend osni në listë sa herë bëni *pazar*.' / Eng. "They are full of fiber, so don't forget to add them to your list every time you go *shopping*."

[Agjencia Telegrafike Shqiptare] 08.02.2017

Në të kundërtën shitja në "*aksham Pazar*" edhe i kësaj n dërmarrjeje i jep vulë realitetit se në Kosovë vijnë vetëm ata i nvestitorë që janë të gatshëm të bëhen pjesë e bandës së pus htetit." /Eng. "On the contrary, selling in the "last minute shopping" of this enterprise further solidifies the reality that in Kosovo, only those investors who are willing to become part of the ruling clique come.

[Zëri] 25.03.2013

I pyetur se kush i zotëron 60% të aksioneve që do të marrin portin, kreu i qeverisë deklaroi se nuk mund të përgjigjet për *muhabete pazari* që bëhen te gabi dhe në kafe. / Eng. When asked who owns the 60% of the shares that will

take over the port, the head of the government stated that he cannot respond to the *gossip* that takes place in second-hand shops and cafés.

CNA.al, 10.09.2022

Nëse ajo legjitimon çdo *pazar* apo akt jo moral të opozitë s për të rrëzuar qeverinë,..."/ "If it legitimizes every *negotiation/bargain* or immoral act of the opposition to overthrow the government

[Koha.mk] 14.05.2012

[...]unë mendoj që çështje të tilla delicate nuk zgjidhen d uke i nxjerrë në *pazar* dhe duke akuzuar me terma të forta atë më të cilin kërkon që të arrish marrëveshjen."/ eng. "I believe that such delicate matters are not resolved *by airing them publicly* and accusing with strong terms the very person with whom you seek to reach an agreement.

[Panorama] 05.11.2016

The first three examples of the usages of the word "pazar" are also encountered in the dictionaries of Turkish, through which these words are borrowed. While the last three - as seen above - have metaphorical meanings which are developed later in Albanian, and are not used as such in Turkish.

Thus, it could be concluded that some Persian words cannot be easily replaced with other Albanian words due to the development of new meanings during the loan process. These words have active use in various styles and registers of Albanian. It has already been found that the speakers, during the conversation, make a style change, so from the formal one they switch to the informal style or often are careless during the use of the formal style, depending on the topic and context and the situation they are talking about. In addition to the topic they talk about, their use is also motivated by emotions. It is worth mentioning here the styles that are used with the expressive function, such as ironic, hyperbolic, or metaphorical style are seen very often.

## 5. Conclusions

Through this study, we researched the Persian words in two important corpora of the Albanian-speaking society of Kosovo. From the first corpus consisting of 20 Albanian folk songs, we were able to identify 45 words of Persian origin. From the second corpus of the project "Oral History of Kosovo" consisting of interviews with 100 people interviewed,

we recorded 100 Persian words. The presence of Persian words in these two corpora, which reflect important dimensions of the daily life of Albanian speakers, is a fact that we still have a visible presence of these words in Albanian. Persian words in the Albanian language should be considered a cultural asset that help expand and develop the ontological, epistemological, aesthetic and social dimensions of Albanian speakers.

By contrasting Persian words with their Albanian synonyms, we understood that not all can be replaced due to the use in different styles, because of new meanings acquired over time as well as due to naturalization and use at the formal level. Our analysis has shown that they are present and an inseparable part of the registers at the lower level of formality. They are language tools employed in the styles and registers which have a expressive function such as the metaphorical style.

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### L'USO DEI PRESTITI PERSIANI NELLA LINGUA ALBANESE: FOCUS SUL LIVELLO BASSO DEL REGISTRO FORMALE

Questo studio si concentra sull'uso dei prestiti persiani nell'albanese moderno con riferimento al livello basso del registro formale. La presenza del persiano nella cultura dell'Impero ottomano, compresi i Balcani e i territori abitati dagli albanesi che ne fecero parte per cinque secoli, fu molto ingente. Dunque, si stabilirono legami interculturali tra la lingua albanese e quella persiana tramite e nell'ambito dell'Impero ottomano. In questo modo molte parole persiane entrarono a far parte della lingua albanese. Nonostante vari tentativi per sostituire queste parole con parole albanesi, esse vengono tuttora usate in diversi registri linguistici. Lo studio analizza lo shift di parole persiane dal registro alto a quello basso della formalità. Al fine di portare a termine lo studio, si è usufruito di due corpora. Il primo corpus comprende testi delle canzoni folcloristiche in quanto appartenenti al registro più basso della formalità. Il secondo corpus consiste di cento interviste registrate per il progetto "Oral History of Kosovo". L'analisi dell'uso di questa parte del lessico della lingua albanese è stata condotta basandosi sui principi della teoria del corpus linguistico; la teoria delle lingue in contatto e l'approccio sociolinguistico al registro linguistico. Lo studio si basa inoltre sulle teorie della multifunzionalità e del pluralismo linguistico attraverso le quali è stato analizzato il processo di funzionalizzazione delle parole persiane nei diversi registri linguistici in cui esse vengono utilizzate.

**Parole chiavi:** Lessico persiano, vocabolario albanese, stili e registri, impatto culturale

## **WHAT MAKES FOR AN EFFECTIVE GRAMMAR PRESENTATION?: PEER, SELF- AND TEACHER TRAINER EVALUATION OF MICRO-TEACHING**

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**Abstract:** In order to identify the elements of grammar teaching which most influence the perception of its effectiveness, we looked into the link between general evaluations of students' micro-teaching grammar presentations (an overall grade) and the assessments of their individual aspects, such as student-teacher personality, their non-verbal communication, the teaching method employed and the appropriateness of the materials and the activities used. The study involved 36 final year students of English language, literature and culture at a state university in Serbia who engaged in micro-teaching as part of their English language teaching methodology 2 coursework. After each classroom-based 5-minute grammar presentation, the same online questionnaire was completed by student teachers themselves (self-evaluation), their fellow students acting as language learners (anonymous peer evaluation) and two university ELT methodology teachers (397 evaluations in total), thus enabling us to investigate the potential differences in the perceptions of the grammar teaching depending on the source of evaluation (peer, self- or teacher trainer). A thematic analysis was conducted on the participants' responses to an open-ended question regarding the key element that made the grammar presentation successful. Correlational analysis revealed that the strongest association occurred between the perceived level of grammar presentation effectiveness and the positive student teacher characteristics, while the qualitative data analysis showed that the student teacher personality and their teaching style consistent with the constructivist theory of learning were almost equally cited as the main contributors to the positive perception of micro-teaching. Differences between the perceptions of different groups of evaluators were identified and accounted for in both types of research inquiry.

**Keywords:** grammar teaching, micro-teaching, teacher effectiveness, teacher personality, teaching method, peer evaluation, self-evaluation

## **Introduction**

Despite the general consensus on the profound impact of effective teaching on student achievement (Goe et al. 2; Teven 434; Toropova et al. 1), research on teacher effectiveness (see a historical overview in Campbell et al.) has been hampered by the lack of agreement on what constitutes good teaching (Kim et al. 2019: 166; Korthagen 78). In fact, because of the largely context-dependent nature of instructional practices, Korthagen has argued that it may even be “impossible or pedagogically undesirable to formulate a definitive description of ‘the good teacher’” (78). Indeed, many authors attest to the complexity of instructional contexts (Turner and Meyer; Šimić Šašić), which, if unfavourable, may put a strain on the performance of even the most competent and experienced teachers. This has led us to look into various aspects of effective grammar teaching in a simplified context of university-based micro-teaching sessions involving groups of 8-10 pre-service English language teachers in their final year of study, as it makes for a relatively safe environment in which students acting as learners tend to be “uniformly helpful and compliant, following the microteacher's instructions and earnestly offering responses” (Bell 33). By enabling us to focus on the aspects of teaching other than classroom management, such a set-up has also created a level playing field for evaluations of students' five-minute grammar presentations from the perspectives of student teachers themselves (self-evaluation), their peers acting as learners (peer evaluation) and two university ELT methodology teachers, one of whom has never taught them. Micro-teaching was part of the coursework for ELT Methodology 2, a course taught by the other teacher trainer, in which students had previously received both theoretical instruction and practical training in various elements of grammar teaching (e.g. elicitation techniques, concept checking, giving instructions, lesson planning).

The aim of the research was, therefore, twofold: (1) to investigate the potential correlations between the general assessments of student grammar presentations (an overall grade) and the evaluations of their individual elements such as teacher personality, teacher presence (body language and the use of voice), teaching style (e.g. student-centred, interactive, inductive approach) and the activities and materials used. This was done with a view to identifying those aspects which most contribute to the positive or negative perception of grammar teaching; (2) to look into the potential differences between the students' (peer evaluation), student teachers' (self-evaluation) and teacher trainers' perceptions of the grammar presentations. However, in order to better understand the complex interplay between the investigated elements

of micro-teaching and to further explain the differences in evaluations depending on their source, a thematic analysis of the participants' responses to an open-ended question about the key positive element of each grammar presentation was performed.

### **Micro-teaching**

Micro-teaching, as a way of training prospective teachers, has been a long-standing practice. The fact that it is still used by professionals proves that the advantages of micro-teaching greatly outnumber the disadvantages. According to Fortune et al. (389), one of its main benefits is exposing teacher trainees to different teaching situations without overwhelming them. This is significant since for most student teachers this is their first brush with actual teaching (Bodrič 930). Such activities are also beneficial as they create opportunities for close examination and detailed feedback. Since it breaks down complicated teaching procedures into small steps, micro-teaching is deemed to be an effective teaching tool for novice teachers (Shi 168; Dwight and Eve 181).

What is often challenged in employing micro-teaching is its authenticity (Bodrič 931; Shi 169). Experts wonder how far we can go with altering everyday classroom conditions before removing ourselves too far from what authentic teaching really looks like. Bell (24), for example, claims that those taking part in such training techniques view them more as a performance than an actual opportunity to teach. Nevertheless, in their quasi-experimental study Metcalf et al. found that it was the student teachers who engaged in micro-teaching and other university-based teacher training activities rather than the field experience trainees who improved their reflective ability and their teaching performance (e.g. increased interaction with learners, more adaptation to their level).

Despite some of the drawbacks of micro-teaching, a lot of research is being conducted to explore its efficiency and the results mostly outline the benefits of using micro-teaching in teacher training environments. Shi (168) investigated its effects on prospective English language teachers in China, where, similarly to our own research, student teachers were evaluating themselves, they received feedback from their peers and a mentor. However, while the majority of studies reviewed focus on either teacher trainees' comments of recorded micro-teaching sessions (Deneme) or the benefits of such sessions to prospective teachers (Bodrič; Fernández; Önal), to our knowledge there are none that explore the aspects of micro-teaching that are presented in this paper.

### **Teacher personality**

Looking back on our formal learning experiences, we seem to regard the role of our teachers and their personality as more important than the teaching methods and the materials they used (Bailey et al. 15; Kneipp et al. 904; Suplicz; Vitaz). However, while personality assessment has been widely used in organizational settings for personnel selection (Göncz 85; Kim et al. 2018: 321), such a practice appears to be much more controversial in educational contexts (see Borko et al.).

Despite its long tradition and diversity both in educational psychology (Rockoff et al. 8; see Göncz for the research classification) and beyond (John et al. 148; Kell 2), it is only in recent decades that personality research has undergone, what some authors call, a paradigm shift (see John et al.) with the general acceptance of the Big Five trait taxonomy as the dominant personality framework (Decker and Rimm-Kaufman 47; Kim, Verena and Klassen 164). Emerging from factor analyses of trait adjectives (see Goldberg; Saucier and Goldberg), the Big Five model comprises the following five dimensions commonly referred to as: extraversion (energetic, talkative, outgoing), agreeableness (kind, warm, helpful), conscientiousness (organised, efficient, thorough), emotional stability (calm, relaxed, secure) and openness (creative, intelligent, curious).

Using predominantly this, as well as other personality taxonomies (e.g. Rushton et al.; Thornton et al.), research studies investigating teacher effectiveness as a function of teacher personality have yielded somewhat inconsistent results – from those reporting no significant relationship between the constructs (Corcoran and O’Flaherty; Rockoff et al.; see Kell) to those establishing a clear link between teaching performance and at least some, although often different, aspects of teacher personality. For example, while in their meta-analysis of 25 studies focusing on the relationship between teacher Big Five personality domains and teacher effectiveness and burnout, Kim et al. (2019) found that all of the personality dimensions except for agreeableness were positively associated with teacher effectiveness (with extraversion and conscientiousness being especially important for student evaluations), in a study involving 63 university instructors (Kneipp et al.), agreeableness was found to be the only personality characteristic significantly correlated with student ratings of instructional quality. In another study by Kim et al. (2018) involving Australian secondary school students and their English and mathematics teachers, teacher personality predicted the subjective measures of teacher effectiveness, with conscientiousness being most important for teacher academic support, agreeableness for teacher personal support

and teacher stability for student performance self-efficacy, but it did not predict academic achievement as a more objective measure of teacher effectiveness.

Instead of using students' evaluation of teachers, some researchers focused on pre-service teachers and compared their personality types to those found in the general population (Ripski et al.; Thornton et al.). The results of the study conducted by Ripski et al. indicate that pre-service teachers are less neurotic, more extraverted, more open to experience, more agreeable and more conscientious than their peers, which is consistent with the findings reported by Genc et al. who investigated Serbian university students' expectations of what a good teacher should be like.

### **Effective grammar teaching**

Although most teachers and students dislike it, languages cannot function without grammar, so it has to be taught in some way (Tomović 100). Consequently, there has always been a debate about the most effective way of teaching grammar. The perception of grammar instruction within the different ELT methods and approaches has been subject to change (see Schenck 165-167 for an overview), but the latest trends stress the importance of contextualized grammar teaching, its integration into the more communicatively-oriented syllabus and the promotion of student noticing of the target structures by using various techniques such as input flooding, input enhancement, consciousness-raising tasks, the garden path strategy etc. with a view to encouraging learners to work out the rules themselves (Ellis 48; Larsen-Freeman 257; Mart 124).

Apart from being taught in context, grammar can be taught overtly and covertly, i.e. by explaining the rules to students, or by hiding grammar from them, so that they are doing an activity without being aware that they are learning a particular structure or rule (Tomović 101-102). Overt grammar teaching can be deductive or rule-driven and inductive or discovery learning, both of which have their advantages and disadvantages. Deductive teaching saves time and appears to be the preferred method among some language learners in Serbia (see Nešić and Hamidović 201; cf. Đorđević 331). However, the main drawback of such an approach is that students are not active participants in the learning process, which is incompatible with the main tenets of the constructivist theories of learning which show that active construction of knowledge, problem-based learning, the use of higher-order thinking skills and cooperative learning lead to deeper levels of understanding, produce better learning outcomes, promote student engagement and

keep them more focused on the task at hand (Džinkić and Milutinović 143; Loyens and Gijbels 352; Šimić Šašić 237).

Among other conclusions that Schenck (184) reaches, there is one relevant to our research parameters: explicit grammar instruction may be more effective with students at a lower level of language proficiency, whereas at higher levels, learners seem to acquire grammatical structures more efficiently when asked to use self-discovery. Since the vast majority of students in our study opted for target structures typically taught at higher levels of language proficiency, it was expected of the research participants to have considered exposing their students to more inductive and covert ways of teaching grammar. Furthermore, as most of them claimed to have experienced the traditional, transmission-based, teacher-fronted language teaching as learners at school (see Nešić and Hamidović 201), micro-teaching was seen as an opportunity for them to step out of their comfort zone and experiment with the more progressive teaching methods.

Finally, while there is research to be found exploring self- and/or peer evaluation in teacher education (Bedir; Ozogul; Zaier), we were unable to locate any studies connected to this type of practice in the context of pre-service teachers micro-teaching grammar.

### **Research methodology**

This study was conducted during the autumn term of 2020/21 school year with fourth year students of English language, literature and culture at the Faculty of Philology, Belgrade University. The final sample size used in the analysis comprises of 36 students<sup>1</sup>, all in their early twenties, and two full-time university teachers at the abovementioned institution, one of whom was teaching the ELT Methodology 2 course the participants were attending at the time (i.e. they knew and had been previously taught by the teacher) and the other one was unknown to them, and vice-versa. The students had been asked to prepare and teach a grammar point of their choice to their peers who were pretending to be language learners, all within a five-minute time frame. The student participants took turns at being teachers within their group of 8 to 10 fellow students, while teacher trainers observed them and after each micro-teaching session everyone was asked to fill in a survey evaluating the grammar presentation they were a part of. Each time three types of evaluation (self-evaluation, anonymous peer evaluation and

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<sup>1</sup> The number was reached after excluding the sessions in which student teachers were evaluated only by one teacher trainer, as a result of the other university teacher testing positive for COVID-19.

independent teacher trainer evaluation) were conducted using private mobile phones to complete the same online questionnaire designed in Google Forms (see Appendix).

The data were collected and analysed using the following tools:

- The data preparation (data cleaning and validation) was done in the open-source application OpenRefine.
- Testing whether there are statistically significant differences in the scores between the matched pairs of treatment participants (Friedman Test) and a non-parametric correlation analysis were done in IBM SPSS Statistics 22.
- A thematic analysis of the participants' responses to an open-ended question was done in the qualitative data analysis software – Nvivo 12. After initial coding, a number of themes were identified (e.g. motivating and encouraging students) and grouped into broader categories (e.g. teacher personality, content delivery/teaching methodology).

### Research results and discussion

#### The importance of different aspects of grammar (micro-)teaching

In order to determine the strength of correlations between general assessments of student teachers' micro-teaching (see Q3 in the Appendix) and evaluations of their individual aspects (teacher personality, body language, student involvement, grammar rule elicitation, teaching materials and activities; see Q4–Q13 in the Appendix), a Spearman's rank-order correlation was run.

Table 1. The output of non-parametric correlation analysis

		Q3. Overall grade	Q4. Positive teacher character.	Q7. Body language	Q8. Involving students	Q9. Eliciting grammar rules	Q1. Materials	Q13. Activities
Spearman's rho	Q3.Overall Grade	1.000	.840**	.734**	.676**	.605**	.687**	.703**
			.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
			397	397	397	397	267	357
			97	7	7	7	2	7
Spearman's rho	Q4.Positive teacher		1.000	.830**	.677**	.602**	.650**	.672**
				.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
				397	397	397	267	357
				97	7	7	2	7

characteristics	N	397	397	397	397	267	357
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\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As a result, a strong positive correlation was found between the general evaluation of the grammar presentations (Q3 overall grade, see Table 1) and the degree of perception of positive teacher characteristics ( $r_s(395) = .840, p = .000$ ), as well as between the degree of perception of positive teacher characteristics (Q4) and the degree to which their adequate physical presence in the role of the teacher (Q7) was observed ( $r_s(395) = .830, p = .000$ ). In other words, the grammar presentations of student teachers who were perceived as exhibiting positive teacher personality traits during their micro-teaching (e.g. enthusiastic, confident, kind, patient) were commonly highly evaluated, while the positive perception of teacher personality was also typically coupled with the perceived appropriate use of body language, facial expressions and voice in the classroom (Q7), which attests to their powerful influence in ELT (Hismanoglu and Hismanoglu; Liu; Salah; a strong positive correlation with the overall grade ( $r_s(395) = .734, p = .000$ ).

As for the link between the general assessment of grammar presentations (Q3) and the perception of the level of student involvement (i.e. interactive teaching; Q8), a moderate positive correlation was observed ( $r_s(395) = .676, p = .000$ ). This means that, generally speaking, the more students were included in the presentation of target structures, the higher evaluation it received. A somewhat weaker association, however, may be explained by the fact that the focus was on the quantity and not necessarily the quality of student–student teacher interaction (see Q8 in the Appendix), so that despite the perceived high degree of interactivity in the classroom, some important aspects of pedagogical communication may have been missing, such as understanding, openness, active listening, the presence of emotions and empathy (Zukorlić and Osmanlić 173). Namely, student teachers had been previously instructed about the benefits of constructivist teaching (see Džinkić and Milutinović 143; Loyens and Gijbels 352; Tomčić and Andevski 54; Šimić Šašić 237), which entails interactive communication with and between students and it was observed that, although many strived for increased student engagement in their micro-teaching, in some cases the interaction was somewhat strained, with student teachers posing questions mechanically without much emotion and warmth and without showing genuine interest in or properly acknowledging and reacting to students' answers. This may partly be explained by the somewhat artificial set-up of the micro-teaching

assignment in which all the participants are pretending to be either a teacher or students (see Bell 24; Bodrič 931; Shi 169). Therefore, a moderate positive correlation between the perception of positive teacher characteristics (Q4) and the degree to which students were perceived to be included in the presentation of grammar (Q8) ( $r_s(395) = .677, p = .000$ ) may be seen as a confirmation of such an observation.

When it comes to the teaching method employed, a moderate positive correlation was also observed between the overall assessment of the grammar presentation (Q3) and the perceived level of eliciting grammar rules from the students (Q9) ( $r_s(395) = .605, p = .000$ ), which points to a generally positive evaluation of the inductive approach in grammar instruction. However, the fact that the association between the overall grade and the perceived degree to which student teachers elicited target structures was the weakest of all the investigated aspects of micro-teaching, may be accounted for by some students' preference for the deductive grammar teaching, often based on their positive learner experience or in line with their personal learning style (see Nešić and Hamidović 201), or some instances of poorly applied guided discovery techniques, in which students had been trained, such as posing inadequate 'lead-in' questions, no concept checking, providing insufficient information or inappropriate examples for student analysis.

Finally, a moderate to strong positive correlation was found between the general evaluation of micro-teaching and the perceived level of adequacy of the teaching materials used ( $r_s(260) = .687, p = .000$ ) and the activities employed ( $r_s(355) = .703, p = .000$ ), which suggests that appropriate, well-chosen and carefully thought-through materials and activities are highly significant in the teaching and learning of a foreign language. Nevertheless, the results also point to a complex interplay between these and other factors involved in teaching (e.g. content delivery, teacher personality, teacher–student rapport), while a closer inspection of the results reveals cases of successful grammar presentations in which no materials or activities were used, and vice versa. Edge and Garton (55), therefore, rightfully notice that "as long as a teacher is using a certain set of materials, even if their appropriateness seems questionable, it is important to use them with enthusiasm."

### **Peer, self- and teacher trainer evaluation**

Another aim of the research was to determine whether the perceptions of micro-teaching sessions differ through a comparison of student teachers' self-assessment, anonymous peer evaluation by their fellow students acting as English language learners and independent

evaluations by two university ELT methodology teachers (teacher trainers), one of whom (teacher trainer 2) has never taught them.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics

	N	Percentiles		
		25 <sup>th</sup>	50 <sup>th</sup> (Median)	75 <sup>th</sup>
Teacher_trainer1	36	6.00	7.00	8.00
Teacher_trainer2	36	4.25	7.00	8.00
Teacher	36	6.00	7.00	8.00
Student	36	8.00	8.00	9.00

Given the fact that all the participating students were evaluated as student teachers on one occasion, while in other cases they were students evaluating their peers, it was decided to use a Friedman Test, which is usually run to determine if three or more measurements from the same group of subjects are significantly different from one another on a chosen variable of interest.

Table 3. Friedman Test statistics

N	36
Chi-Square	36.399
Df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

Consequently, a statistically significant difference was found in an overall grade students gave to their peers acting as teachers in the course of their anonymous evaluation of micro-teaching in relation to those that student teachers gave to their own presentations (self-evaluation), as well as in relation to the grades student teachers were awarded by their university teachers,  $\chi^2(3) = 36.399$ ,  $p = 0.000$  (see Table 3). However, at this stage, we knew that there were differences somewhere between the related groups, but we did not know exactly where the differences had actually occurred, which is why separate Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were run on the different combinations of related groups (peer evaluation vs. self-evaluation; students' grades vs. teacher trainers' grades; self-evaluation vs. teacher trainers' grades). A post hoc analysis with a Wilcoxon signed-rank test was conducted with a Bonferroni correction applied, resulting in a significance level set at  $p < 0.0125$  (significance level of  $0.05/4$ ), which yielded the following results (see Table 4):

Table 4. Wilcoxon signed-rank test statistics

	S Teacher - Student	T_trainer1 - Student	T_trainer2 - Student	T_trainer1 - S Teacher	T_trainer2 - S Teacher	T_trainer2 - T_trainer1
Z	-4.514 <sup>b</sup>	-4.589 <sup>b</sup>	-4.306 <sup>b</sup>	-.555 <sup>b</sup>	-1.312 <sup>b</sup>	-1.329 <sup>b</sup>
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.579	.189	.184

a Based on positive ranks.

Median (IQR) overall grades provided by fellow students, student teachers, teacher trainer 1 and teacher trainer 2 were 8 (8 to 9), 7 (6 to 8), 7 (6 to 8), and 7 (4.25 to 8), respectively (see Table 2). There was a statistically significant difference between student teachers' and students' evaluations ( $Z = -4.514$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ; see Table 4), as well as between students' grades and those given by the two university teachers ( $Z = -4.589$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ;  $Z = -4.306$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). In other words, students in the role of language learners made a more favourable judgement of grammar presentations than did the student teachers. This is in line with the authors' observation that students generally tend to be both self-critical and kind to their peers in the course of their micro-teaching sessions involving reflection. Namely, these are typically viewed as stressful, high-stakes events by students, the more so as they are formally assessed and involve university teacher and peer feedback, so that camaraderie and the sheer awareness of the difficulty of being publicly evaluated and subjected to critique (see Bell 38) often lead students to soften their comments, stress only the positive aspects of the observed grammar presentations and generally act in a more gentle and sympathetic manner towards their fellow students. Therefore, despite the anonymous nature of the micro-teaching peer evaluation in the course of this study, students' identities as friends and classmates may certainly have influenced their subjective assessment.

On the other hand, self-evaluation as the only element of the online survey in which the participants were identifiable, has provided a more rigorous and possibly a more realistic assessment of student teachers' performance. A more negative self-evaluation may be explained as a "protection against potential disappointment resulting from confrontation with more negative students' perceptions" (Wubbels and Breckelmans 20). In our research, teacher trainers' access to student teachers' self-reports and other-reports may have caused a similar reaction, although we certainly hope that student teachers were genuinely aware of both the strengths and weaknesses of their performance during simulated teaching, which has resulted in no

significant differences between their self-evaluation grades and the teacher trainers' grades for their grammar presentations ( $Z = -0.555$ ,  $p = 0.579$ ;  $Z = -1.312$ ,  $p = 0.189$ ).

Finally, it is also important to stress that no significant differences were observed between the independent evaluations of the two university teachers themselves ( $Z = -1.329$ ,  $p = 0.184$ ). This points to a shared system of teaching beliefs and a clear set of assessment standards applied, although it is interesting to note that the teacher trainer 1 who was familiar with the students was slightly more generous in her evaluations compared to the teacher trainer 2 as a possibly more objective observer and assessor (see Table 5).

Table 5. Ranks table

	Mean Rank
Teacher_trainer1	2.17
Teacher_trainer2	2.14
Teacher	2.17
Student	3.53

#### **Thematic analysis: Positive aspects of grammar presentations**

In the course of online evaluation of micro-teaching, respondents were asked to choose the key element that made a grammar presentation successful (see Q14 in the Appendix). In order to identify the underlying themes among their answers, the responses were grouped into different categories to describe the same concept, such as Teacher personality (blue boxes in Table 6), Content delivery/teaching methodology (beige boxes), Body language/use of voice (orange boxes) and Classroom management (green boxes). Given the complexity of instructional contexts (Turner and Meyer; Šimić Šašić) and especially the fact that it is almost impossible to separate what teacher is (i.e. teacher personality) from what they do in the classroom (e.g. content delivery, classroom management), the division was only tentative with some inevitable overlapping between the categories (see Šimić Šašić 234). The main focus and the result of the analysis, however, were the main themes extracted and presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Themes related to perceptions of key elements that made the presentations successful

Theme subgroups/categories	Students		Student teachers		Teacher trainers	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Use of materials; visual aids (ppt); whiteboard	2 7	5 ,4	2	3 ,3	1 7	1 2,4
Interesting; engaging	5 6	1 1,2	5	8 ,3	4	2 ,9
Involving activities	1 1	2 ,2	6	1 0,0	1	0 ,7
Eliciting; discovery learning; personalisation; involving students	1 03	2 0,7	1 1	1 8,3	2 6	1 9,0
Level-appropriate	2	0 ,4	0	0 ,0	1	0 ,7
Well-organized	1 3	2 ,6	1	1 ,7	3	2 ,2
Motivating and encouraging students	3	0 ,6	1	1 ,7	9	6 ,6
Good classroom management	1	0 ,2	0	0 ,0	2	1 ,5
Checking comprehension	1	0 ,2	1	1 ,7	3	2 ,2
Enthusiastic; motivated	2 4	4 ,8	5	8 ,3	5	3 ,6
Body language	0	0 ,0	0	0 ,0	2	1 ,5
Relaxed; patient; kind; pleasant; nice; polite; smiling; helpful; funny	4 3	8 ,6	2	3 ,3	2 1	1 5,3
Confidence	1 9	3 ,8	0	0 ,0	0	0 ,0
Authority	5	1 ,0	0	0 ,0	4	2 ,9
Dynamic; efficient	2 8	5 ,6	1	1 ,7	3	2 ,2
Rapport; positive atmosphere	1 0	2 ,0	2	3 ,3	9	6 ,6
Interaction with students	2 7	5 ,4	6	1 0,0	1	0 ,7

Clear and concise; comprehensive	6 8	1 3,7	5	8 ,3	1 5	1 0,9
Appropriate voice	2	0 ,4	0	0 ,0	6	4 ,4
Appropriate pace; good time management	2	0 ,4	2	3 ,3	1	0 ,7
Creativity	4	0 ,8	0	0 ,0	0	0 ,0
Simplicity	4	0 ,8	2	3 ,3	0	0 ,0
None	4 5	9 ,0	8	1 3,3	4	2 ,9
Total	<b>4 98</b>	<b>1 00,0</b>	<b>6 0</b>	<b>1 00,0</b>	<b>1 37</b>	<b>1 00,0</b>

The one with the highest representation (20.7%, 18.3% and 19%) (students, student teachers and teacher trainers, respectively) is the interactive, student-centred grammar teaching, including the extracted subthemes such as elicitation, discovery learning, personalisation and student involvement, commonly associated with the constructivist approaches to learning. In other words, it appears that the micro-teaching sessions have provided the students acting both as language learners and teachers with a firsthand experience of the benefits of being actively engaged (or actively engaging students) in the process of knowledge construction, thus confirming the teacher trainers' impression based on more than a decade of classroom and micro-teaching observation and evaluation, that such grammar presentations are far more successful and better-received than those where students are only passive recipients of the content delivered (see Džinkić and Milutinović 143; Loyens and Gijbels 352; Šimić Šašić 237). Furthermore, although 'interaction with the students' as another important theme identified (see Table 6), may be related to a number of pedagogical functions including teaching, classroom management, establishing rapport and supporting learner autonomy (see Tomčić and Andevski 50), it may be argued that because of the brevity of simulated teaching it was predominately seen as pertaining to instruction itself (e.g. rule elicitation, comprehension checks), thus adding to the positive perception of interactive teaching.

The comments related to the student-teachers' positive personality characteristics were almost equally highly represented among the students' and teacher trainers' responses as the previous theme (18.2% and 21.8%, respectively), of which 'enthusiastic/motivated' and

'confident', typically associated with extraversion (see Goldberg; Saucier & Goldberg), were most commonly cited among students acting as learners (4.8% and 3.8%, respectively; see Kim et al., 2019). The university teachers focused more on the student teachers' agreeableness (kind, pleasant, nice, polite, smiling, helpful) and emotional stability (relaxed) or both (patient), citing them as the key positive components of their grammar presentations (15.3% compared to 8.6% in peer evaluation). The finding that teacher trainers attach more importance to teacher–student interpersonal relations (e.g. teacher agreeableness), while students value far more the element of fun in teaching (e.g. teacher extraversion) is further supported by the prevalence of the responses associated with 'motivating and encouraging the students' and 'rapport; positive atmosphere' among the two university teachers (6.6% for both themes compared to 0.6% and 2% in peer evaluation, respectively), while those in the 'interesting, engaging' theme subgroup account for 11.2% and 8.3% of the students' and student teachers' answers, respectively and only 2.9% of the teacher trainers' responses (see Table 6).

Another aspect of grammar presentations that all groups perceived as a major contributor to their effectiveness is that they are clear, concise and comprehensive (13.7%, 8.3% and 10.9% for students, student teachers and teacher trainers, respectively). On the other hand, the idiosyncrasy of student teachers' self-evaluations lies, understandably, in a far lower rate of responses signifying positive personality traits (11.6% compared to 18.2% for students and 21.8% for teacher trainers) and a much higher proportion of 'none' responses (13.3% compared to only 2.9% for teacher trainers). This suggests that they may have been either too self-critical or simply uneasy about praising their own personal characteristics (except for their enthusiasm and motivation; 8.3%), which is why they focused more on the quality of the interaction they established with their peers and of the activities used (10% each). Interestingly, the teacher trainers, on the other hand, only mentioned the activities once in total, whilst placing more stress on the materials student teachers used, some of which featured input flooding and input enhancement with a view to promoting student noticing (see Larsen-Freeman 257).

### **Conclusion**

Although the results of the first part of the study indicate that it is the positive teacher traits that are almost invariably associated with good grammar instruction, while the link with other investigated components of micro-teaching, despite the positive correlations

observed, is not as straightforward, it is important to acknowledge the limitation of the quantitative part of the study which focused on the quantity rather than the quality of student teacher–student interaction and grammar rule elicitation, which might have weakened the association with the general appraisal of micro-teaching. The qualitative data was therefore needed to further clarify the importance attached to different aspects of grammar instruction from the perspectives of students, student teachers and teacher trainers as a function of their perception of grammar presentation quality, so that the thematic analysis of their responses to what makes grammar presentation effective revealed that both teacher personality and the constructivist grammar teaching techniques (elicitation, active student engagement, guided discovery) were the most and, more or less, equally valued by both the students and teacher trainers, thus supporting the view that teachers are not only born but made as well.

Although well aware that the results cannot be generalised to real classroom settings, the importance of the research and its findings lies in the evidence found for the positive effects of the student-centred, interactive approach to grammar teaching and the opportunity the students were given to feel them directly by being put in the shoes of language learners. On a more personal level, the study has also confirmed the authors' observations about the nature of successful grammar presentation and the reliability of the micro-teaching assessment practices (no significant differences between the teacher trainers' independent evaluations, as well as between our appraisal and the student teachers' self-evaluation) and provided us with an insight into both the similarities (e.g. presentation clarity, conciseness and comprehensiveness) and the differences between the students' and our perceptions of what makes for an effective grammar presentation (teacher extroversion vs. agreeableness and emotional stability; interesting presentations vs. student teacher–student interpersonal relations, respectively). In future work, investigating the extent to which micro-teaching evaluations are predictive of student teachers' effective grammar instruction in real classrooms might prove important.

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### ŠTA PREZENTACIJU GRAMATIKE ČINI USPEŠNOM?: SAMOEVALUACIJA, VRŠNJAČKA I EVALUACIJA MIKRONASTAVE OD STRANE UNIVERZITETSKIH NASTAVNIKA

Kako bismo se približili odgovoru na pitanje da li se nastavnici rađaju ili stvaraju, analizirali smo odnos između opštih ocena mikronastave gramatičkih jedinica na univerzitetskom nivou i procene individualnih aspekata pomenutih simulacija, kao što su ličnost nastavnika, njihova neverbalna komunikacija, nastavna metoda (transmisioni ili interaktivni model nastave, induktivna ili deduktivna metoda) i korišćenje odgovarajućih nastavnih materijala i aktivnosti. U istraživanju je učestvovalo 36 studenata engleskog jezika, književnosti i kulture na završnoj godini studija. Posle svake petominutne prezentacije gramatičke jedinice identičan elektronski upitnik popunjavali su studenti-nastavnici (samoevaluacija), studenti-učenici (anonimna vršnjačka evaluacija) i dva univerzitetska nastavnika metodike nastave engleskog jezika (ukupno 397 popunjenih upitnika). Na taj način omogućeno je ispitivanje razlika u percepciji uspešnosti mikronastave zavisno od evaluatora (kolega, samih studenata-nastavnika ili univerzitetskih nastavnika). Urađena je tematska analiza odgovora učesnika istraživanja na pitanje otvorenog tipa o ključnom elementu koji je predstavljanje gramatičke jedinice učinio uspešnim. Korelacijska analiza je pokazala da je najjača veza između opšte ocene prezentacije i stepena percepcije pozitivnih karakteristika ličnosti studenta-nastavnika, dok je kvalitativna analiza podataka otkrila da su ličnost studenta-nastavnika i primenjena nastavna metoda koja je u skladu sa teorijom konstruktivizma u učenju (interaktivna, na učenika usmerena nastava, upotreba induktivne metode) skoro u istoj meri navođene kao glavni faktori u pozitivnom doživljaju prezentovane gramatičke jedinice. Razlike u percepcijama mikronastave od strane tri grupe ocenjivača su takođe identifikovane i analizirane kako u kvantitativnom tako i u kvalitativnom delu istraživanja.

**Ključne reči:** nastava gramatike, mikronastava, uspešnost nastavnika, ličnost nastavnika, nastavna metoda, vršnjačka evaluacija, samoevaluacija

**APPENDIX**

Micro-teaching survey

**\* Required**

1. The name of the student teacher observed \*

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2. What was your role in the grammar presentation? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- A student  
 A teacher  
 Teacher trainer 1  
 Teacher trainer 2

3. To what extent was the grammar presentation successful? (an overall grade) \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

4. To what extent did the student teacher demonstrate positive teacher characteristics (e.g. enthusiastic, dynamic, authoritative, confident, kind, patient, efficient)? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

5. Write down one or two most prominent positive characteristics of the student teacher (either from the list above or other).\*
- from the list above or other).
-

## **STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE USE OF ICT IN ENGLISH CLASS AT TERTIARY LEVEL**

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**Abstract:** The use of ICT tools is frequently regarded as a beneficial and effective method for foreign language learning. In addition to providing tools which can help students improve their language skills, ICT can be used to motivate them and foster their interest and positive attitudes towards language learning. On the other hand, overwhelmed by a number of learning tools and apps available, as well as the multitasking required for such a learning experience, some students may find them distracting, which leads to a lower quality in the work produced.

Despite the abundance of existing studies on the topic, very few have addressed the use of ICT at the tertiary level, and almost none have aimed at including students from two different countries in the Balkan region. Hence, the present study aims to explore the attitudes of university students at two tertiary institutions in Slovenia and Croatia towards the use of ICT in their language learning classrooms. The results were obtained using an online questionnaire and were further quantitatively analysed using descriptive statistics and a t-test for unpaired samples. According to the results, the vast majority of the students acknowledge the importance of ICT tools and highlight their usefulness in relation to learning English. However, a difference between the groups is observed in the frequency of usage and types of online tools used in their language learning process. Finally, the results of this study show that the integration of ICT in learning should be carefully and thoughtfully planned in advance. Although prevalent in language settings, ICT should not be seen as a sole replacement for face-to-face learning sessions, but as a necessary complement to English classes. Teachers should first consider the diverse comfort levels and technological proficiencies of students to ensure that ICT enhances, rather than hinders, the learning process.

**Keywords:** language learning, English, ICT, students' attitudes, tertiary level, Slovenia, Croatia

## 1. Introduction

The great influence of technology on the field of education in the present day cannot be overstated (Hernandez, 2017; 341). Computers and projectors have become indispensable in the modern classroom, and technology has allowed teaching to escape the limitations of the physical location of learning, for example, through virtual education, distance learning, MOOCs, and blended learning, to name just a few (Rahim, 2019; 1165). Technology has penetrated all areas of education, with the field of English as a foreign language being no exception. In fact, technology-enhanced language learning (TELL) has become an increasingly active research field in recent years, accompanied by an increased number of practices of TELL in the classroom (Zhang and Zou, 2022; 698). The use of ICT has been shown to have a positive influence on the language learning process in many ways. In addition to providing tools which can help students improve their language skills (Balbay and Kills, 2017; Caldwell, 2020), ICT can be used to motivate them and grow their interest and positive attitudes towards language learning (Al Arif and Handayani, 2022; 25; Tran, 2020; 43). ICT tools can also provide opportunities for collaboration and interaction (Al Arif, *Indonesian University Students' Perception, 2019a*; 133) and foster student autonomy by providing access to digital course materials at home (Balbay and Kills, 2017; 236). Furthermore, the use of mobile technologies in combination with, for example, response systems that allow students to reply to instructor questions has been shown to improve student perception and engagement (Heflin et al., 2017; 93). Finally, outside the classroom, technology can provide opportunities for self-initiated use of English for students, for example, through using search engines, digital gaming, or watching YouTube videos (Lamb and Arisandy, 2020; 86).

However, the use of technology in the classroom also has some potential drawbacks. The exciting opportunities for independent use of digital technologies outside the classroom can also have a demotivating effect in formal learning settings, where ICT use may seem dry and dull to students in comparison (Lamb and Arisandy, 2020; 87). The multitasking required by the use of mobile devices might be distracting for some students, leading to the lower quality of the work produced (Heflin et al., 2017; 92). Another important thing to consider is the possibility that students might lack the information literacy skills needed to work with ICT efficiently (Tri and Nguyen, 2014; 43). Teachers might need to employ different ICT tools because they all have their primary functions as well as their limitations (Heflin et al., 2017; 98). Given the advantages that ICT can provide, as well as the potential pitfalls or

barriers related to its use in the language classroom, studies of students' attitudes towards its use in different contexts are of great relevance. For this reason, the present study aims to investigate attitudes towards the use of ICT for English language learning among students at two different universities in a post-COVID learning environment.

## **2. Literature review**

Technology has been applied to assist language learning and teaching for decades, and educators are generally encouraged to use technology in their teaching process in order to prepare students for life in this globalised, technologically interconnected world (Chun et al., 2016; 65; Shadiev and Yang, 2020; 524). As technology affects how language is used in specific contexts, it is the teacher's task to encourage students to consider language use across different media and technologies (Chun et al., 2016; 65). That is why it is not surprising that technology is used in virtually all aspects of language learning, and studies have pointed out its usefulness for improving the quality of input, enhancing the authenticity of communication and providing feedback (Ghanizadeh et al., 2015; 74). There are numerous ways technology can be applied to language learning. In the broad sense, technology can be defined as all mediating resources used in the classroom such as video, images or audio recordings, while in the narrow sense, it is usually taken to include the use of digital devices such as computers (Chun et al., 2016; 64). In their review of 398 articles on technology-assisted language learning, Shadiev and Yang list topics covered by relevant research, such as automated feedback, social networking, games, corpora, instant messaging, virtual reality, websites and digital resources, speech recognition, collaborative writing tools, electronic dictionaries, voice recording and online video (2020; 529-537). Most of the analysed studies reported positive results, i.e. better outcomes when learning was supported by technology, as well as positive perceptions towards the technology used. Zhang and Zou reviewed TELL studies published after 2016, which focused on topics such as mobile learning, multimedia-assisted language learning and speak-to-text and text-to-speech recognition. These technologies were mostly employed to encourage practice, deliver content, facilitate interactions and restructure teaching approaches, generally reporting positive results concerning the learning outcomes and motivation of the students. The authors of this study also warn of the rapid pace of changing technology, which means that any review does not remain relevant for long (2022; 670). For example, with the launch of ChatGPT in 2022, the last two years have brought an increased interest in the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) solutions

in language learning as well as in the ethical considerations that have to be taken into account (Belda-Medina and Calvo-Ferrer, 2022; Hartono et al., 2023). In any case, it is impossible to ignore technology in the language-learning classroom. As Chun et al. put it: "It is so pervasive and so interwoven with human activity that to teach language without some form of technology would create a very limited and artificial learning environment." (2016; 65).

Generally speaking, the use of technology in the language learning classroom has been found to be as effective as traditional language learning, providing additional benefits such as increased learning motivation and more efficient means of learning for language learners (Shadiev and Yang, 2020; 524). For example, the use of mobile devices in language classrooms has been found to encourage positive attitudes, enthusiasm and engagement (Kukulka-Hulme and Viberg, 2018; 214), provide more opportunities for oral communication practice (Ilic, 2015;19) and support the learners' self-confidence as L2 users (Ushioda, 2011; 12).

On the other hand, in their review of studies on the effectiveness of technology, Golonka et al. (2014) also point out a lack of straightforward evidence on its effectiveness in the studies reviewed. Technology can sometimes be seen as harmful to the development of thinking and literacy, especially in young people, and can even cause physical discomfort and negative emotions (Chun et al., 2016; 65; Shadiev and Yang, 2020; 539). Learner proficiency may also influence the extent to which they benefit from TELL. According to Zhang and Zou (2022; 27), the results of relevant studies are not conclusive, but they do point to the importance of designing TELL activities to make them suitable for learners' proficiency levels and to provide them with sufficient scaffolding (for low-achievers) or enough challenges (for high-achievers). Other potential issues that have been reported by studies are, among others, superficial interaction, distraction from learning tasks, technical issues with software and hardware and safety concerns (Ogunduyile, 2013; Shadiev and Yang, 2020; Yang and Xie, 2013). For example, information overload can be a problem when using the internet to search for appropriate vocabulary (Lim, 2014; 366), which points to the important role of teachers in the process of technology use in the language classroom. They are the ones who should provide guidance and effective learning strategies, so that learners can benefit from the process and so that the potential negative effects on technology use are minimised (Shadiev and Yang, 2020; 539). As Webb and Doman (2020; 22) put it, the teacher is partly responsible for getting students to see the value of technology in this context. However, for this

to be possible, teachers need to possess the necessary skills, both in using digital tools and integrating them into their teaching (Li and Ni, 2011; 70). Teachers might not have these skills, and this is why it is important to offer suitable training and support. Similarly, a lack of training sessions aimed at increasing the level of students' technology acceptance can negatively influence the effectiveness of TELL (Zhang and Zou, 2022; 26). For example, Shyr and Chen (2018) familiarised their students with the technologies used before conducting a flipped classroom, and the results showed positive results on the students' learning achievements and motivation. Finally, the sense of freshness that the students may experience when certain tools are first used may be lost, resulting in a decrease in the positive effects of TELL (Zhang and Zou, 2022; 26). The authors suggest the application of new digital elements and technology-enhanced strategies to counter this problem and maintain students' learning motivation and engagement.

When it comes to student attitudes towards ICT use in the language classroom, research in tertiary contexts in various countries has indicated that they are mostly positive. For example, Tri and Nguyen (2014;43) have found that Vietnamese university students had very positive attitudes towards the benefits of technology for English language learning and expected more frequent use of this technology in the classroom. Indonesian university students also found ICT to be easy, useful and beneficial for English language learning (Al Arif and Handayani, 2022; 31-32). Liu et al. (2022; 7-8) found that Chinese university students had positive attitudes towards the application of automatic speech recognition software for language learning, recognizing its advantages such as the scoring mechanism which stimulated their intrinsic motivation and encouraged them to continue practising. Webb and Doman (2020; 25-26) investigated the effect of flipped classrooms on learner attitudes towards technologically enhanced language learning and found a general development of positive attitudes in learners, with learners reporting that technology helped them master content in English, as well as their digital skills. The learners, university students from Macau, Colombia and the USA, felt that technology helped them stay organised and provided more opportunities to practice English skills, but they also found it more engaging than traditional classes. Tran and Duong (2021; 147) studied 425 non-English majors' attitudes towards autonomous technology-based language learning and found positive attitudes. The participants were highly conscious of and had positive feelings about the role of technology in autonomous language learning; however, they were unsure whether they would actually use technology in language learning themselves, prompting the authors to recommend

that they should be motivated and instructed in how to use technology for language learning.

On the other hand, Afshari et al. (2013; 858) looked at the attitudes of 100 students towards computer-assisted language learning (CALL). As opposed to the previously described studies, the students showed moderate attitudes towards CALL, with perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness directly and significantly affecting their attitudes. The authors emphasise the need to train learners in computer skills and to help foster a more positive attitude. On the teachers' side, Caldwell's study identified that while Japanese teachers see merits in integrating ICT into their teaching practice, they also face many barriers in this process, which may be of a financial, pedagogical or cultural nature (2020; 12). Similar results were obtained by Saidouni and Bahloul (2016; 137-138), with teachers mentioning issues with internet access and large classes, warning that more preparation is needed to integrate technology in the language classroom successfully.

In conclusion, research into technology in the language learning classroom has shown that it can have a very positive effect on numerous aspects of the language learning process. However, studies have also pointed to a variety of potential negative effects and issues. Both researchers and teachers have consistently emphasised that certain conditions need to be fulfilled to fully reap the benefits of technology-assisted language learning. For this reason, it is important to conduct more studies exploring the situation in different tertiary contexts, which is why the present study aims to provide insight into how students at two tertiary institutions in Slovenia and Croatia perceive the use of ICT in their language learning classrooms.

### **3. Methodology**

Despite the abundance of existing studies on the topic, very few have addressed the use of ICT at the tertiary level, and almost none have aimed at including students from two different countries in the Balkan region. Apart from filling this research gap, this study was also initiated in response to the teachers' observation that some students appeared to be experiencing a sense of saturation with these tools. In order to investigate students' attitudes towards the use of ICT in English class, convenience sampling was employed for data collection during the spring term of the academic year 2022/2023. The first group (N=98) consisted of the students enrolled in the English study programme at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia, while the second group (N=35) included the students studying English as part of their Teacher Education programme at the Faculty of Humanities and Social

Sciences of the University of Split in Croatia.

For the purpose of gathering data, an online questionnaire was used as a basic research instrument. The questionnaire is based on the questions and items found in similar research studies (Garcia et al., 2013; Silin and Kwok, 2017; Nagy and Habók, 2018), but it is tailored to pinpoint the use of ICT in English language learning. It is divided into three parts. In the first part the students self-assess their English language knowledge using the CEFR as an international standard (from B1 – Intermediate to C2 – Proficient). The second part measures the students' experience and their attitudes. It contains 23 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale, which examine four dependent variables related to the use of ICT for language learning: general use, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness and students' attitudes (values range from 1 – strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree). Table 1 gives an overview of the four variables, including representative items and their respective Cronbach's Alpha (CA) values. The final part centres around the frequency of using ICT in the classroom, on the one hand, and the frequency of using ICT outside the classroom, on the other (1 – never/rarely, 2 – sometimes, 3 – often/always).

Dependent variable	Reliability statistics (CA)
<b>General use (5 items), e.g.</b> <i>I use ICT as part of my learning process.</i> <i>I cannot study without the use of ICT tools.</i>	0.579
<b>Perceived ease of use (4 items), e.g.</b> <i>It is easy to find English learning resources using ICT.</i> <i>Learning English with the use of ICT is easy.</i>	0.747
<b>Perceived usefulness (7 items), e.g.</b> <i>I find ICT a useful tool when I learn English.</i> <i>ICT helps me to develop English skills.</i>	0.857
<b>Attitudes towards the use of ICT (7 items), e.g.</b> <i>I like the idea of using ICT. (+)</i> <i>Using ICT makes me nervous.(-)</i>	0.823

Table 1. Dependent variables in the second part of the questionnaire.

The quantitative data were further analysed using the statistical package IBM SPSS 22.00, employing descriptive statistics, a t-test for independent samples and a Mann-Whitney U test, to address the following:

1. How do students rate the usefulness of ICT and its ease of use?

2. What is their general attitude towards the use of ICT?
3. To what extent do these attitudes differ among English language students in the two different countries on the one hand, and students of different study programmes, on the other?
4. Which ICT tools do they use and how often?
5. Are there any differences in the use of ICT tools for language learning in the classroom and language learning outside the classroom?

In accordance with these research questions, the following null hypotheses were tested:

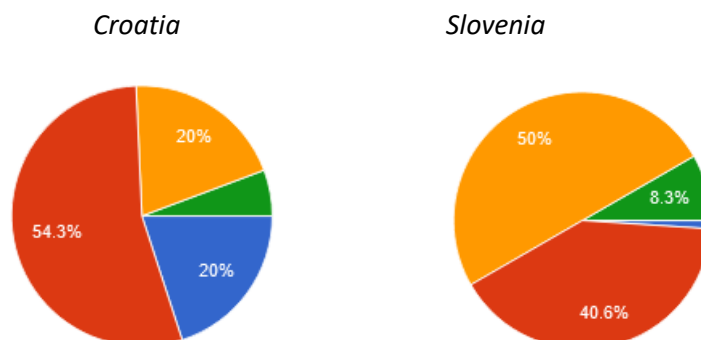
Ho (1): There is no statistically significant difference related to the use of ICT between the two groups of students,

Ho (2): There is no statistically significant difference in the frequency of using ICT tools in the classroom between the two groups of students, and

Ho (3): There is no statistically significant difference in the frequency of using ICT tools outside the classroom between the two groups of students.

#### 4. Findings

Figure 1 shows the students' profiles based on the self-assessment of their language knowledge. As can be seen, the majority of the Croatian students (74.3%) think their English knowledge is at the B2 or C1 level, while the percentage for these two levels is considerably higher for the Slovenian students (90.6%). Given that the latter are English majors, the obtained self-assessment results are to be expected. However, it should be noted that proficiency in English did not play a pivotal role in students' experience with ICT, as these tools can effectively support language learning across all proficiency levels.



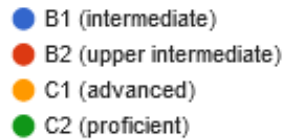


Figure 1. Self-assessment of students' English language knowledge.

Regarding the students' opinions about the importance of ICT tools for language learning, independent-samples t-tests were used to compare the scores for the dependent variables for Croatian and Slovenian students. The findings, summarised in Table 2, indicate that there is no significant statistical difference between the two examined groups in scores for perceived ease of use ( $t=1.018$ ,  $p=0.314$ ), perceived usefulness ( $t=0.910$ ,  $p=0.368$ ) and students' attitudes ( $t=1.493$ ,  $p=0.142$ ).

	COUNTRY	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
generaluse_AVERAGESlovenia	Slovenia	96	3.7062	0.53031	2.377	0.019
	Croatia	35	3.4343	0.69871		
easeofuse_AVERAGE	Slovenia	97	4.0026	0.55726	1.018	0.314
	Croatia	35	3.8500	0.82069		
usefulness_AVERAGE	Slovenia	96	3.9003	0.51659	0.910	0.368
	Croatia	34	3.7563	0.87041		
attitude_AVERAGE	Slovenia	96	3.9777	0.51208	1.493	0.142
	Croatia	35	3.7673	0.77404		

Table 2. Descriptive statistics and t-test results for four variables.

According to the mean results, the students acknowledge the importance of ICT tools, claim that they are easy to use and highlight their usefulness when learning English. In addition, their overall attitude is mainly positive. On the other hand, the t-test showed a significant difference in terms of general use ( $p<0.05$ ,  $p=0.019$ ), because the average scores for two items were higher for the Slovenian students (Table 3), who seem to regard ICT tools as more indispensable for learning. The first null hypothesis is, hence, partially confirmed.

Item	Country	N	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>I use ICT as part of my learning process.</i>	Slovenia	98	4.29	0.642	3.901	0.000
	Croatia	35	3.46	1.197		
<i>I cannot study without the use of ICT tools.</i>	Slovenia	97	3.18	1.061	2.037	0.044
	Croatia	35	2.74	1.120		

Table 3. Statistically significant differences in individual items.

Interestingly enough, after looking into individual items in the questionnaire, the findings also reveal that one third of the students do not solely rely on online tools when studying and state that they can learn without the use of ICT tools. Although belonging to the generation of digital natives, one in ten students admits that interacting with ICT for English language learning does require mental effort and that using these tools for language learning makes them nervous. With regard to the use of ICT in the classroom, both groups have such experience because their teachers (sometimes referred to as digital immigrants) are active users of online tools. However, almost 23% do not agree that ICT enables English language teachers to provide them with more individualised attention.

The two groups were also compared in terms of the frequency of using ICT tools in class with teachers and outside the classroom when they learn on their own. The students could choose how often they access various tools for the purpose of language learning, in particular, social media (SM), YouTube (YT), websites (WS), apps (AP), games (GM), translation tools (TR), online dictionaries (OD) and Moodle (MD). For this purpose, the Mann-Whitney U Test was used because the data are ordinal. Some students also specified their favourite tools for learning, such as Mentimeter, Kahoot, Quizlet, or Grammarly. According to the results of the nonparametric test (Table 4), there is no statistically significant difference between the students from the two countries only in the frequency of accessing YouTube ( $Z=-1.791$ ,  $p=0.073$ ) and websites in class ( $Z=-1.291$ ,  $p=0.197$ ). Both groups often access different websites and watch YouTube videos in language class. It is assumed, based on the nature and dynamics of English classes at the tertiary level, that the teacher engages students by playing a video or showing an educational content online, which then serves as a prompt for further discussion or additional activities.

	SM	YT	WS	AP	GM	TR	OD	MD
Mann - Whitney U	1145.00	1385.00	1490.00	1002.00	1188.00	1068.50	1166.00	1199.00
Z	-4.097	-1.791	-1.291	-4.329	-3.640	-3.484	-3.240	-2.834
p (2-tailed)	0.000	0.073	0.197	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.005

Table 4. The Mann-Whitney U test results for the frequency of using ICT tools in class.

On the other hand, a statistically significant difference was observed for all other ICT tools used in class ( $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the second hypothesis is rejected. Taking a closer look at the percentages, it can be concluded that the non-English majors in Croatia tend to use social media, online translation tools, apps and games more frequently than the English majors in Slovenia. Furthermore, the English majors in Slovenia tend to use Moodle more frequently than the non-English majors in Croatia. This stems directly from the fact that Moodle is widely used at the Faculty of Arts at the University of Ljubljana as an online platform for sharing learning content.

Finally, when it comes to the use of ICT tools outside the classroom, the results differ to a certain extent. As shown in Table 5, the Mann Whitney U test revealed no significant difference in the frequency of using social media ( $Z = -0.851$ ,  $p = 0.395$ ) and YouTube ( $Z = -0.408$ ,  $p = 0.683$ ) between the two groups when they learn on their own, outside the classroom setting. Social media is an integral part in the lives of younger generations, mainly used for entertainment purposes, but also for learning, as was proven here.

	SM	YT	WS	AP	GM	TR	OD	MD
Mann - Whitney U	1565.50	1648.50	1229.00	1166.50	1280.00	1242.50	767.00	1199.00
Z	-0.851	-0.408	-3.047	-2.575	-2.578	-2.388	5.968	-2.943
p (2-tailed)	0.395	0.683	0.002	0.010	0.010	0.017	0.000	0.003

Table 5. The Mann-Whitney U test results for the frequency of using ICT tools outside the classroom.

However, differences between the groups were observed again in the frequency of usage of most ICT tools used as part of their language learning process ( $p < 0.05$ ). This leads to the conclusion that the third hypothesis is also rejected. To illustrate the point, the non-English majors in Croatia tend to use apps, online translation tools and games more often outside the classroom than the English majors in Slovenia. Another significant difference lies in the use of websites, online dictionaries and Moodle, which are accessed more frequently by the English majors in Slovenia.

## 5. Discussion

The present study aims to explore the attitudes of university students at two tertiary institutions in Slovenia and Croatia towards the use of ICT in their language learning classroom. As expected, the students from both groups expressed generally positive attitudes. They were aware of the importance of ICT tools in the language classroom, they found them easy to use and useful for learning English, with no significant differences between the groups. These results are in line with other studies in different tertiary contexts, which reported on students' positive attitudes and their awareness of the potential benefits of ICT for the language learning process (e.g. Al Arif and Handayani, 2022; Liu et al., 2022; Tran and Duong, 2021; Tri and Nguyen, 2014). However, there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups in the scores for general use, with the Slovenian students reporting more frequently that they find ICT an indispensable part of their language learning process. The digitalisation of education is the official policy in both the Republic of Croatia and Slovenia, based on the European Union initiative as elaborated in the Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027)<sup>1</sup>, which has two long-term strategic priorities: 1) to foster the development of high performing digital education ecosystem, and 2) to enhance digital skills and competences for the digital transformation. However, there are many challenges to this process, such as uneven access to technology, the need for additional teacher training, as well as securing data privacy and internet safety for students. According to the findings of the European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, only 54% of people aged 16-74 have at least basic digital skills (2023). The percentage is much higher for the younger population aged 16-24 (71%), however, 34% of students were rated as underachieving in digital skills. For that reason, it could be argued that

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<sup>1</sup> Slovenia: <https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MVI/SDIG/SI-Digital-Education-Action-Plan-EN-web.pdf>

the students in the sample may still not have experienced an education setting where technology is indispensable, which may be why a third (30.1%) stated that they can learn without the use of ICT tools.

Although the students generally reported positive attitudes, it is interesting to note that one in ten stated that interacting with ICT required mental effort and that using ICT for language learning made them nervous. Previous studies have found that a negative effect of the use of ICT in the classroom may be the high cognitive load it brings (Chu, 2014; 341), and the multitasking required by the use of devices in the classroom has also been found to be potentially distracting (Heflin et al., 2017; 92). Some studies also reported on potential negative effects such as physical discomfort (Shadiev and Yang, 2020; 539). Thus, it is not surprising that some of the students in our study also reported on some potentially negative feelings in relation to technology use.

Both groups stated that their language teachers used ICT in their language classes. However, almost a quarter of the students reported that this does not necessarily enable teachers to give them more individualised attention (for example, feedback on individual tasks submitted online or through formative assessment activities delivered digitally). Although one potential benefit of ICT in the language classroom can be seen as its potential for allowing more personalisation, this has not always lived up to expectations (FitzGerald et al., 2018). Effective use of ICT in the classroom and taking advantage of all the benefits it can bring still depends largely on individual teachers – notably their digital competences as well as the time available to them to invest in, for example, providing individualised attention to students using digital tools.

The participants reported on using different digital tools in class and when learning on their own. YouTube and websites were used by both groups of students in the classroom, while there were statistical differences between the reported frequencies for other tools. The Slovenian students, for example, use Moodle, which is not surprising, as it is a widely used platform at their faculty. On the other hand, the Croatian students reported using apps and games more frequently in class, which may stem from the fact that they are studying Teacher Education to become teachers at the primary level, where they work with young children. This prompts their language teachers to resort to these kinds of activities in class more often. Outside the classroom, YouTube and social media were reported by both groups as digital tools used for language learning, which is not surprising given the importance of social media for younger generations. Other studies have also found that university students often use social media for language learning

(e.g., Al Arif, *The Use of Social Media*, 2019b; Slim and Hafedh, 2019), and the potential of different social media apps and sites for language learning has been an important topic given their general availability and popularity with young people (Lin et al., 2016).

Although the results of the present study show the students' perception of ICT use in the language learning classroom is generally positive, some of the results may serve as a reminder that the use of ICT for language learning in tertiary contexts should continuously be reassessed in order to reap the benefits. The application of technology in language learning should never be seen as an end in itself – how it is incorporated should directly stem from the learning goals and the learners' interests and their abilities, but it will also inevitably be affected by the available resources and the institutional policy (Chun et al., 2016; 76). In order to maximise the positive effects, students should be given further explanation of why technology is being applied and how it can help with their learning, as well as guidance on which tools and devices to use effectively (Zou, 2020; 225). In other words, much depends on the teachers themselves and the institutions that they work for. It is important to invest time in preparing students to use ICT tools for language learning efficiently (Shyr and Chen, 2018; 60). However, for this to be possible, it is of crucial importance to make sure that teachers know not only how to use digital tools, but also how to integrate them efficiently in their classes (Li and Ni, 2011; 70). This is not always the case as teachers have reported that they face different barriers when it comes to technology use in the classroom (Caldwell, 2020; Saidouni and Bahloul, 2016). The studies also showed that university teachers need more support and systematic training when it comes to the implementation of ICT in their classes in both Croatia (Müller and Aleksa Varga, 2019; 42-43) and Slovenia (Špur et al., 2020; 674). It is critical that university teachers be able to determine the best possible approach to incorporating technology by evaluating their students' learning goals, the resources they have at their disposal, and the potential ways to assess the effectiveness of their students' use of these resources in achieving the established learning goals (Chun et al., 2016; 76-77). Some other recommendations for teachers might include the use of ICT tools that have been found to facilitate interaction, collaboration and application of newly acquired knowledge in the classroom, such as social media, interactive games and collaborative tools such as *Google Docs*, as well as the use of the flipped classroom model (Zhang and Zou, 2022; 23).

## 6. Conclusion

The use of ICT fosters greater student autonomy, as learners can access resources and engage in activities, thereby extending learning opportunities. This research study once again confirmed the generally positive attitude the students of different study programmes have towards the use of ICT tools for foreign language learning, both inside and outside the classroom setting. Although it was only limited to a smaller sample, the obtained data provide more understanding of the students' experience and learning habits related to the use of different tools. Future research could further investigate the potential of ICT by including students of other study programmes from different countries and could also focus on longitudinal studies to explore the long-term impact of ICT on language proficiency. Moreover, a correlation between their attitudes, be it positive and negative, and their academic outputs could be established. In addition, more focus should be put on the teachers' perspective, especially how they use ICT tools in class and whether the age differences have an impact on their ICT teaching methods (cf. Keržič et al., 2021).

To conclude, this paper highlights the importance of using ICT in language learning in a systematised and organised manner, especially because these tools nowadays present an inevitable part of the language learning process. Nevertheless, a notable finding of this study relates to a surprisingly high number of students who feel intimidated by the overuse of these tools. Therefore, it is essential that their integration in learning be carefully and thoughtfully planned in advance. The responsibility for this should not lie on teachers, but on curriculum developers and educational policymakers. The study's findings underscore the need for increased professional development for teachers in Slovenia and Croatia, who need to be provided with the necessary guidance in the form of practical sessions, workshops and technical support.

Although prevalent in language settings, ICT should not be seen as a sole replacement for face-to-face learning sessions, but as a necessary complement to English classes. Teachers should first consider the diverse comfort levels and technological proficiencies of students to ensure that ICT enhances, rather than hinders, the learning process. The results of this study can help teachers provide a better learning setting and also find more effective ways to help students acquire language skills by integrating these tools into their curriculum, but more importantly, by first acknowledging potential drawbacks and challenges associated with their use. Insights into how students in both countries prefer to learn could be used to create more personalised learning pathways. The

findings on student preferences can guide the development of language curricula that accommodate various learning styles and emphasise autonomous learning practices by giving students the flexibility to learn at their own pace.

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### EINSTELLUNG DER STUDIERENDEN ZUM EINSATZ VON IKT IM ENGLISCHUNTERRICHT IM TERTIÄRBEREICH

Der Einsatz von IKT-Tools wird häufig als nutzbringende und effektive Methode für das Erlernen von Fremdsprachen angesehen. Neben der Bereitstellung von Instrumenten, die den Studierenden helfen können, ihre Sprachkenntnisse zu verbessern, können IKT eingesetzt werden, um sie zu motivieren und ihr Interesse und ihre positive Einstellung zum Sprachlernen zu fördern. Auf der anderen Seite, überwältigt von einer Reihe verfügbarer Lerntools und Apps sowie dem Multitasking, das für eine solche Lernerfahrung erforderlich ist, können einige Studierende sie als ablenkend empfinden, was zu einer geringeren Qualität der produzierten Arbeit führt.

Trotz der Zahl bestehender Studien zu diesem Thema haben sich nur sehr wenige mit dem Einsatz von IKT im Tertiärbereich befasst, und fast keine hat darauf abgezielt, Studierende aus zwei verschiedenen Ländern der Balkanregion einzubeziehen. Daher zieht die vorliegende Studie darauf ab, die Einstellungen von Studierenden an zwei Hochschulen (Universitäten) in Slowenien und Kroatien zum Einsatz von IKT in ihrem Sprachunterricht zu untersuchen. Die Ergebnisse wurden mit Hilfe eines Online-Fragebogens erhoben und mit Hilfe von deskriptiver Statistik und einem t-Test für ungepaarte Stichproben weiter quantitativ analysiert. Den Ergebnissen zufolge erkennt die überwiegende Mehrheit der Studenten und Studentinnen die Bedeutung von IKT-Tools an und hebt deren Nutzen für das Erlernen der englischen Sprache hervor. Ein Unterschied zwischen den Gruppen zeigt sich jedoch in der Häufigkeit der Nutzung und der Art der Online-Tools, die für ihren Sprachlernprozess verwendet werden. Schließlich zeigen die Ergebnisse dieser Studie, dass die Integration von IKT in das Lernen im Voraus sorgfältig geplant werden sollte. Obwohl IKT in sprachlichen Umgebungen weit verbreitet sind, sollten sie nicht als alleiniger Ersatz für Präsenzunterricht angesehen werden, sondern als notwendige Ergänzung zum Englischunterricht. Lehrer sollten zunächst die unterschiedlichen Komfortebenen und technologischen Fähigkeiten der Studierenden berücksichtigen, um sicherzustellen, dass IKT den Lernprozess verbessert und nicht behindert.

**Schlüsselwörter:** Sprachenlernen, Englisch, IKT, Einstellung der Studierenden, Tertiärstufe, Hochschule, Slowenien, Kroatien

## **A SYNTACTIC ERROR ANALYSIS OF EFL ARAB LEARNERS: THE CASE STUDY OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SAUDI ARABIA**

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**Abstract:** Primary school students might find the process of learning syntax confusing and complex presumably due to being unaware of the syntactic errors they make at this early stage. Yet, despite the complexity of such an issue, scant research has been conducted in the Saudi context. Therefore, the present study employs a mixed-method approach to examine the developmental sequences of acquiring syntactic rules and investigate the syntactic errors made by 60 EFL primary school Arab students in a Saudi international school using spoken interviews, written tests, and in-class observations. After analyzing the data quantitatively and qualitatively, it was found that the most common syntactic errors produced by EFL Arab primary school students are related to tense formation, subject-verb agreement, missing articles, conjunctions, pronouns to infinitives, and word order syntactic patterns. Furthermore, verb tense, articles, and copula have been determined as transfer errors. In addition, older children make fewer syntactic errors compared to younger children. Despite the significant results, more samples are needed to make them generalizable.

**Keywords:** Error analysis, syntactic errors, developmental sequences, EFL.

### **1. Introduction**

Studying syntactic errors and examining sequential syntactic development help in reflecting on how students acquire a new language from their perspective and provide data for supporting EFL learners. Language errors refer to deviations from the norms of a language (Larsen-Freeman and Long 262). Toward offering a systematic account of such errors at all linguistic levels, error analysis emerged as a research

method that involves analyzing and identifying the errors L2 learners make as they are learning a new language (Richards and Rodgers 57).

Regarding second language acquisition (SLA), errors can occur when a learner is learning a new language and has not yet fully mastered its rules and conventions (Willis 82). The aim of error analysis is to understand the sources of errors and how they are related to the learner's first language (L1), the L2 being learned, and the learning environment (Gass and Selinker 101-102).

### **1.1. Problem Statement**

EFL Arab primary students make common syntactic errors that vary by age group. More investigation is needed to identify the causes of these errors and develop a comprehensive understanding of the syntactic developmental sequences of EFL Arab students.

### **1.2. Questions of the Study**

The present study seeks to answer two main questions:

1. What are the common syntactic errors produced by EFL primary school Arab students and to what extent do these errors differ across different age groups?
2. What is the sequential syntactic development of EFL primary school Arab students?

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

In answering the study questions, the study aims at

1. identifying the common syntactic errors produced by EFL primary school Arab students.
2. outlining the sequential syntactic development in acquiring syntax.

### **1.4. Significance of the study**

This paper provides an overview of the developmental sequences of EFL acquisition focusing on syntactic errors made by EFL primary school Arab learners who study at an international school in Saudi Arabia. Consequently, researchers and language instructors can gain insights into the developmental sequences of children's language learning and understand their linguistic competence, and therefore they can provide tailored remedies.

## 2.2 Literature Review

### 2.1. SLA and Developmental Sequences

Early approaches to SLA focused on the role of imitation and repetition in language teaching (Skinner 95). These behaviorist approaches viewed language learning as a process of habit formation, in which new language is gained through reinforcement and conditioning. Along with the cognitive revolution in psychology, researchers began to focus on the mental processes involved in language learning. Chomsky (26-58) introduced his concept of the *Language Acquisition Device* that suggested that humans possess an inherent capacity from birth to learn a language and that this ability is governed by a set of rules known as Universal Grammar (UG) (Chomsky 26-58; Chomsky and Berwick 69). For example, if a child is exposed to a language having subject-verb-object word order, he/she would use his/her knowledge of UG to learn this word order and use it to generate syntactically correct sentences in that language. Still, the setting has also a function in determining the method in which language is acquired (Hauser et al. 1574).

The unique process through which individuals acquire L2 is thought to be the developmental sequence of SLA (Dulay and Burt 129-130). Several studies determined that acquisition comes by learning a certain sequence of linguistic aspects (Dulay and Burt 129-130). For example, learners may first acquire basic vocabulary and simple grammatical structures prior to complex grammatical structures and phonological rules (Long 253). Nevertheless, other factors, including learners' native language, their age, their level of motivation, and the type of their linguistic input, play a role in acquisition (Dulay and Burt 129-130).

Lenneberg (525-527) discussed the critical age period for SLA. The hypothesis was further investigated by Johnson and Newport (60-99) and Singleton and Lengyel (76) stressing that children can learn languages better than adults, especially pronunciation and grammar. Other studies focused on the role of input and interaction in second language development. Krashen and Terrell (7-21) recommended the "natural approach", which proposed naturalistic input and interaction, whereby L2, if used for communication rather than explicit instruction, can facilitate SLA in children.

### 2.2. Error Analysis

Error analysis emerged as a way to understand the process of L2 learning and identify areas where learners may need additional instruction or support. Developed by Corder (160-170), it became a research method that involves analyzing and identifying the errors that L2 learners make as they are learning a new language. The basics of the

error analysis paradigm as built by Corder (57-64) could be examined in terms of discrepancies between the learner's interlanguage system and the target language and the cause of the errors, whether linguistic, pragmatic, or psycholinguistic.

Schumann (391-408) recommended that studying L2 learners' errors might yield dynamic insights into the nature of linguistic acquisition and the origins of interlanguage errors, suggesting that errors committed by L2 learners might be seen as evidence where learners strive to simplify and adapt the target language to their own linguistic and cultural background. Furthermore, Littlewood (21) linked language acquisition strategies and error analysis arguing that the emphasis on errors should be shifted from identification and rectification to a more communicative approach. By this, errors shall be viewed as chances for knowledge and progress rather than being addressed as drawbacks (Littlewood 21). This was supported by Dörnyei (117-135) who claimed that by analyzing errors, researchers can identify areas where additional instruction may be needed.

In other words, error analysis is used to analyze the developmental sequences of children's language learning, specifically in terms of intralingual developmental errors, that is, errors that occur when a learner has difficulty with the language itself away from the influence of their L1 or other external factors. Intralingual errors can be include overgeneralization, oversimplification, communication-based errors, induced errors (errors caused by negative feedback or correction), analogical errors (errors based on similarity to familiar words or structures), ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, and false hypotheses (errors based on incorrect assumptions about the language) (Puspita 12-18).

It is worth noting the difference between an error and a mistake. An error refers to a deviation from the norms of a language (Larsen-Freeman and Long 262) (a competence issue). Conversely, a mistake is an unintentional deviation from the norms of a language (Spada and Lightbown ch. 2). Mistakes occur in language performance, but they are less systematic and more random than errors (Gass and Selinker 102). Mistakes are often corrected quickly and do not reflect a lack of knowledge or understanding of the language (Richards and Rodgers 57).

### **2.3. Previous Studies**

Studies reported that errors arise due to several reasons, including differences in grammar between L1 and L2, and lack of knowledge in L2, making students not recognize the production of an error (Dinamika and Hanafiah 120-129). Furthermore, it has been found that types of errors

are influenced by age; for example, students over 13 years old are less likely to make grammatical errors because they learn grammar explicitly. On the contrary, children below 13 years old learn grammar implicitly. Linguistic research studying brain function highlights that while children have an intrinsic sensitivity to deep language elements and may understand prosodies, their capacity to replicate and generate syntax in their own speech may be limited throughout the early stages of language development. The age factor plays a critical role in understanding a language, and adults may face weaknesses in comprehending a second language if developmental errors are not taken into account in the first place (Hussain 242-244).

According to Vakili and Ebadi (345-380), the causes of errors can be classified into three categories: developmental, transfer, and interference errors. Developmental errors are those that reflect the learner's level of proficiency in the target language and they are typically made by fresh learners. Transfer errors occur when the learner uses the rules and structures of their L1 to produce the target language. Interference errors happen when the learner uses the rules of their L1 to produce the target language (Bialystok et al. 240-250).

Roquet (149-231) indicated that the acquisition of explicit knowledge would deteriorate if the learner was not ready in terms of his developmental stage to grasp it or if there was a lack of subsequent communicative exposure and practice. In her study, error patterns made by learners were analyzed, at different stages of language acquisition. It was found that verb-related errors were more common among lower-level learners, while noun-related errors were more common among advanced-level learners. It was noted also that noun-related errors in written production do not disappear easily over time.

Sompong (109-127) indicated that it is an obligation to understand the nature, patterns, and frequency of the errors conducted in order to examine the causes of those errors systematically. He indicated that such practices will aid the process of SLA and support students' and teachers' practices since errors represent essential material in progress, and therefore it would be valuable to study those errors and analyze them scientifically. Furthermore, Sompong (109-127) emphasized the need to classify errors for having deeper analysis. The classification process might include the addition of specific lexis, omission, disordering, and so on.

Eckstein et al. (1-11) studied the writing of students in the Writing Program Administration's (WPA) First Year Composition Outcomes Statement (FYC). Writing samples from L1 and L2 students were analyzed for language errors, measuring lexical and syntactic

complexity. Findings showed that while there are similarities between L1 and L2 students, L2 students had different observed and perceived language needs, including differences in linguistic accuracy, lexical diversity, and language-related anxiety – which are directly linked to intralinguistic errors; for instance, L2 writers wrote fewer words and repeated words frequently. Although L1 students made some mistakes, they proved more confident in their writing, without major grammatical or word order errors.

Sattar et al. (521-535) examined the syntactical errors made by Pakistani secondary school students in the English language. The errors identified were subject-verb agreement errors, word form errors, word order errors, missing objects, run-on sentences, orthographic errors, fragments, punctuation errors, article errors, preposition errors, and conjunction errors. The results of the study showed that punctuation errors accounted for 50% of all errors. Run-on sentences, missing objects, and fragments accounted for only 4% of all errors. Additionally, both interlanguage and intralanguage factors contributed to the syntactical errors made by the students although intralanguage errors were more prevalent.

Darus and Subramaniam (483-495) tried to identify why Chinese students in Malaysia made errors specifically in written English, given that they study three languages in school (Malay, Chinese, and English). It was found that the most common errors made were related to mechanics of writing, tenses, prepositions, and subject-verb agreement. These errors were attributed to the interference of their L1 and a lack of understanding of English grammatical rules. These factors can be classified as interlingual, intralingual, and developmental errors. The students' reliance on their L1, exposure to Malay, and confusion between the rules of these languages and English contributed to the errors in their writing.

Spada and Lightbown (1-22) examined the acquisition of English by francophone children aged 11-12 years (n=150). Oral and written experimentation were used in which the youngsters were pre-tested using several criteria to identify their developmental level of English question acquisition. Over two weeks, the children took part in classroom activities that exposed them to hundreds of English questions. Then, the children were re-tested using the same measures. While students at stage 3 did not perform better in their use of questions in oral production than those at stage 2, all students had some understanding of questions at stages 4 and 5. Further investigation found that students recognized higher-level questions with subject and verb inversion when the subject was a pronoun, but not when the

subject was a noun. This trend is consistent with their native language, French. Given that, Spada and Lightbown (1-22) concluded that L2 acquisition is influenced by a combination of developmental factors as well as the learner's L1 interference.

Likewise, Mahmoodzadeh (734-740) examined the errors produced by intermediate-level Iranian EFL learners due to cross-linguistic influences between their native language (Persian) and second language (English). The study's findings revealed that Iranian EFL learners commonly made errors in the incorrect and repetitive use of prepositions while translating from Persian to English, rather than errors in preposition omission. This, according to Asma (32-54), is an overgeneralization of L2 rules which are affected by L1, and not a developmental error, especially since the study was for adult students whose brains lack the neuroplasticity that children have (Spada and Lightbown 1-22).

Equally important, there have been several studies that have studied the syntactic errors made by Saudi EFL learners. Alahmadi (84-98) analyzed grammatical errors for a sample of 30 fresh Saudi students at the University of Tabuk in Saudi Arabia. The study involved interviews with the participants, during which nine different types of errors were identified and analyzed. Those included the misuse of verb tense, the misuse of articles, the misuse of singulars and plurals, the misuse of prepositions, sentences without verbs, sentences with wrong pronouns, errors with third-person pronouns, and the misuse of regular and irregular verbs. The study concluded that the errors made by participants were caused by L1 interference, while fewer errors were caused by intralingual or other factors.

Al-Shurfa (753135) targeted males and females (18 to 44 years old) who speak English as a second language. Results showed that the misuse of articles is random among speakers. They frequently omitted indefinite articles and repeated the definite article *the* before nouns. She clarified that Saudi English speakers sometimes employ plural forms differently, either deleting the plural marker *s* or adding it to single nouns. Possessive markers are commonly utilized; however, there are notable exceptions. Pronoun use varies, with object pronouns being used instead of possessive pronouns and subject pronouns being substituted (Al-Shurfa 753135).

Khasawneh (31-41) conducted interviews and writing assessment for King Fahd University students, highlighting that participants expressed difficulties with organizing paragraphs, employing suitable links and transitions, and sustaining writing flow. Furthermore, word-choice selection and a lack of grammatical expertise were noted as

typical writing obstacles. Interestingly, students had less trouble defining the primary elements of their writing projects, showing that they knew where to start but had difficulty writing (Khasawneh 31-41).

Most of the available studies on error analysis in the Saudi context are geared toward university or high school students, which leaves a major research gap. In order to figure out the mechanisms and factors associated with children learning English in primary schools in Saudi Arabia, this study targets students aged 6-12.

### **3. Methodology**

Corder (57-64) outlines the following five steps for analyzing student errors: selection, identification, classification, explanation, and evaluation. Corder's method is well-suited for this study because it is a systematic approach that looks at errors as a source of information about the learning process, rather than just mistakes that need to be corrected.

#### **3.1. Research Design**

Researchers utilized a cross-sectional mixed-methods approach to investigate participants' transfer and developmental errors. Data were collected at a single point in time and later analyzed to maintain objectivity, avoiding interference with participants to prevent bias during data collection.

#### **3.2. Participants**

60 EFL male and female students, aged 6-12, were selected from an international primary school in Riyadh. The students were randomly divided into six groups based on their age (10 in each). Non-Arabs were excluded.

#### **3.3. Instruments**

This research employed classroom observation after securing consent from the school administration to observe student spoken interactions with teachers. The syntactic errors in their spoken English were recorded to analyze their types and causes. In this first step, the notes were qualitative in nature, and then selected students were invited to an interview in which the researcher asked them verbally about their specific interests (see Appendix A). As a final step, students were required to complete a writing test on specific topics (see Appendix B). The students were divided into six categories based on age group. Questions for the interview and writing test were created in a

questionnaire form as each student was anonymously labeled, along with his/her age group.

Test results were used to evaluate the developmental sequence of students' errors. Furthermore, the errors were classified per type to align the type of error made versus the age group to unveil correlations between error types and age.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

Since the present study uses both qualitative and quantitative methods, it is essential to demonstrate how data was gathered quantitatively through verbal interviews and written tests. Each interview and test was evaluated individually to identify syntactic errors. Students' gender and nationality were also labeled beside each student in an Excel sheet. Then, the errors were categorized into columns using Microsoft Excel (copula, subject-verb agreement, tense, etc.). Moreover, data for each grade were put in separate Excel sheets (Grade 1 Excel sheet, Grade 2 Excel sheet, etc.). Therefore, there were six Excel sheets for interviews and six Excel sheets for tests. If the student commits a tense syntactic error, for example, it is considered as 1. If he commits two tense errors, they are counted as 2. If he commits no tense errors, it is counted as 0. After collecting and labelling all types of errors, the total number of each error type was calculated and put in columns across the six grades in a new Excel sheet. This is to show the categories of the errors made in each grade.

## 4. Findings and Discussion

The findings of the study will be interpreted analytically along with answering the research questions:

1. What are the common syntactic errors produced by EFL primary school Arab students and to what extent do these errors differ across different age groups?
2. What is the sequential syntactic development of EFL primary school Arab students?

Analyzing interview transcripts, *Table 1* shows the common types of syntactic errors made by EFL primary school Arab students. The errors are categorized in descending order from the most frequent to the least frequent. As shown in the table, G1 students made 12 tense errors, which is the highest error rate. This significant rate suggests that G1 students have the greatest difficulty understanding and using English verb tenses appropriately. One practical justification of this finding is students' lack of language proficiency, as they are still in the early stages of learning English. The table also shows that there are 7 errors made by

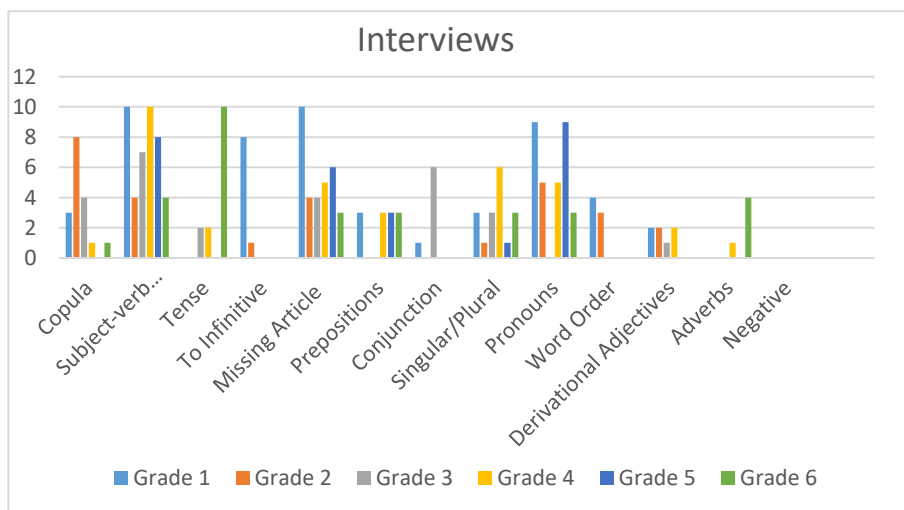
G3 students related to subject-verb agreement, 7 by G1 students related to missing articles, 7 by G3 students related to conjunctions, and 7 by G5 students related to pronouns.

As G1 students are in the earlier stages of learning English, they may lack the ability to comprehend complex syntactic aspects such as verb tenses. Additionally, G3 students may be struggling with subject-verb agreement, G1 students with missing articles, G3 with conjunctions, and G5 with pronouns. This indicates that as students progress through their English learning journey, they gain more understanding of the language, but simultaneously they come across different challenges. The least prevalent error committed is found with to-infinitive (1 error made by G5 students) and word order (1 error made by G1 students).

Table 1: Syntactic Errors according to Grade

	Copula	-verb Agre	Tense	To Infinitive	issing Artic	reposition	onjunction	ingular/Plur	Pronouns	Word Order	etional Adje	Adverbs	Negative
Grade 1	0	0	12	0	7	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Grade 2	1	2	7	0	5	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Grade 3	4	7	1	0	4	0	7	3	0	0	1	0	0
Grade 4	1	4	1	0	2	2	0	4	1	0	3	0	0
Grade 5	3	4	0	1	2	0	0	3	7	0	1	2	0
Grade 6	1	5	1	0	4	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	3

Figure 1: Common Types of Syntactic Errors and Grade Variation (Interview Transcripts)



Student errors were most commonly associated with tenses (12 errors in Grade 1), which is likely because tenses represent a more complex area of grammar. The errors in verb tenses could also be attributed to the use of incorrect forms of verbs or incorrect conjugations of verbs. Figure 1 also shows a decrease in the number of errors associated with tenses as the student's grade level increases. In G6, there was only one error associated with tenses. This indicates that students get more proficient in their understanding of tenses as their grade level increases. Additionally, the most common errors include subject-verb agreement (7 errors made by G3 students), missing articles (7 errors made by G1 students), conjunctions (7 errors made by G3 students), and pronouns (7 errors made by G5).

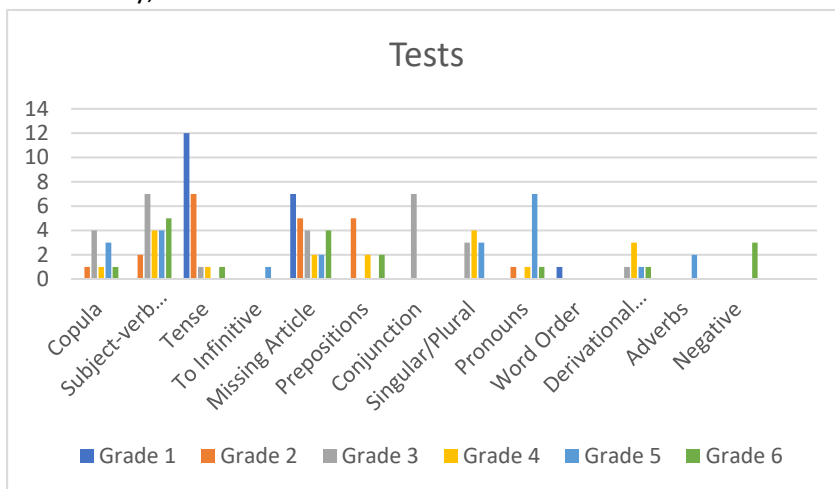
Combining all grade data showed that subject-verb agreement errors were the most common, occurring 43 times, making up 19.91% of the total errors. Article errors occurred 22 times, making up 10.19% of the errors. Pronoun errors were the third most common, with a total of 31 occurrences, accounting for 14.35% of the errors. Developmental errors play a major role in L2 acquisition among children; 25% of all the errors made were from Grade 1 students, and all remaining distributions did not go beyond 17% per grade.

Several studies emphasized that younger learners tend to display distinct error patterns compared to older learners (Dulay 26-29). According to Singleton and Lengyel (2-5), when it comes to developmental abnormalities in children, age becomes an important aspect. Younger children are more likely to make errors as they learn and internalize the rules of their native language. These are sometimes referred to as developmental errors since they are common during the natural language acquisition process. However, it has been observed that some errors exhibited by young learners resemble "transfer errors," akin to those made by adults. The current analysis of syntactic errors across different grade levels unveiled a distinct pattern of language interference from Arabic, the students' native language, to English, which they are acquiring as a foreign language. This interference is evident in the frequent occurrence of errors related to verb tenses, articles and copula. In other words, these errors appear less on the chart that is demonstrated in figure (1). This indicates that students make these errors less as they grow, which is presumably caused by the assumption that they are less susceptible to transfer errors because their brains are developing as they grow, and they are more aware of the error they used to do. This may sprout from the assumption of (Dulay and Burt 4) that language is refined through positive

reinforcement for correct structures and correction of incorrect structures.

Figure 2: Common Types of Syntactic Errors and Grade Variation (Writing Test)

Notably, there is also a remarkable difference between different



age groups and grades. Based on the tests, it can be concluded that the main syntactic errors vary among grades: G1 12 errors, G2 7 errors, G3 1 error, G4 1 error, G5 0 errors, and G6 1 error. The number of syntactic errors related to missing articles varies among grades: G1 7 errors, G2 5 errors, G3 4 errors, G4 2 errors, G5 2 errors, and G6 4 errors. This variation casts light on the complex nature of syntactic errors committed by ESL Arab primary school students. The exact reasons for such a variation in syntactic errors at different ages are vital to understanding and teaching. This finding confirms Sompong's claim that error analysis is essential in teaching EFL as it "can reveal the sources of these errors and the causes of their frequent occurrence" (Sompong 110). Similarly, Farooq and Wahid (336-348) found that syntactic errors can be caused by a variety of factors, including interference with the first language, lack of knowledge of basic grammatical rules, a lack of awareness of parts of speech, inappropriate use of dictionaries, and overgeneralization.

Al-Sofi (2) argued that the main reasons behind syntactic errors are "rooted in the students' interlingual (first language interference) and intralingual (overgeneralization, inadequate knowledge of second language rules, and inappropriate application of such rules) factors". Drawing on their findings, it is evident that students fail to accurately apply grammar rules due to inter- and intra-lingual errors.

Furthermore, the data depicted in Table 1 and Figure 1 indicate that tense errors represent the highest prevalence among Grade 1 students, with a noticeable decrease as students advance to higher grade levels. Sabbah (9) states that one of the main reasons why students tend to incorrectly synthesize tenses in English is that the students formulate their expressions based on the closest they have in the Arabic tenses. According to Sabbah (9), English has multiple tenses compared to Arabic that only has two tenses. These are the perfect tense and the imperfect tense. As a result, it is safe to assume that the students reshape what they want to express in English to fit in one of the either two tenses in Arabic, which causes the tense-related errors they make (Sabbah 2).

The qualitative analysis of the interview transcripts would offer a more in-depth analysis of the nature of these errors.

#### 4.1. Subject-Verb Agreement

The prevalence of subject-verb agreement errors among students was evident, even in simple sentences. It appears that the students may lack awareness of the necessity for the subject and verb to be in agreement. Despite prior exposure to this grammar rule in their earlier education, they continue to encounter difficulties when it comes to correctly applying subject-verb agreement in their sentences (Nurjanah 23). Examples include:

- Grade 3 Student: Hares *stays* alert, *runs* 4 miles per hour. Bears *runs* 30 miles per hour
- Grade 2 Student: My dad *want* me to be a doctor
- Grade 6 Student: I love my brother and he *love* me

Nurjanah (23) suggests that one main theory behind subject-verb agreement errors is intra-lingual errors. These errors occur when learners, due to incomplete mastery of the target language, employ two tense markers simultaneously in a sentence (Nurjanah 25). Furthermore, Zawiszewski et al. (601-626) explained the theory behind subject-verb agreement errors as part of the Phi-features. It was stated that the person (first, second, third) and number (single, multiple) features of nouns, pronouns, and verbs in a language are indicated by Phi-features. These characteristics are critical in determining agreement and referential linkages within a phrase. The phi-features of a noun or pronoun may be seen in verb agreement when the verb form changes to fit the subject's person and number. In the sentence *He walks*, for example, the verb *walks* agrees with the third-person singular subject *he*. In the sentence *They walk*, for example, the verb *walk* agrees with the third-person plural subject *they* (Zawiszewski et al. 601-626).

#### 4.2. Pronouns

Pronoun errors were seen as recurring in all grades. The children's inadequate ability to create a clear relationship between pronouns and their antecedents is a substantial contributor to these errors. Pronouns, being abstract in nature, often require learners to understand and establish connections between the pronoun and the word or phrase it refers to. However, due to their cognitive and linguistic development, children may struggle to make these connections accurately. Because abstract terms, such as pronouns, lack a real and tactile representation, children struggle to understand their referential meaning (Mahfoudhi 91-100).

This is backed up by Chomsky's binding theory. The binding theory is a linguistic framework within the field of syntax that aims to describe and explain how pronouns and other referring expressions are bound or connected to antecedents within a sentence (Chomsky 1982 4-10). Children's capacity to interpret and create pronouns is impacted by their cognitive and linguistic development (Friederici 1357). According to the binding hypothesis, these areas are critical in understanding and resolving pronoun references (Chomsky 1982 4-10).

#### 4.3. Other Significant Findings

With respect to the number of students encountering the same error type, pronoun errors were more common in lower grades than in higher grades, while subject-verb agreement was the opposite.

Article errors were distributed equally among students, but in total around 12% of all the students made such errors; examples include the following:

- Grade 5 Student: *I like to be doctor*
- Grade 3 Student: *dog love food*
- Grade 1 Student: *I want to be football play*

Article errors, particularly omissions, are recurrent across all grades as shown in Figure 2. This is due to the fact that the Arabic Language lacks indefinite articles since definite prefixes express indefiniteness. This justifies the omission error that younger students committed, as shown in figure 2. Furthermore, it is essential to point out that the Arabic Article System structure leads the students to, unintentionally, drop /a/ and /an/, according to Swan and Smith (cited in Al Qadi 2).

Copula errors were noted in which students mainly omit copulations due to the fact that the use of the copula 'to be' in present simple statements, particularly noted in younger learners, can be attributed to the structural absence of such elements in Arabic syntax. In Arabic, the copula is often implied and not explicitly stated in present

tense, which leads Arab learners to omit it in English sentences. This specific error decreases with age and grade, indicating a learning curve influenced by increased exposure to English language norms and practices. Muftah (7) confirms that the acquisition challenges of the English copula 'be' by adult L1 Arabic speakers arise from the syntactic structures of Arabic, leading to frequent copula omission (Muftah 7).

Another significant finding was noted with Grade 6 students: the WH-structure error; for instance, a student mentioned the following statement:

When I didn't know what I *make* I *drawing*. I love Egypt because my mom go there to *take* the PhD. Lutken (34-47) examined this error concluding that

*immature processing mechanisms* as it was called, which means the planning and memory or speaking or comprehension of a language, result in such errors. The study agrees with the current discussion that students in this age while acquiring the language will make errors showing asymmetry in performance.

#### 4.4. Analyzing Data Collected from the Observations

The class observation revealed that G1 students used simple sentences, focusing on present tense only, for example, *I like to swimming*. Highlighting the simplification process discussed earlier, Grade 2 students repeated several errors, including the composition of sentences, past, present, and future tenses, subject-verb agreement, using wrong pronouns for nouns, difficulty in differentiating between he/she and when to use each, and article errors, *mainly missing articles* - done by both male and female students. This finding supports the binding theory and the cognitive abilities of students in this stage. G2 is mainly a channel from the primary development stage in Grade 1 to advanced development.

Tense issues were clear with Grades 3 and 4, in addition to irregular sentences; examples include *I see the moon too yesterday*. Grade 5 students showed a good level of fluency but made errors related to advanced grammar like present perfect and past participle. Examples include the following: *I have study yesterday*. Grade 6 students made fewer errors with respect to the rest; this may be better seen as development for the student's level of proficiency.

#### 5. Conclusion and Limitation

The analysis of syntactic errors sheds light on how language develops in a learners' brain. As a sequential process, the development of the human cognitive system goes through several stages, and each

stage caters to the development of independent areas of language, from articulation to discourse. Given this understanding, the present paper explored the common syntactic errors produced by EFL primary school Arab students and their developmental sequences. Findings showed that the most common syntactic errors produced include tense formation, subject-verb agreement, missing articles, conjunctions, pronouns to-infinitive, and word order. In addition to age-related influences, the results of this analysis validate the impact of the structure of the Arabic language on the syntactic development of primary Arab learners of English as a foreign language. This influence is evident in areas such as tense usage, article omission, and copula usage. The study provided a comprehensive analysis of syntactic structure acquisition among children aged 6-12. It would be beneficial to include a larger and more diverse sample of children and adults belonging to different age groups to further improve the accuracy of the findings.

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### **ANALYSE SYNTAXIQUE DES ERREURS DES APPRENANTS ARABES D'EFL: LE CAS DES ÉLÈVES SAOUDIENS AUX ÉCOLES PRIMAIRES EN ARABIE SAOUDITE.**

Pour les élèves du cycle primaire, le processus de l'apprentissage des structures syntaxique paraît confusionnel et complexe; c'est à cause de leur inconscience des erreurs syntaxiques qu'ils commettent à cette période très tôt. Malgré la difficulté de cette question de recherche, les études qui en traitent sont rares au contexte saoudien. C'est pourquoi, notre recherche adopte une méthodologie éclectique en vue d'examiner la hiérarchie synchronique à l'acquisition des règles de la structure syntaxique et de déterminer les erreurs syntaxiques commises par 60 élèves arabes d'EFL dans une des écoles saoudiennes internationales. Pour ce faire, on a recours à ces procédés: les interviews, les tests écrits et l'observation en classe. L'analyse quantitative et qualitative des données a montré que la plupart des erreurs des structures syntaxiques commises par les élèves d'EFL au cycle primaire portent sur la formation des temps verbaux, la concordance entre le sujet et le verbe, l'omission des déterminants, des conjonctions, des pronoms, du mode infinitival et des types de structures syntaxiques des phrases. En plus, on a constaté que les enfants les plus âgés commettent moins d'erreurs que les enfants les jeunes.

En un mot, les résultats de cette recherche sont significatifs cependant on a besoin d'autres études pour pouvoir les généraliser.

**Mots clés:** Analyse des erreurs, erreurs des structures syntaxiques, hiérarchie synchronique, EFL (anglais langue étrangère).



***Reviews***

***RECENZIJE***



## EIN AKTUELLER SAMMELBAND ZUR ETHNOLINGUISTIK, ONOMASTIK UND ETYMOLOGIE

ЭТНОЛИНГВИСТИКА. ОНОМАСТИКА. ЭТИМОЛОГИЯ: МАТЕРИАЛЫ V МЕЖДУНАР. НАУЧ. КОНФ. ЕКАТЕРИНБУРГ, 7–11 СЕНТЯБРЯ 2022 Г. УРАЛЬСКИЙ ФЕДЕРАЛЬНЫЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ, ИНСТИТУТ РУССКОГО ЯЗЫКА ИМ. В. В. ВИНОГРАДОВА РАН, ИНСТИТУТ СЛАВЯНОВЕДЕНИЯ РАН. РЕДКОЛ.: Е. Л. БЕРЕЗОВИЧ, О. Д. СУРИКОВА (ОТВ. РЕД.) И ДР. — ЕКАТЕРИНБУРГ: ИЗД-ВО УРАЛ. УН-ТА, 2022. — 292 с. — ISBN 978- 5-7996-3508-4.

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Review

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Der vorliegende Sammelband ist den Themen Ethnolinguistik, Onomastik und Etymologie der slavischen Sprachen gewidmet. Er fasst die Ergebnisse der internationalen wissenschaftlichen Konferenz zusammen, die im September 2022 an der Uralischen Föderalen Universität in Jekaterinburg stattfand. Bereits bei einem kurzen Blick in das Inhaltsverzeichnis wird deutlich, dass es sich um eine Publikation mit großem Potenzial für die Soziolinguistik und die Semiotik handelt. Zweifellos werden Themen behandelt, die verschiedene philologische Disziplinen vereinen und ethnolinguistische Aspekte aus der Sicht der Semantik und Semiotik mit kulturwissenschaftlichen Fragen verbinden. Anhand von Beispielen aus mehreren Sprachräumen, z.B. aus dem russischen und dem serbischen, wird hervorgehoben, dass multiple Zugänge zu einem komplexen Thema gewählt werden.

In unserer Rezension werden wir nicht alle Einzelbeiträge im Detail kritisch besprechen, sondern uns auf einige Beispiele konzentrieren, die wir besonders plakativ erachten. Auf 292 Seiten zeigen nämlich Autoren aus verschiedenen Ländern in der für russische Sammelwerke recht üblichen Kürze moderne theoretische Ansätze zur Erforschung der slavischen Sprachen und ihrer kulturellen Semiotik auf. Es wird u.a. beschrieben, wie man sich diesem letztgenannten Phänomen aus der Sicht der Sprachkontaktforschung, der Sprachgeschichte und der Onomastik nähern kann. So ergründen E. L. Berezovi und E. É. Ivanova, wie sich die Gebirgsmythonymie des Urals auf der Grundlage von

linguistischem Material rekonstruieren lässt. Dabei geht es um die Benennung von übernatürlichen Wesen, die nach überliefertem Volksglauben die Reichtümer des Untergrundes bewachen und deren Verarbeitung fördern oder aber behindern können. Die russische Gebirgsmythonymie wurde insbesondere von Volkskundlern untersucht, aber der sprachliche Aspekt wurde dabei nur selten berücksichtigt (S. 18), so dass es sich hier um ein dezidiert neues Forschungsgebiet handelt, welches zudem ergiebige semiotische Zugänge ermöglicht.

Ein weiterer wichtiger Punkt in diesem Werk ist die Berücksichtigung der Dialektologie. So widmen sich beispielsweise einige Studien den Besonderheiten der Benennung seltener Pflanzen, Tiere oder Gegenstände. P. V. Gaidamaško erläutert die Bezeichnungen, die das Geißblatt in der russischen Umgangssprache am oberen Verlauf des Flusses Kama und seiner näheren Umgebung erfährt (S. 72-78). Zudem beschreibt A. V. Gura, wie der Vorgang des Kitzelns in slavischen Sprachen und Dialekten kontrastiv verbalisiert wird (S. 84-92). Eine Besonderheit sollte dabei jedoch unbedingt beachtet werden, denn es ist bekannt, dass in der Erforschung einiger slawischer Sprachen eine sehr starke Betonung dialektaler Erscheinungen und ihrer phonetischen, lexikalischen und geographischen Spezifika vorzufinden ist. Davon zeugen etliche wissenschaftliche Arbeiten, aber wir müssen diese Gegebenheiten noch weiterdenken, sogar soweit, dass diese dialektalen Marker manchmal in Debatten über den Sprachstatus eingeflochten werden können und somit nicht nur aus dialektaler Sicht, sondern auch aus sprachplanerischer Perspektive an Relevanz gewinnen (siehe dazu etwa in den einschlägigen Studien von Henzelmann 2016 oder Henzelmann 2017). Weiterhin wissen wir, dass Dialekte auch grenzüberschreitend gesprochen und in den jeweiligen Staaten recht unterschiedlich bewertet werden (vgl. dazu in einem Aufsatz von Henzelmann/Mitrinov 2020), und es ist auch bekannt, dass eine sprachpolitische oder sprachdidaktische Perspektive in die Problematik eingeflochten werden kann (dazu verweisen wir auf Lisek 2021). Es ist also unbedingt zu erwähnen, dass die hier untersuchte Thematik nicht im luftleeren Raum schwebt und sich auch nicht auf die Beschreibung interessanter Normabweichungen beschränken kann, sondern in einem sehr verschachtelten Konstrukt der Zusammenhänge steht, die traditionell in der Dialektologie, der Soziolinguistik, der Politikwissenschaft und der Kultursemiotik zum Tragen kommen. Ein weiteres wichtiges Thema in den Abhandlungen ist die eng damit umwobene Untersuchung von Sprachvariation. So verweist T. N. Dmitrieva in ihrem Artikel auf die Forschungstradition, die sich in der Sowjetunion seit den 1950er Jahren entwickelte und wichtige Daten zu

Dialekten hervorgebracht hat. Die Autorin nennt exemplarisch die Studien zur Dialektologie von A. K. Matveev im nördlichen Uralgebirge, die wahrscheinlich die letzten Aufzeichnungen über einen heute nicht mehr gesprochenen lokalen Dialekt darstellen (S. 102). An dieser Stelle sollte noch ergänzend erwähnt werden, dass die Akademie der Wissenschaften in Moskau zu dieser Zeit sehr produktiv war und Expeditionen und Dokumentationen von Sprachen in der gesamten Sowjetunion durchführte. Die daraus resultierenden Materialien sind aus sprachwissenschaftlicher, anthropologischer und semiotischer Sicht hochinteressant, da sie Aufschluss über bestimmte Bedeutungsmuster geben, die einzelne Dialektsprecher bestimmten Lexika zuordnen.

Neben den insgesamt dominierenden Dialekterscheinungen, die in der Publikation analysiert werden, wie etwa auch die nordwestlichen Dialekte in Weißrussland (vgl. bei M. M. Kondratenko, S. 129-133), wird aber ebenso einem anderen Bereich besondere Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt, nämlich der Frage, wie eine Person Wertvorstellungen semiotisiert und wie dies in verschiedenen Lebensabschnitten geschieht. Zu diesem Zweck führten S. S. Ristić und I. V. Lazić-Konjik eine Umfrage in Serbien durch und werteten die Ergebnisse in Bezug auf verschiedene Altersgruppen aus. Sie sammelten insgesamt 290 Aussagen über Werte im Kontext der serbischen Sprachkultur, unter denen Konzepte wie die „Familie“ eine besonders prägnante Rolle spielen (S. 213). Dies zeigt, wie wichtig Konzeptualisierungen (nicht nur) in slavischen Sprachen in Kulturen sein können, denn es ist bekannt, dass ebendiese Vorstellung einer „Familie“ auch in der russischen, polnischen und anderen Kulturen ein sehr wertgeschätztes, konservatives und traditionell wichtiges Symbol markiert. Daher ist es verständlich, dass zahlreiche Konnotationen mit ihm in Verbindung stehen, die in der serbischen Sprachkultur aktiviert werden.

Abschließend möchten wir noch kurz auf den Artikel von S. M. Tolstaja mit dem Titel „Folkloristische Texte als linguistische Quelle“ (S. 249-255) verweisen. Es ist bekannt, dass insbesondere die Folklore ein wertvolles Feld für die Untersuchung sprachlicher, kultursemiotischer und historischer Probleme darstellt. In diesem Zusammenhang ist es wichtig, genau diese hier thematisierte Textgattung zu analysieren, und die Autorin zeigt überzeugend auf, welche Ansätze dabei genutzt werden können. Gleichermäßen ist anzumerken, dass dieses Feld noch etliche Nischen für künftige Ausarbeitungen bereitstellt, so beispielsweise die Semiotisierung mündlich tradiert Folklore oder Geschichte.

Zusammenfassend lässt sich nun sagen, dass sich das Sammelwerk vor allem mit sprachwissenschaftlichen Fragestellungen aus verschiedenen Disziplinen beschäftigt. In zahlreichen Beiträgen erfahren

wir mehr über die historische Entwicklung der slawischen Sprachen und die damit zusammenhängende Interpretation kultursemiotischer Konzepte. Seltene, wenig beachtete Dialekte werden dokumentiert, und auch die Untersuchung etymologischer Merkmale spielt in diesem Buch eine wichtige Rolle. Wir können daher sagen, dass es sich um eine bedeutende Publikation handelt, die für einen breiten Leserkreis angelegt ist und insbesondere für Slavisten, Philologen und Semiotiker wertvolle Impulse liefert, wenngleich eine Bündelung nach inhaltlichen Kriterien sicher günstiger gewesen wäre als eine rein alphabetische Aneinanderreihung der Aufsätze.

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