

**Organizadora**

Vivian Bernardes Margutti

## **Academic Writing**



Belo Horizonte

FALE/UFMG

2013

**Diretor da Faculdade de Letras**

Luiz Francisco Dias

**Vice-Diretora**

Sandra Maria Gualberto Braga Bianchet

**Comissão editorial**

Eliana Lourenço de Lima Reis

Elisa Amorim Vieira

Fábio Bonfim Duarte

Lucia Castello Branco

Maria Cândida Trindade Costa de Seabra

Maria Inês de Almeida

Sônia Queiroz

**Capa e projeto gráfico**

Glória Campos

Mangá – Ilustração e Design Gráfico

**Preparação de originais**

Nathalia Bonato

**Diagramação**

Nathalia Bonato

Thiago Landi

**Revisão de provas**

Thays Martins de Paiva

**ISBN**

978-85-7758-225-9 (impresso)

978-85-7758-884-2 (digital)

**Endereço para correspondência**

FALE/UFMG – Laboratório de Edição

Av. Antônio Carlos, 6627 – sala 4081

31270-901 – Belo Horizonte/MG

Tel.: (31) 3409-6072

*e-mail*: revisores.fale@gmail.com

*site*: www.lettras.ufmg.br/labeled

# Contents

## 5 Foreword

## Part I – Studies in Linguistics

### 13 Teaching Intonation

Andressa Gomide

Ariadina Maia

Athalo Carrão

Daniella Ferreira

### 21 Digital Technology and Teaching

Gydion Ava de Almeida Kummer

Laura Kneipp Coscarella

Marco Antônio de Morais

Ramon de Araujo Gomes

### 31 The Effectiveness of Patterns of Interaction in the Classroom

Andréa da Silva Caballero

Diego Bianch Pelizer

Diogo Muniz

Miriam Silva

### 37 Methods of Translation: Domestication or Foreignization?

Aline Martins Reis

Bárbara Iara de Oliveira Marra

### 41 Setting Strategies to Cope with the Problem of Fast Speech in Simultaneous Interpretation

Anna Myotin-Grant

Arthur de Melo Sá

**53 The Objectivity of the News:  
A Comparative Analysis Based on  
Jakobson's Functions of Communication**

Ana Raposo  
Gabriella Larissa  
Lelia Chaves  
Paloma Saraiva  
Vanessa Ruas

**Part II – Studies in Literature**

**63 The Search for Knowledge  
and the Judgmental Society:  
A Brief Analysis of *Frankenstein***

Marcela Diniz Guimarães  
Samira Agnes de Cicco Sandes

**69 Exposing a Mind: The Use  
of Stream of Consciousness in  
Virginia Woolf's "The New Dress"**

Ana Luiza Rezende Smith Maia Girodo  
Camila Matias von Randow  
Juliana Guerra de Moura  
Natália Carvalho Cristóforo

**79 A Brief Analysis of  
Symbolism in "A Rose for Emily"**

Bruna Fortes Moreno Fernandes  
Heidi Henriette Louwerens  
Melina Iasmin Rodrigues Maciel  
Talita Cassemiro Paiva

**87 Manuel Bandeira: Life, Disease, and Poetry**

Marina Mattos  
Patrícia Souza  
Raíssa Almeida  
Wagner Fredmar Guimarães Júnior

**93 The Use of Language in *Glengarry Glen Ross***

Adailson Vinícius Maciel  
Gabriela Silva  
Mariana Ines Martins Brancaglione  
Pollyanna Ferreira  
Thalita Carvalho

## Foreword

This issue of the *Academic Writing Journal* is the result of collaborative work amongst groups of students and their teacher, using technology as a medium, with the objective of developing argumentative papers in the areas of linguistics and literature. The texts were written as a requirement for the Academic Writing course, a compulsory subject for undergraduate students of Faculdade de Letras, at UFMG.

Writing essays and papers is normally one of the biggest challenges for undergraduate students, especially because their academic experience depends precisely on how well they deal with these and other writing tasks. Considering that, the Academic Writing course has the objective of helping students become more familiar with the specific characteristics of different academic genres, such as biodata, PowerPoint presentations and argumentative essays. The course also offers students a thorough understanding of the process involved in producing written work. Some procedures, to name a few, would be choosing a topic, conducting research into it, developing critical and reflective thinking, carrying out debates, drafting, peer editing, and publishing the final version.

The possibility of bringing this process to its utmost point of actually having a compilation of students' written production published as a journal was due to a methodological innovation, brought to the class on the second semester of 2011: the collaborative approach.<sup>1</sup> This term refers to a type of learning that involves the mutual search for under-

<sup>1</sup> This work was developed under the supervision of the Professor Reinildes Dias.

standing amongst teacher and groups of students, centering mainly on the practical application of the course material. A relevant characteristic of this approach is the non-hierarchical position of the teacher and the course content in relation to the students. Although presentation and explication of content is still present in this methodology, students are highly motivated to have active participation in what is understood as a social construction of knowledge.

Working collaboratively does have its drawbacks, especially considering that students, in general, are very busy people nowadays, and thus are not prepared to be committed enough. That is where technology becomes the perfect ally to the collaborative approach. The free educational resources available on Web 2.0 are facilitators in this process. In the case of our Academic Writing course, wikispaces<sup>2</sup> were created, so that all members of the groups could have online access to all the collaborative written work, from any computer connected to the internet, at any time of the day or night. In addition, students interacted with each other using e-mail messages and Facebook groups, which were created for this specific purpose. The use of these technological resources made it easier for students to write, edit texts, communicate and share knowledge with their teams and with the teacher throughout the semester.

All articles included in this journal were written following similar steps and using technological tools. In my opinion, as a teacher, the results were very pleasing, even though, in some specific cases, great obstacles had to be faced. I must add that students kept on participating actively even after the semester had ended, in order to have their texts published. In special, I would like to mention my very dear editing team<sup>3</sup> that helped me with the revisions during the summer holidays and in the following semester.

The fact that the articles were written by teams of students, other than being theoretically adequate in terms of the constructivist point of

<sup>2</sup> Links to our wikispaces:

<<http://academicwritingm4a.wikispaces.com/>>

<<http://academicwritingm4b.wikispaces.com/>>

<<http://academicwritingn4.wikispaces.com/>>

<sup>3</sup> Andressa Gomide, Athalo Carrão, and Wagner Soares.

view, was also a facilitator in terms of making this journal possible. This is the result of the written work of three different Academic Writing classes: two morning groups and one evening group. It is important to point out that it would be an impossible task to go through the whole writing process of an argumentative paper up to the point of the publication in the period of one semester, if we had chosen to work with texts written by individual students. Therefore, the collaborative approach reveals itself to be not only fruitful, but also very practical.

All the articles were revised and edited in order to be published. The alterations were previously suggested to students, who rethought questions concerning title adequacy, the language, structure and content of the text as a whole, the appropriateness of the introductory, concluding and developmental paragraphs, and the quotations, footnotes and references at the end of the papers. After a number of insertions and reviews, the texts still went through the analytical reading of the editing team and the teacher. The reader of this journal will note that even so, the articles are not equal in terms of academic quality. In addition, it is important to point out that the texts were written by undergraduate students who are still going through an on-going learning process, which involves gaining knowledge about academic genres in terms of linguistic, structural and content adequacies. In fact, these specific characteristics are very useful for the objectives of this compilation which are not only to produce written work that will actually be read by a larger audience, but also to serve as material for the critical reading of future students of the Academic Writing courses.

The journal is divided in two parts: Studies in Linguistics and Studies in Literature. The first part has three subtopics according to the specific area approached in each article: Teaching, Translation and Discourse Analysis. The second part was organized in chronological order, considering each historical period of the literary authors and texts studied. Most of the literature chosen is in the English language, apart from one article that deals with the life and works of a Brazilian poet.

The first article, in the field of Linguistics, highlights the importance of teaching intonation to second language students. Although it is usually a neglected topic in L2 classrooms, intonation is seen as a vital

part of the communication process, as it can convey meaning and thus interfere with the understanding of the message. The text presents ideas for teachers to use in the classroom, demonstrating that dealing with intonation is not such a difficult task after all.

The second article brings forth the new possibilities inherent to the use of technology in the educational scenery and, more specifically, in the process of learning a second language. According to the authors, the use of technological tools in the classroom, as a medium for sharing knowledge and of collaborative work, changes the structure of the traditional educational system, which is passive and teacher-centered. The learning environment created via technological resources develops students' autonomy and self-esteem, and also makes learning accessible to all.

The third article, related to the area of teaching, discusses the effectiveness of different patterns of interaction used by the language teacher, such as pair work, group work, whole class and role play. The article considers the positive and negative aspects involved in each one of the strategies, indicating possible ways in which to avoid difficult situations from taking place. It is a good source for teachers who like to reflect on their work, on their students' needs and on the classroom as a learning environment.

Only two groups of students ventured into the field of translation studies, an area which I am not very familiar with. From my perspective, the results were good and clarifying. Aline Reis and Bárbara Marra chose to limit their study to a discussion that considers the applicability of two interchangeable translation approaches: *domestication* and *foreignization*. The authors describe both translation techniques, pointing out when and how they are used. Finally, they present arguments for and against the use of one or the other, coming to their own conclusion on the topic.

Anna Myotin-Grant and Arthur Sá researched the area of simultaneous interpretation. Their study is extensive and complete, because we decided it would be necessary to acquaint the reader with the terminology and practices related to the field. The main focus of the article is the



problem of fast speech and how it should be faced. The authors set strategies to overcome this challenge, based on the theory of *Effort Models*.

In the field of discourse analysis, a group of five students analyzed the language used in two online articles of the same news event, which were taken from two different websites. They based their critical reading on Jakobson's functions of language. The objective of the study is to verify whether the news articles are mainly referential, or if they present any other functions, such as the emotive and poetic ones.

Five teams of students chose to develop their research in the field of Literary Studies. The trail begins in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with Mary Shelley's classic, *Frankenstein*. Marcela Guimarães and Samira Sandes highlight two points that are interrelated from the monster's perspective: the pursuit of knowledge and the judgmental society. Frankenstein, the monster, is the consequence of an obsessive and almost blind search for knowledge. This questionable scientific result is extremely problematic within a society in which prejudice prevails.

Ana Luiza Maia, Camila von Randow, Juliana Moura and Natália Cristófarro decided to write an analysis of the modernist short story, "The New Dress", by Virginia Woolf. Since it is not one of Woolf's most known works, the team members did not find sources to base their research on. For this reason they undertook the challenge of developing their own critical thinking throughout their article. The authors defend the idea that through the use of the stream of consciousness technique, Woolf reveals hidden truths inherent to the protagonist's way of perceiving herself, her life and social relations.

The next literary team embarked on the intricate world of symbolism, identified in Faulkner's well known short story, "A Rose for Emily". The authors analyze the symbols presented throughout the text, revealing their connections with the North American historical background. They assert that the symbols are relevant for the atmosphere which is created through writing, functioning also as foreshadow to the story's mysterious and chilling ending.

Marina Mattos, Patrícia Souza, Raíssa Almeida and Wagner Júnior found it would be pertinent to write an article about a Brazilian poet in the English language. So, they selected Manuel Bandeira and undertook

research into his life and works. Their article demonstrates how the poet's life, especially regarding his health problems with tuberculosis, has influenced his poetry. This is done by considering determined events in his personal life, followed by an analysis of excerpts of five of his poems.

To end this chain of debates is the article about a contemporary American playwright, novelist, essayist, screenwriter and film director, David Mamet. The team members, Melina Maciel, Miriam Silva, Maria Ines Brancaglioni, Pollyanna Ferreira and Thalita Carvalho, chose to develop an analysis of his Pulitzer Prize winner play *Glengarry Glen Ross*. Their main focus is on how the writer uses language, also known as "Mamet Speak", and on the effects it has on the understanding of the play. The results of this study disclose some of the negative values that permeate society in recent times.

I hope that you enjoy this reading venture!

*Vivian Bernardes Margutti*

**Part I**  
**Studies in Linguistics**

# Teaching Intonation

Andressa Gomide  
Ariadina Maia  
Athalo Carrão  
Daniella Ferreira

If you are in a restaurant and the waiter asks you: "would you like fish or red meat?" what would you answer? Would you choose one of the options or would you say simply "yes" or "no"? Whether your answer is appropriate or not, it depends on the waiter's intonation. This is an example of a common situation in which intonation influences the flow of a conversation. The meaning of an utterance and the intention of the speaker, for instance, are also influenced by suprasegmental features. That is why we as teachers should be more concerned about the intonation skills usually neglected by traditional teaching. Although teaching intonation has its own difficulties, teachers should approach it as extensively as learners' goals require, using various techniques, since the effectiveness of communication depends, on a large scale, on the appropriate use of this feature.

As Chun states, although some linguists and teachers have neglected intonation, this feature of language is fundamental to oral communication and it is a powerful tool for negotiating meaning, managing interaction and achieving discourse coherence. Communicative competence is not only the ability of formulating grammatically correct utterances, but also the ability to express interactional strategies also considering the social situation; the interaction between the speakers; and the effect of an utterance on the interlocutor. Intonation is closely related to these last abilities mentioned. It can be used to highlight important elements, to express emotions or attitudes, mark role relationships of

interlocutors and control their interaction, to distinguish syntactic type (statements versus questions, for instance) and so on.<sup>1</sup> This feature of language cannot be forgotten while learning a new language, mainly if one of the learner's objectives is to have good oral skills is.

Studying intonation is important and it makes the process of learning another language less frustrating for students mainly in relation to oral communication. Not understanding, not being understood, or misunderstanding something a person says are very uncomfortable situations. If intonation is not taught or even considered while learning a language, learners may have difficulties in communication. One of the reasons for this is that they do not know that each language has its particular social and intonational cues and they will probably use the intonation of their own native language, which very likely rely on different sets of cues from the target language. Even the meaning of an utterance can change if it is pronounced with a different intonation. So, this feature of language should be taught and its importance should be shown, so that students will be able to avoid communication problems.

In addition to that, teachers should have a thorough knowledge of the English sound system in order to effectively meet the oral skill needs of their students. Teaching any suprasegmental characteristics of a language is not a simple task; teaching intonation is not different. Many teachers agree that intonation is important to be taught, but they do not teach this language feature either because they do not know how they will teach it (appropriate techniques and exercises) or because they do not have enough knowledge of English intonation to teach it. Therefore, knowing how important this feature is, teachers should always try to look for information, take courses about it in order to learn, have ideas of good exercises and improve their knowledge. By doing so, teachers will be more proficient in the language and be prepared to help their students in a more effective way.

In order to present common intonation patterns to students, teachers must establish their own set of pedagogical priorities according to learners' needs, and then develop activities for listening discrimination. Some variations in intonation and prominence are especially remarkable

<sup>1</sup> CHUN. The Neglected Role of Intonation in Communicative Competence and Proficiency.

because of their extensive use in daily situations and the meaning they carry, or miscarry if the rhythm is misused. The most common examples are the specific intonation of tag-questions, and alternative questions, which can lead the learner to interpret closed-choice questions as open-choice. Celce-Murcia gives a typical situation in which this can happen “[...] in restaurants, when asked if they would like blue cheese, ranch, or house vinaigrette dressing, learners may answer ‘yes’ instead of selecting from among the three options [...]”.<sup>2</sup> Evidently, how extensively a teacher may consider this sort of intonation patterns depends on the curriculum goals, on the focus of the course, and on the students’ proficiency level.

It is believed that, in order to provide students with the basis to start practicing intonation, the concept of *thought group* must be highlighted, since each thought group has a specific intonation pattern. A thought group can be characterized by four main points: it is set off by pauses before and after, it contains one prominent element, it has an intonation contour of its own, and it has a grammatically coherent internal structure. Aiming at the development of students’ listening discrimination, one suggested activity is explaining the difference between two intonation patterns as, for example, rising intonation for yes or no questions and raising-falling intonation for statements, and providing a set of sentences without punctuation, which they should complete after listening to the teacher’s pronunciation of the sentences.

A very useful technique to teach stress, intonation and timing is by reading or reciting texts aloud. This activity may consist of passages or scripts that allow students to practice or memorize before reading them aloud. Tasks that involve controlled, guided and communicative practice, as highlighted by Celce-Murcia, are commonly used for that purpose in a progressive set of activities. For a controlled practice, choral reading of simple dialogues can be very useful if the teacher guides the rhythm, stress and intonation, either by superimposing the contours over the written text on the board, or by using gestures to elicit the intonation during the oral modeling. A good example of guided practice involves “dramatic reading of literature excerpts” such as poems. For communicative

<sup>2</sup> CELSE-MURCIA. *Teaching Pronunciation: A Reference for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages*, p. 192.

practice, the teacher may build up an activity that allows students to be creative, for example, by making yes or no questions about their own house, paying attention to the usual intonation for that kind of question and its answer. This set of steps would give students the opportunity for growing their own awareness of intonation patterns as the teacher moves from listening discrimination to communicative practice.<sup>3</sup>

Another strategy to encourage students to enhance their intonation patterns is to make recordings of their own production, which can elicit motivation as the students are able to notice their progress in this area. It can start with an activity named mirroring, or shadowing. After understanding a speech sample as, for example, a dialogue or monologue, and accompanying a fluent speaker reading the excerpt (maybe the recorded material), the learners record their voices reading along with the speaker trying to maintain the same rhythm, speed, stress, and intonation, assessing their own recording afterwards. A long-term process that is also useful is recording the learner reading a passage from a book, poem etc., or his/her authentic speech as he/she speaks about something that he/she is interested in. After a month, he/she may record a similar speech again, and after another month, do it again, and so on. At the end of a determined period, the student can observe his/her own progress as he/she compares the various recordings.<sup>4</sup> This kind of practice is largely used in order to develop students' autonomy and self-confidence – qualities that will be useful throughout his/her life.

There are some new directions in the teaching of pronunciation, and one of them is the use of authentic material that can include children's rhymes, advertisement slogans, and comic strips, which may give the teacher the opportunity to approximate the world reality to classroom learning. Advertisements usually use linguistic devices as alliteration and contrastive stress,<sup>5</sup> which can be useful if the teacher is attentive to these opportunities of highlighting the importance of suprasegmental features.

<sup>3</sup> CELSE-MURCIA. *Teaching Pronunciation: A Reference For Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages*, p. 193-200.

<sup>4</sup> CELSE-MURCIA. *Teaching Pronunciation: A Reference for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages*, p. 10.

<sup>5</sup> CELSE-MURCIA. *Teaching Pronunciation: A Reference for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages*, p. 299-305.

Some activities involving the reading of a poem, or other literary passage, can be largely used, especially if the teacher allows the students to choose from a list of pre-selected works, so that the student may identify himself with the passage that he/she will read out loud in front of the class. That kind of activity, if well planned, will give students the opportunity to listen to an audio tape recording of the selected passage, or even to predict the intonation pattern of the excerpt. This is another kind of practice that enhances the possibility of acquiring the English rhythm as the student plays an active role developing his/her skills.

Among the new directions in the teaching of pronunciation, we also find the use of multisensory modes, namely visual and auditory reinforcement, tactile reinforcement, and kinesthetic reinforcement, all of which create significant opportunities to decrease students' inhibition and reluctance when practicing the target-language. The visual reinforcement is largely used in the traditional method and in the Silent Way,<sup>6</sup> and consists of charts, diagrams, flashcards, wall charts, and so on. The auditory reinforcement, or aural mode, can be a tool for expanding the simple "listen and repeat" drills, being used as a memory peg. A memory peg is a mnemonic device when, for instance, the sound of a moving train ("choo", "choo", "choo", "choo") is used to help the student remember the sound of /tʃ/; a set phrase can also be used as a peg.<sup>7</sup>

The tactile reinforcement is made through the sense of touch, for example, when the student puts his hand on the throat in order to perceive if it is vibrating or not. Among the items that can be creatively used by the teacher, are matches for demonstrating the puff of aspirated consonants, rubber bands for differences in vowel length, and mirrors, for making possible the awareness of mouth and tongue position while the students produce sounds. Body movements and hand signals are used in the kinesthetic reinforcement if the students trace intonation contours with arms and fingers extended in front of them as they pronounce an utterance.<sup>8</sup>

Acton suggests a more radical kinesthetic activity: "poetry in motion" makes the students use their bodies according to the thought

<sup>6</sup> GATTEGNO. *Teaching Foreign Languages in Schools: The Silent Way*.

<sup>7</sup> CELSE-MURCIA. *Teaching Pronunciation: A Reference for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages*, p. 295.

<sup>8</sup> CELSE-MURCIA. *Teaching Pronunciation: A Reference for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages*, p. 296.



groups as they recite a poem. The use of jazz chants is particularly suited for the practice of suprasegmental features of English, since they need the right rhythm to be sung.<sup>9</sup> If the teacher is attentive to the opportunities to use different reinforcements with the students, the possibilities are innumerable, being the teacher responsible for expanding the horizons and applying his/her knowledge to his/her own reality inside each specific group of learners.

The teaching of English language is often divided into the four skills. The interaction amongst these skills is what will ensure a better learning and development of a second language. Since intonation takes an important role on communication, educators may teach this English feature not only in pronunciation classes, but also in reading, listening and grammar classes. It is undeniable that students try to follow their teacher's style of pronunciation, which means teachers must be attentive to how they use intonation. Educators who teach this feature only in pronunciation classes are prone to miss the opportunity to improve students' self correction of pronunciation.

As intonation interferes with the meaning of what is said, it may be taught in the first levels of the English learning process. Some specialists in this area believe that intonation is not as essential to communication as other aspects of the language, so this feature, in some cases, is not well taught. We must be aware that learners acquire the main rules of the second language at the beginning of the process. Therefore, it is possible to affirm that in basic levels it is easier to make changes on students' perception of sounds and to show how it affects the real purpose of what is intended to be communicated. Moreover, intonation is closely related to speakers' attitudes; it can show, for example, if somebody is either telling the truth or not.

Having all these points in mind, it is possible to come to the conclusion that teachers should be concerned about the importance of intonation in order to enhance students' communicative abilities. In addition, teachers should be able to intertwine this feature of language with the four main skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading and writing. As to

<sup>9</sup> CELSE-MURCIA. *Teaching Pronunciation: A Reference for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages*, p. 297.

approach the teaching of intonation appropriately, teachers should know learners' needs, goals and difficulties. Getting better acquainted to what motivates the student and showing them the functions of intonation with dynamic techniques is a way to make the learning process more effective. Only by studying the English sound system deeply can teachers learn and use the techniques aforementioned, in a way that they improve their own performance, while learners are given the essential tools for an effective communication.

## References

ATOYE, O. Raphael. Non-Native Perception and Interpretation of English Intonation. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, Ile-Ife, v. 14, n. 1, p. 26-42, 2005. Available in: <<http://www.njas.helsinki.fi/pdf-files/vol14num1/atoye.pdf>>. Access on: 4 Oct., 2011.

CELCE-MURCIA, Mariane. *Teaching Pronunciation: A Reference for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages*. Cambridge: University Press, 1996.

CHUN, Dorothy. The Neglected Role of Intonation in Communicative Competence and Proficiency. *The Modern Language Journal*, Austin, v. 72, n. 3, p. 295-303, 1988. Available in: <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/327507.pdf?acceptTC=true&>>. Access on: 4 Oct., 2011.

GATTEGNO, Caleb. *Teaching Foreign Languages in Schools: The Silent Way*. 2. ed. New York: Educational Solutions, 1972.

LOWE, Charles. The music of English: A New Model of Communicative Intonation and Rhythm. *IJ Journal of Educational and Development*, London, p. 10-16, 2003. Available in: <[http://www.ihjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/journal/Issue\\_14.pdf](http://www.ihjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/journal/Issue_14.pdf)>. Access on: 4 Oct., 2011.

RANALLI, James. Discourse Intonation: To Teach or not to Teach? Birmingham, p. 1-17, 2002. Available in: <<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/collegeartslaw/cels/essays/csdp/Rannali4.pdf>>. Access on: 4 Oct., 2011.

UFOMATA, Titi. Setting Priorities in Teaching English Pronunciation in ESL Contexts. London, 1995. Available in: <<http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/shl9/ufomata/titi.htm>>. Access on: 4 Oct., 2011.

# Digital Technology and Teaching

Gydion Ava de Almeida Kummer  
Laura Kneipp Coscarella  
Marco Antônio de Moraes  
Ramon de Araujo Gomes

It is in general agreed that education plays a fundamental role in an individual's life and also makes an effective difference in society as a whole. It is hard to deny how complex and sometimes controversial this issue can be. Tireless efforts, measureless amounts of resources, and no guarantee of success are the common components in this equation. This study, far from diminishing the role education has, intends to point out the new road it is about to take, as soon as it completely assimilates the possibilities brought by new technologies. The world is about to witness how people can eventually obtain information and knowledge by themselves, just by interacting online with the adequate sources. The advent of the internet brought to a close the former monopoly of information, carried on by the mass media and the mainstream educational system. From this perspective, the recent dissemination of digital technology has arisen as a freeing process from the mass-production thinking.

Yet, by not taking advantage of digital technology, the mainstream educational system follows basically the same model around the world. Students are divided by age, knowledge is divided into subjects; the lesson is managed by a specialized teacher, and it has a fixed duration of time. According to Robinson in his Technology, Entertainment, Design (TED) conference, schools are organized similarly to factories in terms of the division of work and the strict rules of behavior.<sup>1</sup> Not surprisingly, both have the same origin: this model finds its foundation in the

<sup>1</sup> ROBINSON. Changing Educational Paradigms.

Enlightenment pedagogy, and it has not changed much, considering the two centuries of history, at least, which elapsed ever since.

Robinson pointed out in the prestigious same prestigious TED conference that the “current system was designed and conceived for a different age [...] in the economic circumstances of the Industrial Revolution”.<sup>2</sup> In opposition to this long-lasting methodology, education supported by technologies of communication can happen in a non-hierarchical environment. Even though schooling is most of the time orchestrated by market forces, nowadays education requires more independence and collaboration, instead of focusing mainly on submissiveness.

Digital technology is a revolutionary tool that makes the process of learning a language easier, faster, more interesting, more creative and more autonomous. The multiple possibilities offered by technology place the individual in the position of being the manager of his/her own learning process. The teacher no longer has the power to decide what, when, where and how much his students will learn because knowledge is totally spread out and accessible, at least for those who have an internet connection. Nonetheless, technology and the classroom are not necessarily apart from each other; in fact, if used in unison, the learning environment can be compared to a football field, which the students group together and function as a team playing the game, whereas the teacher functions as their coach. Therefore, using technology can be identified as the ultimate support for mastering a language and interacting productively.

However, schools that have been taking advantage of technologies have to face the challenge of overcoming the differences between generations. Younger students have spent most years of their lives in front of personal computers, accessing the internet through cell phones and other technological means. This altered the way they think and process information in relation to their predecessors, according to Prensky,<sup>3</sup> establishing a divide between Digital Natives and Digital Immigrants. The students of the new generation are “native speakers” of the digital language. Digital Immigrants are people who were not born into the digital world, but have learned to use technology. There is a difference between them,

<sup>2</sup> ROBINSON. Changing Educational Paradigms.

<sup>3</sup> PRENSKY. Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants.

considering that immigrants are trying to equalize, taking into account that they have the task to teach the new generation to use technology instead of the old tools which they were taught to use. From the Natives' point of view, their Digital Immigrant instructors make their education not worth paying attention to, as compared to everything else they have experienced. For instance, they are used to instantaneous hypertext, downloaded music, phones in their pockets, a library on their laptops, beamed messages and instant messaging. The Digital Immigrants need to reconsider both their methodology and the content they teach.<sup>4</sup>

In relation to methodology, present teachers need to be faster, following less rigorously the step-by-step model, and working more in parallel with the students, among other things. In terms of content, there are two types: *legacy content* and *future content*.<sup>5</sup> Legacy content is all the content from the past, from the "traditional" curriculum, and future content is the digital and technological content. The solution for this challenge of teaching both contents in the language of the Digital Natives lies in the immediate adequacy of education to technology through new methods of teaching and learning.

Every learner needs to accurately interpret any new information in order to grasp it. "People don't get ideas; they make them"; this was said by Resnick, a winner of the 2011 Harold W. McGraw Jr. Prize in Education. Even though teachers (or professors) are generally concerned with the best ways to present a new issue, and take into consideration how it should be presented in order to make the information both understandable to students, this is definitely not the whole process of learning. Also, as Norte has explained, the students have to go through a reflective process in order to construe new understandings for themselves.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, education is not a passive system; rather, it is an "active exploration, experimentation, discussion and reflection", as mentioned by Resnick.<sup>7</sup>

The many different features provided by technologies create a stimulating environment for students to come up with new ideas. According to Norte, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) can

<sup>4</sup> PRENSKY. Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants.

<sup>5</sup> PRENSKY. Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants.

<sup>6</sup> NORTE. Formação de professores de língua inglesa em ambiente virtual: uma escola sem fronteiras.

<sup>7</sup> RESNICK. Rethinking Learning in the Digital Age.

create a propitious learning environment for students' intellectual ability to emerge, since such media convey significant, academic and cultural contents.<sup>8</sup> In addition, Coscarelli states that different technological features can make the learning process more effective.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the change of focus promoted by technology inside the classroom is noticeable. As Lai and Kritsonis have affirmed, learners "become the creators and not just the receivers of knowledge."<sup>10</sup> According to Robertson's observations, "the participants who joined computer-assisted language learning programs also had significantly higher self-esteem ratings than regular students".<sup>11</sup> Thus, using technological possibilities helps in building the students' autonomy and self-confidence.

This environment of multiple features is of paramount importance for learners to develop problem-solving abilities through multitasking activities. Together with co-workers, Bialystock explains that:

There's a system in your brain, the executive control system. It's a general manager. Its job is to keep you focused on what is relevant, while ignoring distractions. It's what makes it possible for you to hold two different things in your mind at one time and switch between them.<sup>12</sup>

This is the exact system that one can put at work while using a computer, for instance. One can open a large number of pages (or tabs) with various contents and work with them all at the same time. By doing so, he/she has to focus on his/her issue, while adding correlated new information.

The second language practice requires an equivalent intellectual effort. More importantly, this sort of activity brings health benefits for a lifetime. According to Bialystock and co-workers' research, cited by Dreifus, "on average, the bilinguals showed Alzheimer's symptoms five or six years later than those who spoke only one language".<sup>13</sup> This means that, although the disease was taking root in their brains, they were still able to continue functioning at a higher level. Therefore, if one uses both

<sup>8</sup> NORTE. Formação de professores de língua inglesa em ambiente virtual: uma escola sem fronteiras.

<sup>9</sup> COSCARELLI. *A informática na escola*.

<sup>10</sup> LAI; KRITSONIS. The Advantages and Disadvantages of Computer Technology in Second Language Acquisition.

<sup>11</sup> ROBERTSON *et al.* Enhancement of Self-Esteem through the Use of Computer-Assisted Instruction.

<sup>12</sup> BIALYSTOK *et al.* Effect of Bilingualism on Cognitive Control in the Simon Task: Evidence from MEG.

<sup>13</sup> DREIFUS. The Bilingual Advantage.

computers' multi-access and second language fluency, he/she will maximize his/her benefits because, as Dreifus states, "it's that regular use that makes that system more efficient".<sup>14</sup>

Computers allow learners to develop their autonomy and self-esteem by thinking independently. Considering the classroom environment, one computer per student is enough to change the traditionally centralized-control model operated by teachers (or professors) based on the former educational model, and to create a present-day approach to life. That is, instead of an environment involving a teacher pouring information into a room full of learners, there will be a new environment in which the latter will have the opportunity to actively and independently search for information and then create new files from the sources. This would involve, for instance, academic essays, educational videos, blogs, and various types of criticism, such as political and literary ones. This idea meets Renisck's thoughts when he affirms: "If we use computers simply to deliver information to students, we are missing the revolutionary potential of the new technology for transforming learning and education."<sup>15</sup> In order to help students to develop these projects, the teacher will work as a consultant (and not as a commandant, as it used to be). As Norte explains, "one can learn better when the pedagogical approach impels the students to a reflective process on what they have learned and to act in real context".<sup>16</sup> The better they accomplish their tasks the more confident they will feel by acting for themselves, and the more responsible they will become towards their own achievements.

Moreover, inside the classroom, technology enables collaborative tasks. All students can work together, or in groups, using individual computers. They can even be totally apart from each other (at their own homes, for example) but still work simultaneously. There are sites that permit everyone to edit texts at the same time and keep their files available online for free. They can also work in different hours of the day, according to each one's convenience, in the development of their common file.

<sup>14</sup> DREIFUS. The Bilingual Advantage.

<sup>15</sup> RESNICK. Rethinking Learning in the Digital Age.

<sup>16</sup> NORTE. Formação de professores de língua inglesa em ambiente virtual: uma escola sem fronteiras.

Nowadays, there are college disciplines that are taught half face-to-face, half online, not to mention completely online courses. The students are set to do projects in which they have to interact with each other in order to do their best. Nevertheless, they have to go through agreements and disagreements, to overcome their individualities in order to reach consensus and, finally, to accomplish the task. Therefore, instead of being the unique focus, the use of technology in education can become a digital environment for sharing knowledge, wherever and whenever learners happen to be.

The portability of technological devices such as iPods, MPplayers, and smartphones, makes it possible to master a language while doing any other activity. Nowadays, a learner can record a lecture, make a video, and get connection with the internet wherever he/she goes, using a unique piece of equipment. More than that, a learner can access these files at any time. For instance, listening to English lessons CD's while jogging, reading a text in a supermarket line, listening to a native's audio conversation on a bus stop, watching a pronunciation video during a bus travel, receiving e-mails, learning a new lesson from a subscribed educational channel, searching for sources and writing a draft in the workplace are some of the activities that promote learning in environments not possible previously, before digital technology became so widespread.

In an experiment, Chinnery compared three groups of students receiving identical materials – the first through SMS, the second through the web and the third on paper. The SMS students learned more than twice the amount of vocabulary as compared to the web students. In addition, the former almost doubled the grades as compared to the “on paper” group.<sup>17</sup> According to this researcher “the vast majority preferred the SMS instruction, wished to continue such lessons, and believed it to be a valuable teaching method.”<sup>18</sup> The researchers assume that this result was obtained due to the frequent rehearsal and spaced study possibilities stimulated by this sort of push-media format. Thus, it can be affirmed that mobile technologies optimize learner's time throughout the day.

<sup>17</sup> CHINNERY. Emerging Technologies: Going to the MALL – Mobile Assisted Language Learning.

<sup>18</sup> CHINNERY. Emerging Technologies: Going to the MALL – Mobile Assisted Language Learning.



The infinite internet content deals with all the aspects of a language. As soon as one connects with this medium, he/she has access to innumerable articles from reliable sources (universities all over the world, for example) about how to effectively read and summarize a text, for instance. Also he or she can listen to real spoken English audios about various subjects, including specific ones, such as, for instance, business English.<sup>19</sup> On this site, for instance, one can learn or improve his/her writing skills by reading Grammar explanations and answering quizzes. At the YouTube website one can find educational videos about pronunciation with various accents, for example. The same site also offers subscription to channels, providing a chain of videos from a unique author, such as a teacher or an educational institute. There are online dictionaries compatible with most of the dictionaries in book format available in the market. In terms of interaction, there are chat-rooms where one can exchange messages with native speakers. So far everything is for free. Nevertheless, for those who can afford it, there are even real-time classes with native teachers from several countries – not costing more than the average prices in a full classroom of a local school in Belo Horizonte, for instance. According to what was discussed above, it can be affirmed that one can take full advantage of the internet in order to develop all his/her language skills.

In conclusion, learning another language has never had such propitious days. All the possibilities brought up by technology have created a new era also in the area of education. Currently, the challenge is the disparate divide between Digital natives and Digital immigrants. This case can be easily settled by making learners responsible for their own achievements. Consequently, a revolutionary change will occur in terms of the relation between teachers and students, and also between students and their peers. By means of technology, students learn by themselves and teachers give as little support as possible, in order to promote an independent and entrepreneurial spirit. Thus, students can feel much more prepared for life outside school as well. As supported by the arguments presented in this essay, even a student, who is studying for his

<sup>19</sup> <<http://tinyurl.com/6wfyk7d>>.

own account, has plenty of chances to succeed in mastering a language. Hence, by means of technology every student can be his/her own teacher.

## References

- BIALYSTOK, Ellen; CRAIK, Fergus; FREEDMAN, Morris. Bilingualism as a Protection Against the Onset of Symptoms of Dementia. *Neuropsychologia*, Toronto, v. 45, n. 2, p. 459-464, 2007. Available in: <<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0028393206004076>>. Access on: 1 Nov., 2011.
- BIALYSTOK, Ellen; CRAIK, Fergus; GRADY, Cheryl; CHAU, Wilkin; ISHII, Ryouhei; GUNJI, Atsuko; PANTEV, Christo. Effect of Bilingualism on Cognitive Control in the Simon Task: Evidence from MEG. *NeuroImage*, Toronto, v. 24, n. 1, p. 40-49, 2005. Available in: <<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1053811904005853>>. Access on: 31 Oct., 2011.
- BIALYSTOK, Ellen; CRAIK, Fergus; KLEIN, Raymond; VISWANATHAN, Mythili. Bilingualism, aging, and cognitive Control: Evidence from the Simon task. *Psychology and Aging*, Eugene, v. 19, n. 2, p. 290-303, 2004. Available in: <[http://cog.lab.yorku.ca/files/2007/11/Bialystok\\_Craik\\_Klein\\_Viswanathan.pdf](http://cog.lab.yorku.ca/files/2007/11/Bialystok_Craik_Klein_Viswanathan.pdf)>. Access on: 1 Nov., 2011.
- CHINNERY, George. Emerging Technologies: Going to the MALL – Mobile Assisted Language Learning. *Language Learning & Technology*, Baltimore, v. 10, n. 1, p. 9-16, Jan. 2006. Available in: <<http://llt.msu.edu/vol10num1/emerging/default.html>>. Access on: 10 Oct., 2011.
- COSCARELLI, Carla. *A informática na escola*. Belo Horizonte: Edições Viva Voz, 2002. Available in: <<http://www.letras.ufmg.br/carlacoscarelli/publicacoes/Vivavoz.pdf>>. Access on: 10 Oct., 2011.
- DREIFUS, Claudia. The Bilingual Advantage. *The New York Times*, New York, May 30, 2011. Available in: <<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/31/science/31conversation.html>>. Access on: 31 Oct., 2011.
- LAI, Cheng-Chieh; KRITSONIS, William Allan. The Advantages and Disadvantages Technology in Second Language Acquisition. *National Journal for Publishing and Mentoring Doctoral Student Research*. Houston, v. 3, n. 1, 2006. Available in: <<http://faculty.ksu.edu.sa/saad/Documents/CALL%20Advantages%20and%20disadvantages.pdf>>. Access on: 30 Oct., 2011.
- NORTE, Mariângela Braga. Formação de professores de língua inglesa em ambiente virtual: uma escola sem fronteiras. In: XX SEMINÁRIO DO CELLIP, *Anais...* Londrina: [s.n.], 2011. p. 1-10. Available in: <<http://dc428.4shared.com/doc/kd5bfs8s/preview.html>>. Access on: 10 Nov., 2011.
- PRENSKY, Marc. Digital natives, Digital Immigrants. *On the Horizon*, [S.l.], v. 9, n. 5, p. 1-6, 2001. Available in: <<http://www.twitcheed.com/site/Prensky%20-%20Digital%20Natives,%20Digital%20Immigrants%20-%20Part1.htm>>. Access on: 27 Oct., 2011.
- RESNICK, Mitchel. Rethinking Learning in the Digital Age. Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Available on: <<http://llk.media.mit.edu/papers/mres-wef.pdf>>. Access on: Oct. 6, 2011.
- ROBERTSON, Elizabeth *et al.* Enhancement of Self-Esteem through the Use of Computer-Assisted Instruction. *The Journal of Educational Research*, London, v. 80, n. 5, p. 314-316, Jun. 1987.

## **Video**

CHANGING Educational Paradigms. Sir Ken Robinson. 2010. (11:41 min.). Available in: <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcDGpL4U>>. Access on: Oct 6, 2011.

# The Effectiveness of Patterns of Interaction in the Classroom

Andréa da Silva Caballero  
Diego Bianch Pelizer  
Diogo Muniz  
Miriam Silva

There are some critical issues about language teaching that may be considered essential in order to obtain a better understanding of how to guide students in the process of second language acquisition. By studying and investigating these issues, teachers will be able to develop their class activities and establish a particular goal for each student. As teachers, we must provide a balance amongst the different patterns of interaction, in order to motivate our students. In this article, the goal is to introduce different patterns of interaction and their respective problems in the classroom, as well as to help teachers by showing how the language teaching process can be improved in different and effective ways.

The first pattern of interaction which is common in language schools is *pair work*. In this case, the whole class is divided into pairs. Every student works with his or her partner and all the pairs work at the same time. This type of interaction can be used in an enormous number of activities involving speaking, writing or reading.

Pair work offers the students more opportunities to speak English and can encourage them to be more involved and focused on the tasks they have been assigned. They will feel less anxiety when working privately, as compared to doing something in front of the whole class. Through pair work, shy students can be helped by their partners and encouraged to share ideas and knowledge. In a reading activity, for example, students can help each other to explore the meaning of the text; and in a discussion activity they can give each other new ideas. We

can consider that pair work enables students to practice language and collaborative learning.

The problems generated by pair work are usually noise and indiscipline, particularly with children and adolescents. If they are left in pairs for a long time, they become bored, restless, sometimes behaving badly and may also start using their first language. Teachers have to be conscious of this negative behavior and need to find a way to solve this specific problem, motivating all students to get involved with the assigned activity, by explaining to them that this interaction is important to develop their skills in everyday conversation.

The second common pattern of interaction is *group work*. In this type of activity, the class is divided into groups of usually four or five students that work together. The groups work simultaneously. As with pair work, students who are shy of saying something in front of the whole class, or to the teacher, often find it much easier to express themselves in front of a small group with their peers. As Ur affirms:

The physical focus of the discussion is close and directed towards the individual student; that is to say, whoever is speaking is only a small distance away, clearly audible, facing the others and addressing them personally.<sup>1</sup>

In this way, group work gives students more opportunities to use language in order to communicate with each other and to co-operate amongst themselves, because there are now a larger number of participants to react with and against. Besides, group work activities, as role-play and simulations, can often be more exciting and dynamic, which increases motivation and interest. The problems that may arise are very similar to the ones mentioned for pair work.

The third pattern of interaction analyzed is *whole class activity*. In this case, students are involved in working with the teacher at the same rhythm and pace. According to Harmer, this type of interaction is called *lockstep*.<sup>2</sup> The teacher leads the whole class through a controlled sequence of activities centered on a new language point. During the presentation and controlled practice (drilling), stage errors in structure

<sup>1</sup> UR. *A Course in Language Teaching*, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> HARMER. *The Practice of English Language Teaching*.

and pronunciation are identified and corrected immediately, which helps students to ensure that what they are saying is correct. In this case, all students are concentrated on the teacher, and for that reason it is useful to give instructions after a listening or reading task, for example, and also to provide students with feedback.

However, some problems do arise when working with the whole class at the same time. If students are locked into a teacher-controlled drill, they are not going to practice the language that they should be learning in a communicative situation. If the teacher is too fast, the less able students are of getting in panic and unable of learning what is being taught, and if the teacher is too slow, the more able ones may feel bored and unmotivated. It is necessary for teachers to pay attention to all students' reactions throughout each activity being developed, and they also need to have in mind the students' needs.

The fourth pattern of interaction is *role-play*. In this teaching strategy, the students assume roles in different contexts, in order to develop their communication in specific situations. The teacher suggests a variety of situations, considering the vocabulary that is being taught. This type of activity helps students to feel inserted in different communicative environments. In addition, students will be stimulated to use not only the second language being taught, but also to use the correct vocabulary for each specific real-life communicative situation.

Role-play can be performed in groups of different numbers of students or as pair work. Ladousse defends that it is better if the teacher begins by using pair work. There are two reasons for this: the first one is practical; it is easier to talk to someone that is close to you without disturbing the class. The other reason is a psychological one: in direct one-to-one communication, students tend to work better because they are less self-conscious, and this helps them in the learning process.<sup>3</sup>

In all applications of role-play, the interaction should begin with easy communicative situations, because students can be more confident when the activity they are involved with is simpler. If the teacher's proposed situations are too difficult in the beginning of the learning process, the students will probably use their native language to communicate and

<sup>3</sup> LADOUSSE. *Role Play*.

this is not the main aim of the task. As with other activities, role-play can change the classroom into a chaotic environment if it is not correctly organized, and due to this, the teacher needs to know how to deal with situations of chaos. We have selected four tips that, according to Ladousse, can be helpful: i) keep the duration of the activity short until the students get used to it; ii) make sure that the students have in fact understood the situations involved before starting them; iii) always have a follow-up activity at hand just in case some of the groups finish the role-play before the others; iv) set a strict time limit and do whatever it takes in order to stick to it.<sup>4</sup>

There are several different types of role-plays, and they can help the teacher in many different ways to make the class more practical and fun. It is important that, before using this kind of activity, the teacher demonstrates its validity and purpose to the students.

In this study, four patterns of interactions have been considered: *pair work*, *group work*, *whole class* and *role-play*. Teachers and students are advised to develop these different teaching strategies in order to get better results in the language learning process. Advantages and disadvantages were shown throughout this study, so that teachers may have the ability of using them to meet their students' needs. In all the strategies considered, teachers need to take the learners' perspective into account, with regards to their feelings about working in groups, because the use of certain patterns may lead to humiliation in some cases. The best way to clear these problems up is the appeal to constant recycling which includes a lot of communicative tasks and feedback to let learners become aware of their difficulties.

It is suggested that students take more responsibility for their learning and have more pair work and group work. However, the teachers' interventions are not to be avoided. As students become more confident, they will do more and more self-centered work, but teachers must find a balance between leading the students and letting them have control of their own learning. This balance may vary from class to class. Some classes may not respond so well to autonomous activities and may demand that all they do may be more oriented by the teacher. In a

<sup>4</sup> LADOUSSE. *Role Play*.

student-centered classroom, students are involved with the learning process and different learning styles can be accommodated, and they can help each other to develop their skills in collaboration. In order to make the learning process more effective, teachers can develop learning activities that are more enjoyable and more stimulating by taking a number of aspects into consideration while preparing their classes.

## References

GRIFFITHS, Carol. Patterns of Language Learning Strategy Use. *System*, Auckland, v. 31, n. 3, p. 367-383, June 2003.

HARMER, Jeremy. *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. 3. ed. Harlow: Longman, 2001.

LADOUSSE, Gilian Porter. *Role Play*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987. (Series Editor).

UR, Penny. *A Course in Language Teaching: Practice and Theory*. 6. printing. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. (Series Editor).



# Methods of Translation: Domestication or Foreignization?

Aline Martins Reis  
Bárbara Iara de Oliveira Marra

In the field of translation, there is a large debate about the correct translation strategy chosen for the communication of cultural contents. The two most important approaches are domestication and foreignization. The present article aims to study how useful the foreignization and domestication techniques are in works of translation, considering the point of view of authors such as Zare-Behtash and Firoozkoobi, and Wiersema.

Domestication and foreignization are two terms in Translation Studies created by Lawrence Venuti. Both approaches take into account the influence of cultural issues on translation and consider the influence of translations on the target readers and cultures.

Domestication refers to the translation approach that intends to reduce the strangeness of the foreign text for target language readers. It means making the text well known and, consequently, bringing the foreign culture closer to the readers. Venuti points out that translation is fundamentally domestication and it begins in the actual domestic culture.<sup>1</sup> The use of domestication can be found in news items, such as the following *BBC* report from 1998: “[...] most of the Kuwaiti ruling family fled to Saudi Arabia”.<sup>2</sup> This was translated into Arabic as: “most of the Kuwaiti ruling family left to Saudi Arabia”. This translation is domesticated since using “left” as an alternative of “fled” is planned by the translator to avoid embarrassment, mainly if she or he is employed in Kuwait.

<sup>1</sup> VENUTI. *Translation and the Pedagogy of Literature*.

<sup>2</sup> KUWAIT and Iraq – Sworn Enemies.

On the other hand, foreignization takes the reader to the foreign culture and makes him or her feel the linguistic and cultural differences, such as regional and social dialects, archaism, jargons, technical terminologies, neologisms, literary figures like metaphors, and so on.

In translation works, the two strategies are alternatives for a translator, although some experts say that there is no way to consider *domestication* as a useful method. In a detailed study, Zare-Behtash and Firoozkoobi have concluded that domestication has been the most diffusive cultural translation approach. Their purpose was to investigate the main cultural translation strategies of domestication and *foreignization*, involving six of Hemingway's works, of which the original texts in English were compared with their Persian translations over a period of six decades. As it was concluded after the authors' research, the domestication strategy would beat the foreignization strategy both in number of procedures and number of applications. Their sources attested that while the *domestication* strategy includes twelve procedures of idiomatic translation: synonymy, limited universalization, absolute universalization, descriptive translation, adaptation, equivalence, normalization, explication, simplification, exoticism and omission, the foreignization strategy is composed of only six procedures: namely, extra textual gloss, intratextual gloss, orthographic adaptation, repetition, calque and borrowing.<sup>3</sup>

In contrast with this, we found Wiersema defends foreignization, highlighting its importance in a globalized world, and how it can also improve people's knowledge about cultures. In his current work about Mexican Literatures, he gives an example of the word "mole", a Mexican food name, translated into 'like a spicy sauce on a chocolate basis' (an explanatory translation). The author is against the practice of finding a word in the target language that gives the idea of the original word, but that it is not actually the real meaning of it. He believes that due to the present tendency towards globalization, the translator no longer needs to constantly look for a one-word translation of a term in the target language – otherwise this would make the text lose its credibility.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> FIROOZHOOBI; ZARE-BEHTASH. A Diachronic Study of Domestication and Foreignization Strategies of Culture-Specific Items: in English-Persian Translations of Six of Hemingway's Works.

<sup>4</sup> WIERSEMA. Globalisation and Translation: A Discussion of the Effect of Globalisation on Today's Translation.

According to Wiersema's studies, the foreignization method is the best one, since globalization has made this choice possible and more acceptable. As a consequence of globalization, target-language terms can be informative to the reader because they reflect the source cultures in a more real and correct way and, therefore, contribute to a better understanding of it. Translation is becoming a very important instrument to develop understanding between cultures. Evidently, it can bring some consequences, like distortion between cultures. So, if this is about to happen, the translator must make some decisions like the one Wiersema mentions in his work on the translation of Mexicanisms, but we believe it is acceptable for every translation in any language as well. The following are the three options for the translator according to the author:

- a) To adopt the foreign word without any explanation;
- b) to adopt the foreign word with extensive explanations (like the word "mole" mentioned before);
- c) to rewrite the text in order to make it more comprehensible to the target-language audience.

Since the reported author writes on behalf of foreignization, he would go for option a) above for the following reasons: the readers would read more fluently (no stops); the text remains more exotic, more foreign; the translator is closer to the source culture; the reader gets a more authentic image of the source culture and, finally, the target text is more correct.

Wiersema defends that in a contemporary global background we can bring more and more foreign features into the target text therefore creating something that is not so much foreign for the source culture. Translation transforms the contents of the text, leading from familiarity to strangeness. Thus, in his conception, the approach called foreignization may be a solution in order to avoid the negative situation of drawing away from the source culture.<sup>5</sup>

As we already mentioned, the debate about which method is better still remains under discussion. Both studies presented, Zare-Behtash and Sepideh Firoozkoobi's, and Wiersema's, are applicable, so the choice concerning the more appropriate, either domestication or foreignization,

<sup>5</sup> WIERSEMA. Globalisation and Translation: A Discussion of the Effect of Globalisation on Today's Translation.

is up to the translator. As future translators, we must balance the advantages of these methods and we can never forget that our intention is two-fold: to make the text familiar, but at the same time to bring the foreign culture closer to the reader's, thus making him or her feel the linguistic and cultural variations.

## References

KUWAIT and Iraq – Sworn Enemies. *BBC News*, London, 19 Feb. 1998. Available in: <[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/special\\_report/iraq/55803.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/special_report/iraq/55803.stm)>. Access on: 1 Nov., 2011.

FIROOZHOOHI, Sepideh; ZARE-BEHTASH, Esmail. A Diachronic Study of Domestication and Foreignization Strategies of Culture-Specific Items: in English-Persian Translations of Six of Hemingway's Works. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, Chababar, v. 7, n. 12, p. 1576-1582, 2009. Available in: <<http://idosi.org/wasj/wasj7%2812%29/19.pdf>>. Access on: 27 Sep., 2011.

VENUTI, Lawrence. Translation and the Pedagogy of Literature. *College English*, Urbana, v. 58, n. 3, p. 327-344, Mar. 1996. Available in: <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/378715>>. Access on: 1 Nov., 2011.

WIERSEMA, Nico. Globalisation and Translation: A Discussion of the Effect of Globalisation on Today's Translation. *TranslationJournal*, [S.l.], v. 8, n. 1, Jan. 2004. Available in: <<http://translationjournal.net/journal/27liter.htm>>. Access on: 1 Nov., 2011.

# Setting Strategies to Cope with the Problem of Fast Speech in Simultaneous Interpretation

Anna Myotin-Grant  
Arthur de Melo Sá

There are many different cultures and languages in the world, and it is the function of a translator to establish the communication amongst them. The origin of different languages is explained through stories and theories, such as the biblical story of the Tower of Babel, and the well-known evolutionist theory. However, despite those, the fact is that languages – and cultures – can communicate with one another with the help of translators and interpreters.

In this text we propose to explore some of the challenges met by the simultaneous interpreter. The focus will lie on *fast speech*, which is only one of these challenges. It is understood that an increase in the speaker's speech rate affects the interpreter's capacity to do his job. The problem of fast speech is well known in the simultaneous interpretation area, but through the use of effective strategies, it should no longer pose any obstacles to effective translation.

Before defining strategies to cope with that challenge, we are going to define some key concepts used throughout the text, consider the concept of simultaneous interpretation and its origin, and later introduce some difficulties that an interpreter will probably encounter. After that, we are going to focus on the matter of fast speech, and then set some strategies to overcome it, based on the theory of *Effort Models*.

Before getting into the discussion about the particularities of simultaneous interpretation, it is important to point out some key concepts related to simultaneous translation. We will explore three language-pairs,

namely source/target language, translation/interpretation and simultaneous/consecutive interpretation. The pair source and target language are absolutely essential to the understanding of translation and interpretation. The *source language* (SL) can be simply defined as the language in which the text to be translated is written/spoken. That is the original language, the actual language in which a paper or a talk was written. Opposed to the source language, the *target language* (TL) is the language into which a text is to be translated. Consider a talk in which a speaker addresses the audience in Portuguese – the source language will be Portuguese. The content of the “original talk” is to be translated into German – German in this case will be the target language.

After clarifying this distinction we can move on to another key distinction for this paper, that of *translation* and *interpretation*. In the *Dictionary of Translation Studies*, Catford, a well-known linguist in the area of Translation Studies, defines translation as the “replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent material in another language”.<sup>1</sup> In terms of interpretation the essence of Catford’s definition prevails, however with an important particularity: the oral element. Interpretation is the replacement of spoken material in one language (SL) by equivalent material in another language. In brief, when a determinate act of translation involves speech, the translator will be called interpreter.

Finally, to conclude this section, it is important to be aware of the concept of *consecutive interpretation* and *simultaneous*. The former occurs when the interpreter waits for the speaker to finish his “turn” or to pause to begin his speech (two consecutive actions are present), very common in meetings or seminars. The latter occurs when both professionals do their tasks simultaneously. In this paper we will only consider simultaneous interpretation (SI).

SI is a simultaneous activity that consists in real-time translation of the SL to the TL, orally, during which the interpreter sits in a booth wearing a pair of headphones and speaking into a microphone to an audience that is also supposed to wear headphones. In this process the audience will not listen to the speaker’s voice, maintaining only visual contact with him or her.

<sup>1</sup> SHUTTLEWORTH; COWIE. *Dictionary of Translation Studies*, p. 49.

After discussing the key concepts used in this text and defining what simultaneous interpretation is, we are going to introduce briefly the history of simultaneous interpretation, according to the report of Siegfried Ramler in a special lecture on February 18, 2006, at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, under the sponsorship of the Japan Association for Interpretation Studies. Ramler is an interpreter who participated in the well-known Nuremberg Trials, after the end of World War II. A special tribunal was set in Nuremberg in order to judge "leaders of Germany who had been arrested and gathered at the Nuremberg Palace of Justice".<sup>2</sup> That tribunal was composed of judges and prosecutors "representing the four allied nations – USA, Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union";<sup>3</sup> hence, interpretation was required in four languages, namely German, English, French and Russian. In the beginning of the trials, interpretations were being made consecutively; however, it "would have been a tedious and laborious procedure to deal with four languages consecutively, not to mention the unacceptable increase in the length of the trial".<sup>4</sup>

In fact, the Nuremberg Trials were not the first experience in simultaneous interpretation, for there were former attempts at the League of Nations involving only English and French. Nonetheless, it was in Nuremberg that "the first comprehensive and large scale practice of simultaneous interpreting using multi-language teams"<sup>5</sup> took place: three teams of twelve people each, responsible for translating from and to German, English, French and Russian, using equipment provided by IBM Corporation. Obviously, the equipment was a "system which would seem very primitive by today's standards but was quite innovative at the time".<sup>6</sup> That was the first time simultaneous interpretation was conducted, an experience that was very important for its development and still is until today.

Nowadays, simultaneous interpretation has reached a much more sophisticated level: equipment and techniques have been created in order to aid the interpreter and the access to information is easier and

<sup>2</sup> RAMLER. The Origin and Challenges of Simultaneous Interpretation: The Nuremberg Trial Experience, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> RAMLER. The Origin and Challenges of Simultaneous Interpretation: The Nuremberg Trial Experience, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> RAMLER. The Origin and Challenges of Simultaneous Interpretation: The Nuremberg Trial Experience, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> RAMLER. The Origin and Challenges of Simultaneous Interpretation: The Nuremberg Trial Experience, p. 10.

<sup>6</sup> RAMLER. The Origin and Challenges of Simultaneous Interpretation: The Nuremberg Trial Experience, p. 10.

faster than it was in 1945. Thus, to work as a simultaneous interpreter is not difficult, and it is now more valued than it was at the beginning. There are also associations such as the AIIC – Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence (in English it means ‘International Association of Conference Interpreters’). Those associations function as a global syndicate for interpreters, giving support to them. Therefore, a simultaneous interpreter has a better support, equipment and even better techniques than before, not being the almost “impossible” profession to put in practice as it was during the Nuremberg Trials.

Even though simultaneous interpretation has seen enhancement and sophistication throughout the years, interpreters still do face challenges, such as technical problems, quality of speaker’s voice, language structure, ambiguity, emotional impact, fast speech, the use of dialects and technical terms, to name just a few. These are challenges that any interpreter should be able to account for.

*Fast speech* is one of the most problematic challenges, as it requires doing something that is already difficult with the additional feature of increased speed. Fast speech is not something that can be eased with prior preparations, similar to what can be done to overcome the problem of technical terms and lack of knowledge about the topic. In addition, it is not something that can be predicted; it’s completely out of the control of the interpreter. Fast speech can make interpreting unsustainable, as it jeopardizes the ability of the interpreter to understand what is being said, causes a delay in production and may result in a loss of information or mistranslation.

There has been some discussion about what can be considered an appropriate speech rate and there have been disagreements between linguists cited by Setton:<sup>7</sup> Seleskovitch argued that an input rate of 100-120 wpm (words per minute) was comfortable for interpretation, being 150 an upper limited. Lederer held a different opinion and defended that a rate of 100 wpm was the maximum an interpreter could cope with for recited texts.

When the interpreter faces a situation in which the speech rate is faster than his humane limit of comprehension, the problem of fast

<sup>7</sup> SETTON. *Simultaneous Interpretation: A Cognitive-Pragmatic Analysis*, p. 30.



speech becomes apparent: how can an interpreter carry out his job if instead of processing 100-120 wpm he is called to process 200 wpm? Which strategies can an interpreter develop in order to overcome the problem of fast speech?

When the interpreter faces this kind of problem, he will need to transfer more attention to listening in order to overcome the difficulties caused by fast speech. This means that he will devote less attention to other tasks related to his job, as his attention will be all concentrated in solving the listening difficulty. This is better illustrated by the theory of *Effort Models* by Daniel Gile.<sup>8</sup>

Gile postulates that in interpreting, three efforts are involved: the listening and analysis effort (L), the production effort (P) and the short-term memory effort (M).<sup>9</sup> The first one is self-explanatory; it is concerned with the ability to listen to what is being said and analyze the content of it. The second effort is concerned with speech production in simultaneous interpretation and with note taking during the first stage of consecutive interpretation, and the last one is concerned with memory operations from the time a speech segment is heard to the time it is reformulated in the target speech or disappears from memory.

As mentioned by Gile these three efforts “compete” with each other:

The three Efforts are at least partly competitive, meaning that even if they share resources and may be somewhat cooperative, the net result of their coexistence will usually be an increase in processing capacity requirements (the “competition hypothesis”).<sup>10</sup>

The “competition hypothesis” can be represented by the following mathematical formula:

$TotC = C(L) + C(M) + C(P) + C(C)$ , where ‘TotC’ stands for total processing capacity consumption.

The equation consists of a sum of the capacity of the three efforts, the listening and analysis effort C(L), the short term memory effort C(M) and the production effort C(P), plus a new element being introduced,

<sup>8</sup> GILE. Testing the Effort Models’ Tightrope Hypothesis in Simultaneous Interpreting: A Contribution.

<sup>9</sup> GILE. Testing the Effort Models’ Tightrope Hypothesis in Simultaneous Interpreting: A Contribution, p. 154.

<sup>10</sup> GILE. Testing the Effort Models’ Tightrope Hypothesis in Simultaneous Interpreting: A Contribution, p. 156.

the coordination effort  $C(C)$  – “the management of capacity allocation between the efforts”.

In some occasions, one of the efforts may require more attentional resources than the other, which will result in an increase of the total processing capacity consumption. This would not have been a problem if it were not for a simple fact: the total processing capacity consumption cannot increase ceaselessly. On the contrary, the interpreter has a limited mental capacity, and this capacity has to be distributed in different tasks, as seen with the three efforts. Therefore if there is an increase in one capacity, it follows that there will be a decrease in the other capacities.

The interpreter may still be able to carry on doing his job, if he is not working at his “full capacity” (which means he still has “effort” to employ into the three efforts), but it will depend on how big this increase is. If there is an increase so big that it affects the resource allocation of other efforts, then the interpreter’s job may be compromised:

Total capacity consumption is close to the interpreter’s total available capacity, so that any increase in processing capacity requirements and any instance of mismanagement of cognitive resources by the interpreter can bring about overload or local attentional deficit (in one of the Efforts) and consequent deterioration of the interpreter’s output.<sup>11</sup>

For instance, when an interpreter faces the problem of *fast speech*, his brain is overloaded with too much information in a short period of time and his understanding and performance is affected. In other words, most of his attentional resources will be employed in the listening and analysis effort, and little will be left for the production and the short-term memory. That is the reason why fast speech is a problem. Even though it may be possible to understand what is being said, the effort to accomplish this task is so intense that it affects resource allocation of the other efforts and, consequently, affects the quality of the interpreter’s output as a whole.

Having analyzed the matter of fast speech, we are going to discuss some of the strategies to cope with this problem also based on the theory of *Effort Models*. We are going to explore six strategies: previous knowledge, preparation of a glossary, requesting the speaker to slow down, the interpreter’s speeding up, summarization and termination of service.

<sup>11</sup> GILE. Testing the Effort Models’ Tightrope Hypothesis in Simultaneous Interpreting: A Contribution, p. 159.

At first, it is fundamental for interpreters to have previous knowledge of the subject of a conference. In fact, that is essential to every interpretation, but prior knowledge may really help overcoming the problem of fast speech. It is very common for the requester of service to send an abstract or even the full text of the event, but it is necessary to read more than just that: articles, newspapers and even journals in the area. If the interpreter prepares him or herself previously, it will demand less attentional resources: as they will be less consumed by the listening and analysis effort in the total capacity consumption, because the interpreter has already read about and understands much more about the subject; in this way, only some of the parts of the speech would be unintelligible for him or her. In the case of fast speech, it would be easier for the speaker to be listened and analyzed by the interpreter. If the latter has not read about the subject area, it would demand more effort in listening and analyzing the fast speech, that is, total capacity consumption of attentional resources is more consumed by the listening and analysis effort. The theory of *Effort Models* explains the relation of a previous knowledge and the quality of interpretation. Considering the equation as shown above,  $TotC = C(L) + C(M) + C(P) + C(C)$ , it is possible to conclude that if the interpreter spends less time and efforts in listening and analyzing (L), he or she would have more time and efforts to spend in producing (P), in short-term memory operations (M) and in coordinating his or her own thoughts and speech (C). Hence, it is highly advisable to have previous knowledge of the subject to be dealt with in the event, for it will consume less attentional resources.

Secondly, preparing a glossary is also an aid to any interpreter, mainly when facing the problem of fast speech. By using a glossary, he or she may identify a particular word or expression, requiring less time and attentional resources than the effort of trying to translate it mentally, for reading something that was written before consumes less total capacity consumption of attentional resources. In a report by Maslennikov about a conference that he simultaneously interpreted from Russian into German, besides reading, he prepared himself previously by creating a glossary. In his report, he decided to "gather all the vocabulary which he would need for the job (nouns, verbs and semantic word combinations)" in a glossary

“on the basis of keywords”,<sup>12</sup> using general and specific dictionaries, but not copying all them – just the necessary words or expressions. He also included abbreviations in the glossary, for it would be much faster and easier to read them, rather than to hear, analyze and translate them. In Maslennikov’s words,

during simultaneous interpretation, sometimes it is necessary to remember a word in the given context, a word combination, or the translation into the other language within a few seconds, and such glossaries are very useful in those cases.<sup>13</sup>

The theory of *Effort Models* also explains the relation of a glossary and the quality of interpretation. Considering the equation mentioned two paragraphs above, it is possible to obtain the same conclusions, since the interpreter is using less listening and analysis capacity (L) to translate a sentence which has words, abbreviations and other expressions that are difficult to translate, and which are even more difficult in fast speech. Therefore, glossaries are very useful tools, and may help someone trying to interpret the lecturer’s fast speech.

Another strategy to cope with the difficulties of fast speech is to request the speaker to slow down. That is probably the most obvious strategy, but there are some problems in implementing this solution. The question is that “reminders seldom work, for speakers are either set in their speaking habits, or are always trying to cover too much within a limited time”.<sup>14</sup> The word *reminders* here means that there are lights near the speaker that blink when the interpreter presses a button, or the interpreter’s just raising his or her hands – these are reminders to show the speaker to speak slowly. According to Changshuan: “after being reminded, a speaker will usually slow down for a sentence or two, before quickly forgetting the rules”.<sup>15</sup> However, an interpreter should try to remind the speaker of his/her pace of speech, even though he realizes that his/her actions towards this goal will be ineffective.

The fourth strategy is the interpreter’s speeding up. If all the strategies above fail, this one could be a solution. The problem is that,

<sup>12</sup> MASLENNIKOV. Some Advice on Preparing for Simultaneous Interpretation of Current Political Themes.

<sup>13</sup> MASLENNIKOV. Some Advice on Preparing for Simultaneous Interpretation of Current Political Themes.

<sup>14</sup> CHANGSHUAN. Coping Strategies for Fast Delivery in Simultaneous Interpretation.

<sup>15</sup> CHANGSHUAN. Coping Strategies for Fast Delivery in Simultaneous Interpretation.

according to the *Effort Models*, one's total capacity consumption of attentional resources is constant, that is, it cannot be increased, which means that "most of the interpreter's processing capacity will be devoted to comprehension, leaving little energy and time for translating and speaking the target language".<sup>16</sup> Even though the interpretation "would be either incoherent or too fast for the audience's comprehension",<sup>17</sup> the strategy of the interpreter's speeding up may be used as a last resource.

Furthermore, there is the strategy of summarization. As the name suggests, this strategy consists of making a summary of the speaker's speech. In this way, the interpreter can avoid losing audience's attention by trying to speak in the same pace as the speaker or fitting in the same amount of information. This strategy can be used when the interpreter is unable to keep pace, even though he has tried using the previous strategy of speeding-up. It may be an effective solution since it produces "a more succinct speech than the original"<sup>18</sup> and complex information can be made simple. But in order to make the procedure truly work, it is essential that more than one strategy mentioned in this paper be used. A speaker which has previous knowledge of the area in question can respond better to summarization as he can "respond faster by capturing essential information and discarding the trivial".<sup>19</sup> Also an effort is required from the interpreter to speed up and keep pace with the speaker, as this will make summarization more sustainable.

However, the use of this strategy has also its problems, for it consumes a lot of energy. According to Changshuan, when an interpreter faces a speech "densely packed with information or with complex reasoning",<sup>20</sup> a speech with little redundant information, or a speech with jargons and technical vocabulary, "any attempt at summarizing will result in omissions or truncated logic, and the audience will find difficulty following the speaker".<sup>21</sup> Besides, taking into consideration the formula above mentioned –  $TotC = C(L) + C(M) + C(P) + C(C)$  – there is an extra effort

<sup>16</sup> CHANGSHUAN. Coping Strategies for Fast Delivery in Simultaneous Interpretation.

<sup>17</sup> CHANGSHUAN. Coping Strategies for Fast Delivery in Simultaneous Interpretation.

<sup>18</sup> CHANGSHUAN. Coping Strategies for Fast Delivery in Simultaneous Interpretation.

<sup>19</sup> CHANGSHUAN. Coping Strategies for Fast Delivery in Simultaneous Interpretation.

<sup>20</sup> CHANGSHUAN. Coping Strategies for Fast Delivery in Simultaneous Interpretation.

<sup>21</sup> CHANGSHUAN. Coping Strategies for Fast Delivery in Simultaneous Interpretation.

involved in the process of summarization, namely the *summarization effort*, which can be represented by (S). Hence, the effort of summarizing also consumes the total capacity consumption of attentional resources (TotC) and the equation must be reformulated as follows:

$TotC = C(L) + C(M) + C(P) + C(S) + C(C)$ , where S corresponds to the summarization effort

Therefore, summarization is a strategy that should be used by the interpreter only if the previously presented ones fail. And he or she must bear in mind that it "consumes a lot of energy and is not sustainable"<sup>22</sup> for long conferences. Obviously, this is not true for every single act of interpretation and will depend on certain factors such as familiarity of the interpreter with the subject, and its terminology and also his or her ability and agility.

At last there is the strategy that can be used if all the above fails: it is the termination of service. That seems an extreme solution, but it may be acceptable, necessary and possible for interpreters to terminate their services, as "working conditions do not meet the interpreters' minimum requirements".<sup>23</sup> Changshuan also advises that this is certainly the last strategy to be used and that "interpreters who serve as the bridge between speakers and audience should refrain from turning off the microphone (despite it being one possible strategy) unless absolutely necessary".<sup>24</sup> The interpreters should bear in mind that one speaker who speaks fast is just one among many others who are participating in a given congress, and may not necessarily be a trigger for them to turn off their microphones, as their respective turns will be soon over. Changshuan also points out that

many conferences provide SI services simply to raise the prestige of the meeting or as part of the complete language service offered at the conference. If the interpreter determines that this is indeed the case [...] there is even less necessity to turn off the microphone and attract the organizer's attention to interpreters.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> CHANGSHUAN. Coping Strategies for Fast Delivery in Simultaneous Interpretation.

<sup>23</sup> CHANGSHUAN. Coping Strategies for Fast Delivery in Simultaneous Interpretation.

<sup>24</sup> CHANGSHUAN. Coping Strategies for Fast Delivery in Simultaneous Interpretation.

<sup>25</sup> CHANGSHUAN. Coping Strategies for Fast Delivery in Simultaneous Interpretation.

In brief, throughout this text we defined some key terms, looked into the concept of *simultaneous interpretation* and its origin. After that, we introduced some difficulties that an interpreter will probably encounter, and later we focused on the issue of fast speech, that is well known in the simultaneous interpretation area. Through Gile's theory of *Effort Models*, we explained why fast speech can be considered a problem to interpreters and also how this theory is pertinent when setting strategies to overcome that. Based on that theory, some strategies were presented in order to aid an interpreter to overcome the challenge of interpreting fast speech. Through the use of those strategies, even though fast speech may be challenging, it has been verified that it should no longer pose major problems to an effective translation.

## References

- CHANGSHUAN, Li. Coping Strategies for Fast Delivery in Simultaneous Interpretation. *The Journal of Specialised Translation*, [S.l.], n. 13, p. 19-25, Jan. 2010. Available in: <[http://www.jostrans.org/issue13/art\\_li.php](http://www.jostrans.org/issue13/art_li.php)>. Access on: 26 Nov., 2011.
- GILE, Daniel. Testing the Effort Models' Tightrope Hypothesis in Simultaneous Interpreting: A Contribution. *Hermes: Journal of Linguistics*, Meudon, n. 23, 1999, p. 153-172.
- MASLENNIKOV, Igor. Some Advice on Preparing for Simultaneous Interpretation of Current Political Themes. *Translation Journal*, [S.l.], v. 8, n. 2, Apr. 2004. Available in: <<http://www.proz.com/translation-articles/articles/234/>>. Access on: 26 Nov., 2011.
- RAMLER, Siegfried. The Origin and Challenges of Simultaneous Interpretation: The Nuremberg Trial Experience. *Interpretation Studies*, [S.l.], n. 7, p. 7-18, Dec. 2007.
- SETTON, Robin. *Simultaneous Interpretation: A Cognitive-Pragmatic Analysis*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1999. (Benjamin Translation Library).
- SHUTTLEWORTH, Mark; COWIE, Moira. *Dictionary of Translation Studies*. 1. printing. Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 1997.

# The Objectivity of the News: A Comparative Analysis Based on Jakobson's Functions of Communication

Ana Raposo  
Gabriella Larissa  
Lelia Chaves  
Paloma Saraiva  
Vanessa Ruas

Roman Osipovich Jakobson is a Russian linguist and literary theorist who died in 1982. He became one of the greatest linguists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and a pioneer in language, poetry and art analysis. This article intends to draw a parallel between his work on functions of language and the functions used to write news articles in online newspapers by analyzing two different articles on the same subject.

Journalists seek objectivity as one of the main goals of news texts. It is not difficult to find newspaper companies proud of their ability to give "pure" news, without any personal opinion. Students of journalism are taught to write exactly what happened and be careful with any sign of opinion in their texts. But are journalistic texts really objective?

Is it possible to write a purely objective text, only on the basis of the referential function? As we analyze two different types of news in different online newspapers, we can obtain clues to answer these questions. So, based on Jakobson's theory, we realized that it is possible to find different functions of language in journalistic texts, suggesting that the function responsible for objectivity does not always predominate.

Firstly, we will briefly explain Jakobson's theory in order to substantiate our thesis. Jakobson highlights six communication functions based on the Organon-Model by Karl Bühler. In brief, the *referential* function is oriented toward the *context*; the *emotive* (expressive) function is oriented toward the *addresser*; the *conative* (action-inducing, such as a command) function is oriented toward the *addressee*; the *metalingual* (language speaking about language) function is oriented toward the



*code*; and the *poetic* function is oriented toward the *message*. Although we distinguish six basic aspects of language, it is difficult to find texts that contain only one of these functions. Even though the verbal structure relies on the main function, readers should be aware of the role of other functions in the text.<sup>1</sup>

One of the six functions is always the dominant function in a text and usually related to the type of text. In poetry, the dominant function is the poetic function: the focus is on the message itself. The true hallmark of poetry is according to Jakobson "the projection of the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection to the axis of combination". Very broadly speaking, it implies that poetry successfully combines and integrates form and function, that poetry turns the poetry of grammar into the grammar of poetry, so to speak. A famous example of this principle is the political slogan "I like Ike".<sup>2</sup>

Language must be studied taking into consideration the range of its functions. The sender sends a message to the recipient and, in order to be effective, the message requires a context understandable by the recipient, a recipient which is either verbal or capable of verbalization, a code common to the sender and recipient and a contact, a physical channel and a psychological connection between the sender and recipient, which enables them both to enter and stay in communication. When put together, all the six factors involved in verbal communication (sender, message, recipient, context, code and contact) determine a different function of language: referential, emotive, poetic, conative, phatic and metalinguistic.

The referential function concerns the information intended for the recipient; the emotive function is centered on the sender and conveys emotion; the poetic function focuses on the poetic message; the conative function gives guidance to the recipient, often through the vocative and the imperative; the phatic function serves to delay or interrupt the communication to check whether the channel operates; and the metalinguistic function is related to the language itself.

In a news article, the most frequent function is (or should be, as we mentioned) the referential function. Yaguello and Harris – linguists that also work with Jakobson's theory – affirm that the objective of this

<sup>1</sup> JAKOBSON. *Linguística e comunicação*.

<sup>2</sup> SEBEOK. *Style in Language*.

function is to give information and that it refers to the context of the speech. Besides, its main characteristic is purely to give information, the main function of scientific and technical texts. These authors also claim that “human language is never completely neutral, so usually combined with other functions.”<sup>3</sup> That is why we expect to find other functions of language in newspaper texts, even though journalists defend that their writing involves purely objective information.

When we started analyzing the journalistic texts, however, we detected many marks not only of the referential function, but also of other functions, such as poetic and emotive. The presence of these functions of language allows us to prove that it is not only the “fact” (or the context) that is being conveyed by the news, but also some interventions, and even points of view, of the journalist. We analyzed two online articles about the same event. The first was taken from the *BBC News* and the second from *The New York Times*.

Amanda, who was an exchange student in Italy in 2007, and Raffaele Sollecito, her Italian boyfriend, were accused of the murder of Amanda’s flatmate, Meredith Kercher. After three years in jail in Italy, the DNA tests that had been used as proof were found to be contaminated and the jury acquitted Amanda Knox and Raffaele Sollecito of Miss Kercher’s murder.<sup>4</sup> Both articles we analyzed reported Knox’s return to the USA after the time she spent imprisoned in Italy.

In the *BBC* text the referential function can be clearly identified, as it is typical of journalistic texts. For example, in: “An eight-member jury cleared both defendants of Miss Kercher’s murder after doubts were raised over procedures used to gather DNA evidence.”<sup>5</sup> and also in:

During a separate earlier trial, Rudy Guede was convicted of Miss Kercher’s murder for his role in the killing and sentenced to 30 years in prison. On appeal, his conviction was upheld but his sentence reduced to 16 years.<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand, as stated earlier, a text has always more than one function.<sup>7</sup> So, another function that was frequently observed in the

<sup>3</sup> YAGUELLO. *Language through the Looking Glass: Exploring Language and Linguistics*.

<sup>4</sup> MEREDITH Kercher Murder: Timeline.

<sup>5</sup> AMANDA Knox ‘Overwhelmed’ at US Return.

<sup>6</sup> AMANDA Knox ‘Overwhelmed’ at US Return.

<sup>7</sup> YAGUELLO. *Language through the Looking Glass: Exploring Language and Linguistics*.

*BBC* news was the emotive one. As Jakobson states, this function is oriented toward the addresser and it shows marks of the addresser's point of view by the vocabulary selection that he/she makes.<sup>8</sup> Because it is a journalistic text, which is supposed to be free of subjectivity, these marks are fairly subtle, but may be noticed.

In the text, for example, it is affirmed that "Amanda Knox is 'overwhelmed' at US return", and there are also the phrases "being back on US soil" and "their fight for justice continues". These excerpts allow us to suppose that the author plays with form and uses specific words to inform what happened. Using the word "soil" instead of simply writing that she is "back to the US" suggests a relief for arriving home, and from reading the expression "fight for justice", the reader may infer a heroic struggle for a fair ending.

Besides, in the sentence below, the choice of the term "joked" (instead of other options like "said" or "declare") suggests that the journalist may have wanted to soften the image of Knox, highlighting the fact that, because she had arrived at her homeland, she was feeling comfortable enough to even tell a joke. "Speaking at Seattle International Airport, Knox joked that she had to be reminded to speak in English, rather than Italian, before telling reporters: 'I'm really overwhelmed right now'."<sup>9</sup>

The emotive function may also be found in the quotes chosen by the journalist. By citing certain statements and silencing others, we notice that a specific point of view is being highlighted instead of others. Consider the following passage:

Ms Mellas said: 'It's because of the letters, calls and amazing support we have received from all over the world - and especially in Seattle - that we have been able to endure and make sure Amanda had the support she needed'.<sup>10</sup>

Here, the choice of Knox's mother speech, full of emotion, may be able to sensitize the reader (or addressee) to agree with Amanda Knox and her family's side of the story. The choice of this quote over any other (such as a policeman or an inquisitor quote) might also be a mark of

<sup>8</sup> JAKOBSON. *Linguística e comunicação*.

<sup>9</sup> AMANDA Knox 'Overwhelmed' at US Return.

<sup>10</sup> AMANDA Knox 'Overwhelmed' at US Return.

manipulation of language made by the journalist, in order to guide the reader's point of view and interpretation of the facts.

In the article from *The New York Times*, the referential function also prevails, as it is expected: "One of those questions is about Rudy Guede, who in 2008 received a 30-year sentence for sexual assault and aiding and abetting murder in Ms Kercher's death."<sup>11</sup>

We may notice, however, the poetic function in the use of metaphors and adjectives that, other than bringing a colloquial feeling to the text, are suggestive and degrading in terms of meaning. Observe this in the following excerpt by the use the italicized words in the referred context:

But to many Italians, the case was a humiliation, an American media circus that came to a sleepy Umbria hill town and depicted Italy as a banana republic with amateur police officers and compromised magistrates.<sup>12</sup>

In addition, there is a comment that shows the journalist's critical opinion, for he highlights the Italian commentator's mistake about Kercher's age: "Inside the commentator Vittorio Macioce wrote (misstating the age of the housemate, Meredith Kercher, who was 21)."<sup>13</sup>

It is possible to notice that the journalist diverged from the main topic, turning the attention to the current Italian political issues. Consider the passage:

The case, the most-watched trial in Italy after the trials of Mr. Berlusconi, tapped into an intense debate this fall over Italy's justice system at a time when the Berlusconi government is pushing a law that would make it illegal for papers to publish material leaked from preliminary legal investigations.<sup>14</sup>

Here, the journalist uses a confusing construction to drive the attention to Italy's political issues, referring vaguely to Knox's case and focusing on Berlusconi's latest controversies. By driving the reader's attention to a related topic, the journalist keeps distance from the main

<sup>11</sup> DONADIO; POVOLEDO. As Amanda Knox Heads Home, the Debate is Just Getting Started.

<sup>12</sup> DONADIO; POVOLEDO. As Amanda Knox Heads Home, the Debate is Just Getting Started. Authors' highlights.

<sup>13</sup> DONADIO; POVOLEDO. As Amanda Knox Heads Home, the Debate is Just Getting Started.

<sup>14</sup> DONADIO; POVOLEDO. As Amanda Knox Heads Home, the Debate is Just Getting Started.

topic – which for the USA could be a negative one – and gives the reader a new one that is positive for the USA.

As it was already pointed out, by quoting a third person's speech into the article the journalist makes use of the emotive function to persuade the reader of his opinion:

"In the end, it was the trial of a different culture, a clash of cultures more than a legal case," Vittorio Zucconi wrote in the center-left daily *La Repubblica*. "The same girl whom prosecutors depicted as a she-devil starved for sex and orgies, grew, in inverse proportion in American public opinion as a chaste diva who fell into a hornets' nest of inept, evil men."<sup>15</sup>

Although journalists seek for objectivity in news articles, the analysis showed a strong presence of functions of language that convey subjectivity. We also realized that the emotive function in the *BBC* article is more subtle than in *The New York Times* article, even though American journalism has a strong tradition of objectivity and impartiality. It is known that Americans have their "all American way", and in this case, this "way" seems to have affected the impartiality of their journalism, since they were dealing with the involvement of an American girl in another country's politics.

This analysis shows that it is possible to identify different functions of language in journalistic texts. By contrasting two articles from different online news websites, it became clear that journalists tried to guide their readers towards the point they wanted to stress in the two articles we analyzed. In addition, we observed how the articles were structured, that is to say, not only on the basis of the referential function, but with a strong appeal to the emotive function as well.

## References

AMANDA Knox "Overwhelmed" at US Return. *BBC News*, London, 5 Oct. 2011. Available in: <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-15000651>>. Access on: 28 Oct., 2011.

BRANDÃO, Antônio Jackson de Souza. As funções da linguagem (Roman Jakobson). *Jackbran*, [S.l. : s.n.]. Available in: <[http://www.jackbran.pro.br/linguistica/funcoes\\_da\\_linguagem\\_jakobson.htm](http://www.jackbran.pro.br/linguistica/funcoes_da_linguagem_jakobson.htm)>. Access on: 18 Oct., 2011.

DONADIO, Rachel; POVOLEDO, Elisabetta. As Amanda Knox Heads Home, the Debate is Just Getting Started. *The New York Time*, New York, 4 Oct. 2011. Available in: <<http://www>>.

<sup>15</sup> DONADIO; POVOLEDO. As Amanda Knox Heads Home, the Debate is Just Getting Started.

nytimes.com/2011/10/05/world/europe/amanda-knox-freed-after-appeal-in-italian-court.html?ref=world>. Access on: 10 Oct., 2011.

GRZEGA, Joachim. Socioeconomic Linguistics (or Linguistic Socioeconomics): A New Field of European and Global Research and Teaching. *Journal for EuroLinguistiX*, Eichstätt, v. 2, p. 19-43, Sep. 2005. Available in: <<http://www1.ku-eichstaett.de/SLF/EngluVglSW/ELiX/grzega-052.pdf>>. Access on: 18 Oct., 2011.

HONS, Rainer. *The Language of Radio News: A Comparative Study of News Discourse Broadcast in New York City*. 2008. Dissertation (Masters in Philosophy) – University of Viena, Viena, 2008.

JAKOBSON, Roman. *Lingüística e comunicação*. 21. ed. Translation of Izidoro Blikstein e José Paulo Paes. São Paulo: Cultrix, 2005.

MEREDITH Kercher murder: Timeline. BBC News, London, 26 Mar. 2013. Available in: <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-15000651>>. Access on October 28, 2011.

NEW WORLD ENCYCLOPAEDIA. Roman Jakobson. *New World Encyclopaedia*. Available in: <[http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Roman\\_Jakobson](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Roman_Jakobson)>. Access on: 28 Oct., 2011.

SEBEOK, Thomas Albert. *Style in Language*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1960.

YAGUELLO, Marina. *Language through the Looking Glass: Exploring Language and Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

**Part II**  
**Studies in Literature**

# **The Search for Knowledge and the Judgmental Society: A Brief Analysis of *Frankenstein***

Marcela Diniz Guimarães  
Samira Agnes de Cicco Sandes

*Frankenstein*, by Mary Shelley, is a classic of English literature, and due to this it is possible to find several studies analyzing different aspects of this novel. Two very interesting aspects are Victor's pursuit of knowledge and the prejudice that the creature suffers because of his appearance. After carefully reading the novel, we see that these two subjects are deeply discussed by Shelley. So, we could not help but making a connection between them, since we believe that one is a consequence of the other, for the monster is only created to satisfy Victor's will, and he, the monster, ends up suffering the consequences of this obsession for science and the creation of life. One of these consequences is the rejection of the monster by a judgmental society, which still prevails nowadays.

In *Frankenstein*, we are able to see a critique of science and its impacts on society. Many literary critics have written about this particular theme and to guide our work we are going to use the article by La Roque and Teixeira,<sup>1</sup> which discusses the role of science in literature and especially in *Frankenstein*. In this article the authors discuss how people believe that science is something that they can always trust and how Shelley questions this idea.

The roles of the judgmental society and prejudice are discussed by Gigante in her article named "Facing the Ugly: The Case of *Frankenstein*". In her work she explains what ugly represents in the novel and how the

<sup>1</sup> ROQUE; TEIXEIRA. *Frankenstein*, de Mary Shelley, e *Drácula*, de Bram Stoker: gênero e ciência na literatura.



meaning behind it helps us to understand the way our own society judges and treats people. Overall, two important themes in the novel *Frankenstein* are the “search for knowledge” and the “judgmental society”. Victor’s commitment to creating something new is extreme and reflects how this search is strongly present in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The monster’s misplacement in a judgmental society seems to be a warning of the possible negative consequences brought about by a naive search for knowledge.

In *Frankenstein*, Victor represents the obsession with the pursuit of knowledge, and, in order to understand that, we did some research on the historical context of the novel. As acknowledged by many critics, Mary Shelley writes the first work of science fiction in the history of literature. This happens because of the environment in which the novel is placed, both in time and space. *Frankenstein* was written in 1818, when the European people were being able to get more and more information and explanations about scientific theories and discoveries about the human body and other important subjects that were unknown before. That is why *Frankenstein* is surrounded by the scientific world: Mary Shelley creates a character, Victor Frankenstein, to represent this obsession with knowledge and to criticize this social moment of the society to reveal that the consequences of the development of science can be very dangerous.

It is possible to see that the main character in this novel is science itself, for if science was not there to guide Victor, he would never be able to create the monster, and the story would have never happened. Victor is so obsessed with knowledge that he wants to reach a point that has never been achieved before: the generation of life. When the creation of life starts to appear in the novel we see how Shelley starts to criticize science. The problem begins when ethics is ignored and knowledge starts blinding Victor, for he cannot see the meaning behind what he is trying to do, and he is not aware of the consequences of his actions. Victor himself admits his obsession for knowledge as we can see in the passage below:

I ardently desired the acquisition of knowledge. I had often, when at home, thought it hard to remain during my youth cooped up in one place and had longed to enter the world and take my station among other human beings. Now my desires were complied with, and it would, indeed, have been folly to repent.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> SHELLEY. *Frankenstein*, p. 42.

Another relevant passage from the book that shows Victor's obsession is this one: "From this day natural philosophy, and particularly chemistry, in the most comprehensive sense of the term, became nearly my sole occupation."<sup>3</sup> It is possible to see that he is not only studying something because he wants to know more, but he is searching for something that had not been found before. He does not want to only repeat knowledge, he wants to create it; he spends almost every day of his college life working on something that would be new and that had never been discovered previously. All the time and efforts he puts in the search for knowledge are the perfect evidence that he was more than obsessed.

Victor suddenly turns into a villain when he decides to ignore the ethics of science by trying to create life. *Frankenstein*, as a novel of science fiction, brings science as the main character, and sometimes, also as the villain of the story. By showing Victor to the world, Shelley warns people about how knowledge can be dangerous if not treated with integrity and ethics. Victor recognizes that science would be the worst part of his life, for when he is telling his story to Walton and he comments about the words he heard from Professor M. Waldman that had impacted him so much, Victor says: "such were the professor's words – rather let me say such the words of the fate – enounced to destroy me."<sup>4</sup> He recognizes that his pursuit for science is something evil, but only after the damage had been done. While he is creating the monster, he ignores everything that should be considered scientifically correct and acceptable, and, of course, trying to create life is not something that science should be trying to do. Ethics here works as a way to protect people from the dangerous consequences that science can have on society. The young Victor ignores these limits and this is what makes him so evil and hated by the readers. Victor is blinded by science and he cannot distinguish right from wrong anymore, the only thing that he seems to be worried about is his ambition.

Victor also becomes a lonely person, for his obsession with science ends up isolating him from their loved ones, and in the end the result of his work is not shared with society. There are many passages in the book that illustrate how Victor isolates himself during the process of creation of the Creature, one that shows it perfectly is quoted below:

<sup>3</sup> SHELLEY. *Frankenstein*, p. 49.

<sup>4</sup> SHELLEY. *Frankenstein*, p. 46.

The summer months passed while I was thus engaged, heart and soul, in one pursuit. It was a most beautiful season; never did the fields bestow a more plentiful harvest or the vines yield a more luxuriant vintage, but my eyes were insensible to the charms of nature. And the same feelings which made me neglect the scenes around me caused me also to forget those friends who were so many miles absent, and whom I had not seen for so long a time. I knew my silence disquieted them... I knew well therefore what would be my father's feelings, but I could not tear my thoughts from my employment, loathsome in itself, but which had taken an irresistible hold of my imagination. I wished, as it were, to procrastinate all that related to my feelings of affection until the great object, which swallowed up every habit of my nature, should be completed.<sup>5</sup>

It can be noticed that Victor wanted to forget about his feelings and his loved ones while searching for the answer of how life is created; he was totally out of reach and isolated from other people, because he believed that he should only be preoccupied with his work. Science and knowledge, then, are a synonymous of loneliness and isolation. Victor believes that the contact with the ones he loves would distract him from his main objective and he could not allow it to happen, for his desire to create life was so immense that he could not think about nothing else, including feelings. He, then, locks himself in his laboratory and works entirely alone, never letting anyone approach the experiment. It is ironical to see Victor's reaction when he finally finishes the work he is so committed to complete. He is so afraid of what he has done that he simply leaves the Creature and goes for a walk, he does not want to think about the consequences of his action and he just runs away from it. After spending so much time and effort doing something, he simply runs away from it and does not want to deal with it anymore. This fact proves that Victor was working only to satisfy himself, once his creation had no purpose for society like the majority of relevant scientific work often has. Victor isolates himself to create something that will end up being rejected by him. The problem is that not only will Victor reject it, but the whole society.

Victor's uncontrolled obsession ends up causing him to create a monster that will suffer consequences that he could never imagine. When Victor decided to create life with his own hands, his idea was to use beautiful features from corpses and dead animals to make something pleasing

<sup>5</sup> SHELLEY. *Frankenstein*, p. 55.

to be seen. However, when he put the parts together, the combined form came out differently from what he had expected: it did not only become an ugly being, but it was also extremely scary. While Frankenstein was combining the parts, his creation did not seem to be proportional, but it did not bother him until the creature came to life.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless, from the very first moment he saw the creature alive he was "catching and fearing each sound as if it were to announce the approach of the demoniacal corpse to which I [Frankenstein] had so miserably given life".<sup>7</sup> From this excerpt of the book it is possible to see that the creature suffers prejudice from the moment he starts breathing, and still, from his own creator. Victor Frankenstein did not know, however, that this would be the natural reaction of all human beings that had some kind of contact with the Creature. One of the passages containing prejudice against the monster is when he saves a young girl from falling into a river. When he held the girl, avoiding the tragedy, a man who was accompanying her took a gun out of his pocket and shot at the creature.

Another passage that shows the creature having contact with humans is when he finds a small cottage in the middle of the woods. He was wandering alone for a very long time in the forest when he bumped into the cottage. A family with a blind man, known as old De Lacy, his daughter Agatha, and his son Felix lived there. The creature observed them for several months until he decided to approach, for they seemed to be very amiable and respectful to other people. The creature thought that if they knew about the admiration he had for them, they would accept him as for what he was, and they would not mind about his terrible appearance. Knowing he would be feared by the children, who could see, he waited until they left the cottage to come inside and to talk to the blind man. As he imagined, the blind man, who did not judge him by his appearance, treated him very respectably and listened carefully to what he had to say. On the other hand, when Agatha and Felix, accompanied by a friend, Safie, came back, they showed disgust when they looked at him: Agatha fainted, Safie rushed out of the cottage, and Felix hit the monster with a stick.

<sup>6</sup> GIGANTE. Facing the Ugly: The Case of *Frankenstein*.

<sup>7</sup> SHELLEY. *Frankenstein*, p. 60.

It is possible to see through these two passages that people did not even give the creature a chance to explain himself, for either his appearance was too ugly to be faced or his terrible-looking body made him seem like a dangerous monster whose intentions were only to hurt people – he would not be good enough to save them or to just be nice to them. Also, it can be noticed through the latter passage, as the creature talked to old De Lacy and he listened to him attentively, the monster could possibly be considered a normal human being if it was not for his appearance and the way in which he was created, for he could speak, he could walk, and he also had feelings, just like any other human being.

In conclusion, this essay intends to show how Victor Frankenstein's search for knowledge and ambition lead him to be concerned only about his experiments. In order to feel recognized in the scientific field, he had the selfish idea of creating life using his own hands, and he did not measure the consequences this would have neither in the creature's life nor in society. The creature did not turn out as the scientist expected him to be, and due to his unnatural appearance, the monster felt rejected, wronged, and suffered prejudice from the society of his time.

## References

GIGANTE, Denise. Facing the Ugly: The Case of *Frankenstein*. *English Literature History*, Baltimore, v. 67, n. 2, p. 565-587, 2000. Available in: <<http://tinyurl.com/facingtheugly>>. Access on: 14 Oct. 2011.

ROQUE, Lucía de La; TEIXEIRA, Luiz Antonio. *Frankenstein*, de Mary Shelley, e *Drácula*, de Bram Stoker: gênero e ciência na literatura. *História, Ciências, Saúde: Manguinhos*, Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 11-34, Jun. 2001. Available in: <<http://www.scielo.br/pdf/hcsm/v8n1/a01v08n1.pdf>>. Access on: 27 Sep. 2011.

SHELLEY, Mary. *Frankenstein*. [S.l.]: Planet eBook, 2012. Available in: <<http://www.planetebook.com/Frankenstein.asp>> Access on: 13 Nov. 2011.

# Exposing a Mind: The Use of Stream of Consciousness in Virginia Woolf's "The New Dress"

Ana Luiza Rezende Smith Maia Girodo  
Camila Matias von Randow  
Juliana Guerra de Moura  
Natália Carvalho Cristóforo

When it comes to any kind of story, it is noticeable that the way it is told influences greatly on the way it is perceived, and this is why different strategies and techniques are used by the authors depending on which perspective they want their story to have. The chosen option will be crucial to how occurrences will be comprehended, since it is the lens through which they will be portrayed: all the information we obtain about the events in a story and how we respond to them are very much dependent on the perspective we have. Some authors like to tell a story from a third-person narrator's perspective; others like to write from a first-person narrator's perspective. Each kind of point of view has its own "formulas" in order to create particular effects on the readers and there is one technique used in third-person narratives that deserves some special attention: the stream of consciousness technique. According to Humphrey, it was developed by modern writers such as Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, William Faulkner, and Dorothy Richardson. These writers "have created a fiction centered on the core of human experience",<sup>1</sup> which means that they deeply focus on what is happening inside a character's mind.

According to Bowling, the stream of consciousness technique can be defined as "that narrative method by which the author attempts to give a direct quotation of the mind – not merely the language area but of the whole consciousness".<sup>2</sup> This means that the use of the aforementioned

<sup>1</sup> HUMPHREY. *Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel: A Study of James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Dorothy Richardson, William Faulkner, and Others*, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> BOWLING. What is the Stream of Consciousness Technique?

tioned technique implies in narratives that "have as their essential subject matter the consciousness of one or more characters".<sup>3</sup> The stream of consciousness "intends to render the flow of myriad impressions – visual, auditory, physical, associative, and subliminal – that impinge on the consciousness of an individual and form part of his awareness along with the trend of his rational thoughts".<sup>4</sup> That is to say that the narrative is "filtered", according to Patel through "perceptions, emotions, feelings and observations"<sup>5</sup> it is, therefore, a very particular narrative, filled with all sorts of personal impressions of one (or more) character(s).

This is precisely the reason why writers use this technique: it can be used to add depth to the narrative and focus on a single point of view to achieve a certain effect. According to Humphrey, through the stream of consciousness, novelists can "enlarge fictional art by describing the inner states of their characters", which is exactly what Virginia Woolf, known for using this technique, believes: "for her, the process of inner realization of truth could only be found on the level of the mind that is not expressed."<sup>6</sup>

The idea of truth in the hidden level of the mind is shown by Woolf in her short story "The New Dress", in which the central themes are made clear to the reader through the use of the technique. The use of stream of consciousness in Virginia Woolf's "The New Dress" helps to build the social aspect of the story through the exposition of the character's conflicts which would be oblivious to the reader. It shows how Mabel's struggles are related to her social condition and how she is bothered by it, even though it is clear that the insecurities she has are only in her mind. By exposing Mabel's mind, Virginia Woolf reveals conflicts, truths and delusions. It is important to point out the fact that no sources were found on the use of the stream of consciousness technique as a strategy to reveal the character's social condition in this short story, in the university library or online, so this analysis was conducted solely by the authors of this essay.

<sup>3</sup> HUMPHREY. *Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel: A Study of James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Dorothy Richardson, William Faulkner, and Others*, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA. Stream of Consciousness.

<sup>5</sup> PATEL. Point of View Technique in Short Story.

<sup>6</sup> HUMPHREY. *Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel: A Study of James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Dorothy Richardson, William Faulkner, and Others*, p. 7.

In the story, the stream of consciousness reveals something hidden inside Mabel that is caused by external aspects. Mabel Waring's thoughts and feelings are central to the narrative. The focus is more on character than on plot, which is revealed as the readers learn about the protagonist. At the beginning of the story, we already find traces of the stream of consciousness technique. When Virginia Woolf presents us the situation, and, most of all, Mabel, she gives psychological descriptions of what is going on in her mind and from that the reader is capable of knowing what is wrong with the character's behavior: "the sense she had had, ever since she was a child, of being inferior to other people".<sup>7</sup> The conflicts Mabel has are only in her mind. She was the one who thought she could not be fashionable, it was her who compared herself with a fly, and it was her who felt that the yellow dress was a penance she had deserved. Thus, if Mabel's feelings had not been exposed through the main character's stream of consciousness, the causes of her strange conduct (she goes to a party and excludes herself in the drawing-room; she pretends to observe a painting because she was feeling like a fish out of water and did not want people to notice that; she lies to the other guests pretending she is interested in what they are saying) would not be clear, for what is happening to her has a different interpretation than the one the reader would have only through his or her own impressions of the story.

As briefly mentioned in the previous paragraph, Mabel frequently refers to herself as a fly in the saucer. It is one struggle (among others) that the main character deals with. When she does not feel comfortable in a situation, it is said that she uses lines from books she read in the past in order to use them as a kind of spell to wipe out the feeling of agony. The fly metaphor she uses, revealed through the stream of consciousness, reflects that Mabel feels inferior to other people because of her social condition. First, Mabel tries to think that all people are the same, saying that all people "are like flies trying to crawl over the edge of the saucer."<sup>8</sup> However, she quickly changes her mind, coming to the conclusion that she could not be on the same level of others: she sees other people as "dragonflies, butterflies, beautiful insects", but she sees herself as a sim-

<sup>7</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

<sup>8</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.



ple fly drawn in the saucer. Her feeling of inferiority and the comparison she makes between herself and other people supports the idea that her inferiority complex is connected to her social status: since people who belong to upper social classes have a better condition for buying expensive garments, they can be represented by more attractive insects like “dragonflies, butterflies, beautiful insects.”<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, people who have a lower status do not possess much money to invest on beautiful outfits, thus they can be represented by flies. That is exactly how Mabel feels – as “dowdy, decrepit, horribly dingy old fly”,<sup>10</sup> because she thinks that she does not have a good condition to afford a new, stylish dress that would make her feel fashionable and comfortable enough to fit in at a party.

Furthermore, Mabel’s opinion about parties reinforces her awareness of her own social condition. After Robert Haydon’s “quite polite, quite insincere” comment on Mabel’s feeling dowdy, she reflects upon the fact that “a party makes things either much more real, or much less real”.<sup>11</sup> From one point of view, parties make things more real because differences are evidenced. A great example is related to the guests’ clothes. The way a person dresses may reflect something about him or herself, and also about his or her social status. Parties are social events in which the participants pay attention to the way others speak, eat, talk or walk. However, this fact is, most of the time, unconscious. People do pay attention to them and are influenced by them, but are not aware of it. With Mabel it is different, because she sees the truth, she pays attention to details, especially in relation to herself and to how people see her: “she saw in a flash to the bottom of Robert Haydon’s heart; she saw through everything”.<sup>12</sup> This conscious mind is a sign that she sees herself in this kind of society, but feels that she does not belong to it. She does feel inferior to other people, ever since she was a child, and the reader knows that because of the kind of narrative used.

Another sign that leads us to think that Mabel is influenced by society but wants to hide this fact from others is that she takes other people’s

<sup>9</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

<sup>10</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

<sup>11</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

<sup>12</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

opinions into account very often and very easily. When Mabel makes a comment looking at the picture, she pretends to be talking about it. However, we know she was actually talking about her dress “so old-fashioned”. This fact shows that her self-esteem is based on what everybody at the party thinks about her. By saying that the picture is old-fashioned, she actually talks about her own dress in order to gain Charles Burt’s attention, since she feels the need to be praised by others and is fully conscious of it: “one word of praise, one word of affection from Charles would have made all the difference to her at the moment”.<sup>13</sup> This means that Mabel expects positive acknowledgment from the society and from the people surrounding her in order to make her feel comfortable in her own skin, for she herself cannot do it: she sees herself as old-fashioned and only other people’s opinions would make her feel more confident about herself and raise her self-esteem. Her own opinion is not enough: positive reactions from other people “would have changed her life”,<sup>14</sup> but not positive thoughts from herself.

Since she has such low self-esteem, she is unable to believe not only in her own thoughts about her looks, but she also seems to find it difficult to agree with positive comments and to consider them in detriment of negative ones. Because she feels inferior, she sees irony when a person compliments her. Miss Milan is the one who makes Mabel feel more comfortable about herself, making “an extraordinary bliss shoot through her heart” as she looks at herself in the mirror wearing her new dress, and the consequence of this is that she feels “suddenly, honestly, full of love for Miss Milan, much, much fonder of Miss Milan than of any one in the whole world”.<sup>15</sup> This feeling, however, is not a long-lasting one, for the thoughts of inadequacy and inferiority arise again, especially when Charles Burt does not praise her. At this point, we realize that not only she is dependent on other people’s opinions, but she also has a tendency to accept negative reactions more easily: “Why, she asked herself, can’t I feel one thing always, feel quite sure that Miss Milan is right, and Charles wrong and stick to it?”.<sup>16</sup> She is unable to feel quite sure that Miss Milan

<sup>13</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

<sup>14</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

<sup>15</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

<sup>16</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

is right because of how low she thinks of herself and feels that Charles is right for the same reasons. Upon trying on her new dress, she feels beautiful. However, when she does not receive the praise she expected, her opinion of herself changes: Mabel holds onto society's opinions, no matter what they are.

Still, along with all the mixed feelings of uneasiness and disbelief about what others say of her, Mabel pays attention to her own thoughts, which are being continuously reported to the reader. While talking to Mrs. Holman, Mabel sees their image in the looking glass, which can be a representation of her thoughts: a playing of social roles. The mirror plays a very important role in this story: it appears to show that Mabel sees herself. She is aware of her condition. She knows who she is and she knows she is not like those people who are around her at the party. In the mirror, she says that she sees two buttons, which represent both women. We get to this conclusion because she distinguishes one from the other by their colors, which are the colors of the characters' dresses. The yellow one, Mabel, was solitary, self-centered and detached, while the black one, Mrs. Holman, was leaning forward and telling a story, playing her role of being sociable.

The way Mabel describes the buttons is important, especially in relation to the focus that she puts on the colors: yellow, which may represent cowardice, and black, which may mean sophistication and convention. From this point of view, it is clear that Mabel is detached, not interested in keeping their talk, but is not courageous enough to leave the conversation, while Mrs. Holman is talking to her only because of the so-called social contract. Mabel's description of what she sees lets us, readers, know what she is feeling and thinking. The access to her mind and thoughts is free through the looking-glass. It reflects her heart. It is unnecessary to explain her feelings, since it is clear what they are.

Once again, looking at the mirror, Mabel sees herself as an oppressed woman who deserves such fate, though it was not her fault to belong to an inferior class of society. Keeping her eyes on the mirror, Mabel is detached. She does not pay attention to the conversation she is having with Mrs. Holman. Her own reflection makes her realize that she is despised for being "a feeble, vacillating creature"<sup>17</sup> at the same

<sup>17</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

time she understands that the yellow dress she wears is a penance she deserves for being that way. Mabel sees the whole situation as inescapable: if she was a better, more beautiful person, she would be dressed like Rose Shaw, "in lovely, clinging green with a ruffle of swansdown",<sup>18</sup> but she is not and will never be Rose. For her, she is feeble and deserves a punishment which comes in the form of a dress, while Rose Shaw, a beautiful woman always dressed "in the height of the fashion,"<sup>19</sup> deserves the beauty she has. She realizes, however, that her condition is not her fault: the way she was raised, in a rather poor environment, has turned her into what she is now. Her family has never had enough money and there was "no romance, nothing extreme about them all".<sup>20</sup> Being lost in a huge family, one child in the middle of so many others, has made her uninteresting, a girl who had done the same as the rest of her family and was just like her aunts.

Mabel realizes that her family and the environment she was raised in have made her mediocre and boring, "nothing very clear or very bold."<sup>21</sup> She has become just like the rest of her family, "poor water-veined creatures who did nothing",<sup>22</sup> not free of punishment, but also not guilty: it was not her fault that she belonged to an inferior class of society since she could not be blamed for being born into such a family. Considering herself "a fretful, weak, unsatisfactory mother, a wobbly wife", being "like all her brothers and sisters",<sup>23</sup> Mabel understands her flaws but feels herself free from any guilt: she is a victim.

After a long struggle with her own thoughts and self image, in the final scene of the story Mabel decides that "she would become a new person".<sup>24</sup> She convinces herself that she would change, that she would not need to worry about clothes again. However, when she is leaving the party, she says: "I have enjoyed myself enormously".<sup>25</sup> One more time, it is a sign that Mabel cares about what other people think about

<sup>18</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

<sup>19</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

<sup>20</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

<sup>21</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

<sup>22</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

<sup>23</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

<sup>24</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

<sup>25</sup> WOOLF. *The New Dress*.

her. We can see that even after her decision to be transformed, she says she enjoyed the party, but it is clear for the reader that this is not true. We know the truth because we have access to Mabel's mind through the stream of consciousness – right after her saying goodbye to Mrs. Dalloway, she says to herself: "Lies, lies, lies!"<sup>26</sup> It is evident that the fact that she pretends to like the event is related to her acting according to the conventions of society. Mabel's attitude is different from her real feelings, and this means that she is willing to hide what is inside her because she cares about her acceptance in a social environment.

The exposition of all these thoughts and conflicts dealing with social condition and self-image makes a story about a woman in a party into a complex narrative about the character's oppressed mind. The exhibition of Mabel's conflicts and behavior would be alien to the reader if the stream of consciousness technique had not been used. In simple words, this short story would not be the same, for the reader would not have access to the root of the character's inferiority complexes that are in her mind. Many times in the story, the reader knows what Mabel feels through the image she describes at the looking-glass. It can be considered a symbol of her mind, a strategy that Woolf used to externalize the main character's impressions. Virginia Woolf chose to expose Mabel's feelings and struggles through the stream of consciousness technique, in order to let the reader know what is happening and why this is happening. Because of the fact that we have access to the mind of the character, we are able to notice how her struggles are related to her social condition in general: she worries about other people's impressions of herself.

## References

ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA. Stream of Consciousness. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online Academic Edition*. [S.l.]: Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2013. Available in: <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/133295/stream-of-consciousnes>>. Access on: 26 Sep. 2011.

BOWLING, Lawrence Edward. What is the Stream of Consciousness Technique? *PMLA*, New York, v. 65, n. 4, p. 333-345, Jun. 1950. Available in: <<http://www.jstor.org/pss/459641>>. Access on: 29 Sep. 2011.

HUMPHREY, Robert. *Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel: A Study of James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Dorothy Richardson, William Faulkner, and Others*. 6. printing. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965.

<sup>26</sup> WOOLF. The New Dress.

PATEL, Rakesh. Point of View Technique in Short Story. *Yahoo! Voices*, Sunnyvale, 1 Feb. 2010. Available in: <[http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/2645989/point\\_of\\_view\\_technique\\_in\\_short\\_story.html?cat=44](http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/2645989/point_of_view_technique_in_short_story.html?cat=44)>. Access on: 1 Oct. 2011.

WOOLF, Virginia. The New Dress. *Dibache*, [S.l. : s.n.]. Available in: <<http://www.dibache.com/text.asp?cat=51&id=2223>>. Access on: 11 Oct. 2011.

# A Brief Analysis of Symbolism in "A Rose for Emily"

Bruna Fortes Moreno Fernandes  
Heidi Henriette Louwerens  
Melina Iasmin Rodrigues Maciel  
Talita Cassemiro Paiva

"A Rose for Emily" was originally published on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 1930. It was Faulkner's first short story published in a major magazine. William Faulkner is a very important figure in the 20<sup>th</sup> century Literature. He was born in the Post-Civil War South and his writing reflects the changing society he lived in:

His literary work captivates the emotional transition faced by southerners as they emerged from an era gone-by to a new, more modern period. The characters he creates exemplify the conflict that was embedded deep within the human spirit of southerners who lived in this changing society.<sup>1</sup>

In the above mentioned short story the focus is on Emily Grierson, an eccentric southern spinster, who denies the obvious changes in her life and society. This article shows how the symbols presented in the story contribute to the creation of the atmosphere and foreshadow the outcome of the story.

Amidst all the symbolism present in this short story, the one that could be said to be the most peculiar is the rose mentioned in its title. After all, there is no such rose for Emily in the story per se. Hence, many possible interpretations have been created in order to try to unravel the mystery behind the rose. According to Getty, many critics believe that the rose could be the "final tribute" given by the narrator, who, possibly touched by Miss Emily's story, preserved the secret of Homer's murder

<sup>1</sup> QUN. Analysis of the Changing Portraits in "A Rose for Emily".

until her death, or even that the narrator offers “unwittingly little more than bought flowers for Miss Emily”;<sup>2</sup> not being able to grasp the severity of the case and treating her death as he would treat any other, until the gray hair is finally found in the pillow.

Another possible interpretation shows that Homer could be the rose. The combination of the rose-colored bedroom and the presence of Homer’s corpse make it resemble a dried rose, and thus, he would be “a relic of the past”.<sup>3</sup> However, Getty claims that the interpretation of the rose should not be done by focusing on any of the internal elements. On the contrary, “the focus should be on the impact of the titular rose itself”.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, one possible and effective way to reflect on the symbolism of the rose present in the title is by taking the sub-rosa concept into consideration. Sometimes, roses are associated with secrecy or privacy. The Greek legend also reinforces this concept as:

Harpocrates stumbled upon Venus while she was making love with a handsome youth, and Cupid bribed the god of silence to keep quiet about the affair by giving him the first rose ever created. This story made the rose the emblem of silence.<sup>5</sup>

The scholar, Jack Scherting, proposes a Freudian reading of the short story which makes use of this concept only to suggest that Emily’s attachment to her father was transferred to her lover, Homer Baron. According to him, the townspeople never recognized the Oedipal love present in their affair, not even Emily herself. Such fact shows the presence of the sub-rosa concept in the story, hiding from everyone that Emily’s love for Homer was most probably only her longing for her deceased father.

Getty, on the other hand, goes against this theory, arguing that “the entire story operates sub-rosa to conceal that iron-gray hair on the pillow until after Emily is dead”,<sup>6</sup> instead of the concept being used solely for expressing Emily’s state of mind with her former lover. Ergo, following Getty’s argument, may affirm that Faulkner manages to protect

<sup>2</sup> GETTY. Faulkner’s “A Rose for Emily”.

<sup>3</sup> GETTY. Faulkner’s “A Rose for Emily”.

<sup>4</sup> GETTY. Faulkner’s “A Rose for Emily”.

<sup>5</sup> HENDRICKSON *apud* GETTY. Faulkner’s “A Rose for Emily”.

<sup>6</sup> GETTY. Faulkner’s “A Rose for Emily”.



Emily's privacy, so that no one is able to grasp the truth until the very last moment.

According to Getty, the sub-rosa concept could also carry religious connotations. Since a rose was carved over the confessional of the Roman Catholic Church and was seen as a symbol of silence, the act of confession could be conveyed by Faulkner, who ultimately confesses her actions. Lastly, even the house itself may be under the sub-rosa concept, both physically and figuratively. It is in that place, considered an eyesore among eyesores by the people, that every mystery is hidden and then finally unraveled. The house not only conceals Homer's body but also the secrets that Emily was able to maintain it hidden while alive. All her privacy remains in that building, and it is only violated "after the flowers have been placed on Emily's grave".<sup>7</sup>

Another symbolic feature of the text is the unnamed narrator. Curry writes that:

The men in the town are portrayed as respectful of Emily, while the women are curious. The narrator is both, and like the townspeople cannot know what goes on in Emily's life. This bisexual narration admits the existence of the female protagonist's subjectivity and in doing so has to admit, through this subjectivity which the narrator cannot be a part of, the gendered aspect of narrative itself.<sup>8</sup>

These different attitudes towards Emily can be identified in this excerpt from the first lines of the story itself:

When Miss Emily Grierson died, the whole town went to her funeral: the men through a sort of respectful affection for a fallen monument, the women mostly out of curiosity to see the inside of her house, which no one save an old man-servant – a combined gardener and cook – had seen in at least ten years.<sup>9</sup>

There's a conflict for we don't know the gender of the narrator, we infer that there's an attempt by the author to be impartial in order to give room for the reader to use his or her own imagination or critical thinking to figure this out. Curry accepts that gender can be motivated by a division between respect and curiosity, affection for a representation and intention to view the insides of a house.

<sup>7</sup> GETTY. Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily".

<sup>8</sup> CURRY. Gender and Authorial Limitation in Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily".

<sup>9</sup> FAULKNER. A Rose for Emily.

Curry also states that Miss Emily "is the woman, the object who provides the reason to feel 'affection' and to 'see' and "our whole town "floats as subject of the sentence". The style of Faulkner's language has its means to "subordinate Emily, supposedly the subject of the tale, and to elevate the town as the truer subject."<sup>10</sup> There is a transition movement from Subject to Object, not in a linear order; the short story is written in *media res*. Emily starts as a celebrity who died in Jefferson town and follows being the object to represent the fallen monument, the fallen tradition.

Emily is considered by many critics as the expression of the "Old South" that was slowly fading and opening way for a new concept which can be identified in the character named Homer. His arrival provokes Jefferson City and, consequently, diminishes Emily's reputation among the public who had her as a reference of behavior in this Southern small town. Emily, who followed her father's rules – in a male-oriented patriarchal society, was seen as an exemplar person. Her house was also an indicator of tradition being maintained, for having a Negro working there although slavery was over. Homer is the symbol of innovation, modernity, industrialization, progress over values. Miss Emily, with her dilapidated mansion, in the middle of the town, surrounded by changes and growth, was the last portrait of the "Old South" in town. In a way, she was rebellious, because of her refusal to change and this was her most tragic characteristic.

Her father acted as if no man was ever good enough for her or for the Grierson family. Therefore, she was never able to experience passion or the rose of love, until she met Homer. Somehow, it seems that she murdered him to keep control of the situation, and we can think of necrophilia (attraction to corpses and control of relationships) behavior, studied by Sigmund Freud, as Homer's body is found, after Emily's death, lying in a bed, and next to the body "[...] in the second pillow, there was the indentation of a head. [...] we saw a long strand of iron-gray hair."<sup>11</sup>

Emily represents the past and the history of that city. She is a "fallen monument"<sup>12</sup> and so is her house. She belongs to southern tradition and old values. The narrator says that "Miss Emily had been a

<sup>10</sup> CURRY. Gender and Authorial Limitation in Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily".

<sup>11</sup> FAULKNER. A Rose for Emily.

<sup>12</sup> FAULKNER. A Rose for Emily.

tradition, a duty, and a care; a sort of hereditary obligation upon the town".<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, the new generation represents progress and development. Homer is a good example. Emily's choice of dating Homer and keeping his corpse is very ironic. This combination of past and present brings a deadly result. She caused Homer's death in a desperate attempt to freeze time. Then, Emily takes control of her own time and "changes cease to exist".<sup>14</sup>

Powell affirms that Faulkner "creates numerous figurative portraits of Emily herself by framing her in doorways or windows".<sup>15</sup> The view the narrator has of Emily and her father follows this frame structure. He reveals that he and the town people "had long thought of them as a tableau, Miss Emily a slender figure in white in the background, her father a straddled silhouette in the foreground, his back to her and clutching a horsewhip, the two of them framed by the back-flung front door".<sup>16</sup> This portrait shows the position and the value that women had at that time. Women didn't have any participation in society; they were only housewives. Emily's father held a horsewhip in the picture previously mentioned. It represents the oppression he imposed on her: not a physical and violent one, but he oppressed her ideas and wishes. She really desired to marry, but he prevented her from accomplishing this. That dark controlling figure, the father, always kept everyone away from her, no one was ever good enough for her, as she was a Grierson. His wrong concepts of wealth and position in society dismissed all of her opportunities to have a husband.

Faulkner uses the symbol of portraits to construct the scenes from Emily's life. It is an artifice for the reader to follow the changes throughout the story timeline. These portraits enable the readers to picture the story, for they are representations, like photos of moments of the short story. While young, Emily is first portrayed as a "slender figure in white",<sup>17</sup> a virginal figure, representing purity and beauty. She was a young woman belonging to an important family. The lexical choices in

<sup>13</sup> FAULKNER. A Rose for Emily.

<sup>14</sup> POWELL. Changing Portraits in "A Rose for Emily".

<sup>15</sup> POWELL. Changing Portraits in "A Rose for Emily".

<sup>16</sup> FAULKNER. A Rose for Emily.

<sup>17</sup> FAULKNER. A Rose for Emily.

her description imply she was pretty, besides it is said that she had many suitors. However, there is the shadow of her father standing behind, controlling her. The father represents old values and traditions. The fact that he was pictured with his back to her "suggested his disregard for Emily's emotional welfare".<sup>18</sup>

If taken as representations of the South and the Southerners, it is possible to say that Miss Emily represents the new generation that could be in contact with new things, a new reality, and her father represents the old tradition, preventing her from knowing anything different. Emily was so attached to her father's figure that when he died she couldn't handle it. She kept her father's body and she didn't want to let anyone bury him. Emily didn't know anything different from living by her father's tradition, so she was lost when he died. Qun states that "when her father passed away she was unable to survive"<sup>19</sup> and because of that, instead of adapting to her new life, she secluded herself. According to Qun, "even after his death Emily's father played a huge role in her life. The crayon portrait of her father, which appears repeatedly in the story, symbolizes his continued presence in her life".<sup>20</sup>

At this point of the story, the reader is presented to another portrait: after her father's funeral, Emily's appearance changed dramatically. Instead of being free from her father's influence, Emily became the representation of his old moral values. She didn't grow up to be a woman, thus she was represented as a girl who lacked sexuality. In the following quotation the citizens describe her appearance: "When we saw her again, her hair was cut short, making her look like a girl, with a vague resemblance to those angles in colored church windows, sort of tragic and serene".<sup>21</sup> It was at this moment of her life that she met Homer Baron, representative of "the new-born class and culture of the North – traveling around, experiencing a lot, enjoying timely, having good relations and being irresponsible".<sup>22</sup> Emily couldn't bear the insult of Homer leaving her. After Baron's disappearance she is portrayed again, yet then she

<sup>18</sup> QUN. Analysis of the Changing Portraits in "A Rose for Emily".

<sup>19</sup> QUN. Analysis of the Changing Portraits in "A Rose for Emily".

<sup>20</sup> QUN. Analysis of the Changing Portraits in "A Rose for Emily".

<sup>21</sup> FAULKNER. A Rose for Emily.

<sup>22</sup> QUN. Analysis of the Changing Portraits in "A Rose for Emily".

was the dominant dark silhouette, the protagonist had “established her dominance with this act of murder”.<sup>23</sup>

The fact that Emily has moved to the room downstairs is also considered a symbol of her personality and the status of her relationship with the townspeople. It relates to the fact that she is considered a city monument:

Emily shut off the top floor – or her private life – and allowed townspeople to view only her public image. Just as an idol occupied its nook on a wall, Emily continued to occupy her niche as the last Grierson.<sup>24</sup>

According to Powell, Emily’s final portrait “contrasts sharply with the portrait of her youth”. When she gets old, she becomes a “fat woman in black”.<sup>25</sup> She has lost her purity, her beauty and her hope to get married. When some authorities of the city visited her in order to discuss her old debts, she was very impolite. As the narrator reveals, “her voice was dry and cold”.<sup>26</sup> In this particular scene, she seems more like a man, maybe more similar to her father, than like a woman who used to be fragile and submissive. Her behavior is justified by the fact that she was a lonely woman combined with the education she had received from her father. At this point of the story, Emily had already lost track of the changes in the society she lived in. Powell affirms that “time and its inescapable changes have died” for Emily.<sup>27</sup> This explains her strange appearance, her black dress and the fact that she was sleeping with a corpse.

Emily’s mysterious secret is hidden by the symbolic elements that the story contains. The rose, the changes in Emily’s appearance and her house are hints of the story’s tragic outcome. All these elements create suspense and lead the reader to the surprising gothic ending. Besides, the conflict between Southern and Northern states in America can be glimpsed throughout these symbolic elements, in which characters and situations are representative of the historical background portrayed by Faulkner. The author is successful in keeping readers and critics interested

<sup>23</sup> QUN. Analysis of the Changing Portraits in “A Rose for Emily”.

<sup>24</sup> QUN. Analysis of the Changing Portraits in “A Rose for Emily”.

<sup>25</sup> FAULKNER. A Rose for Emily.

<sup>26</sup> FAULKNER. A Rose for Emily.

<sup>27</sup> POWELL. Changing Portraits in “A Rose for Emily”.

and always searching for new readings of the story. Therefore, the readings and analysis presented in this essay are far from being the final answer to the rose's mystery. It intends, however, to be a base for whoever wants to unravel more of this terrific short story.

## References

CURRY, Renee R. Gender and Authorial Limitation in Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily". *Mississippi Quarterly*, Starkville, v. 47, n. 3, p. 391-402, 1994. Available in: <<http://www.lettras.ufmg.br/profs/marcel/data1/arquivos/Rose3.txt>>. Access on: 29 Sep. 2011.

FAULKNER, William. A Rose for Emily. In: MEYER, Michael. *The Bedford Introduction to Literature*. 5th ed. Boston: Bedford, 1999. p. 72-78.

GETTY, Laura J. Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily". *The Explicator*, v. 63, n. 4, p. 230-234, 2005. Available in: <<http://www.lettras.ufmg.br/profs/marcel/data1/arquivos/Rose2.pdf>>. Access on: 29 Sep. 2011.

POWELL, Janice A. Changing Portraits in "A Rose for Emily". *Teaching Faulkner*, Granby, [s/d]. Available in: <[http://www6.semo.edu/cfs/TFN\\_online/rose\\_powell.htm](http://www6.semo.edu/cfs/TFN_online/rose_powell.htm)>. Access on: 29 Sep. 2011.

QUN, Xie. Analysis of the Changing Portraits in "A Rose for Emily". *Canadian Social Science*, Laval, v. 3, n. 2, p. 66-69, Apr. 2007. Available in: <<http://www.lettras.ufmg.br/profs/marcel/data1/arquivos/Rose4.pdf>>. Access on: 29 Sep. 2011.

SCHERTING, Jack. Emily Grierson's Oedipus Complex: Motif, Motive, and Meaning in Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily". *Studies in Short Fiction*, Fayetteville, v. 17, n. 4, p. 397-405, 1980.

# Manuel Bandeira: Life, Disease, and Poetry

Marina Mattos  
Patrícia Souza  
Raíssa Almeida  
Wagner Fredmar Guimarães Júnior

Manuel Bandeira was a Brazilian poet who lived in Rio de Janeiro and integrated the Modernist movement. His life was marked by a serious disease: tuberculosis. This situation affected his work as a writer, reflecting on his poems. This article is intended to discuss the relationship between the poetic speaker and the author himself, analyzing five selected poems in comparison with his personal difficulties caused by his health problems. In order to contextualize the literary analysis, it is necessary to give an overview of Bandeira's life.

Manuel Carneiro de Souza Bandeira Filho was born in the city of Recife, Pernambuco, Brasil, on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1886. His family moved to Rio de Janeiro when he was four years old, and later on to Santos and again to Rio de Janeiro. They went back to Recife, Pernambuco, in 1892, where Bandeira studied in Irmãos Barros Barretos Primary School. In 1896, his family moved back to Rio and he studied in Externato do Ginásio Nacional High School.

When he was 17 years old, his life started to change. His family was then living in São Paulo and he joined Escola Politécnica in order to become an architect. He also started studying drawing and painting. However, in the end of 1904, he found out that he had tuberculosis. Then he moved to Rio de Janeiro looking for better weather to help with his health.

Six years later, he enrolled for a poetry contest by Academia Brasileira de Letras (The Brazilian Academy of Literature). In this context,

he was influenced by several authors, such as Apollinaire, Charles Cros and Mac-Fionna Leod, and started writing his first free lines. Later on, he moved to Switzerland to look for treatment for his serious disease, but came back in 1914 due to the First World War. As he returned, he released his first book of poems, called *A cinza das horas* (The Ashes of the Hours). In the following year, he published his second book: *Carnaval* (Carnival). Both his books were greatly complimented by modernist writers.

Manuel Bandeira didn't join the Brazilian Week on Modern Arts, in 1922, but one of his poems, "Os sapos" was read in the event by Ronald de Carvalho. In 1924 he published "Poesias", which included the poems from *A cinza das horas*, *Carnaval* and some new ones. In 1937, after publishing *Libertinagem* (Libertinage), he received an award from Sociedade Felipe de Oliveira, and in 1940 he became a member of the Academia Brasileira de Letras, a great recognition of his work. From this day on, he published a lot of poems and texts in prose, wrote various literary reviews and worked as a professor in Faculdade Nacional de Filosofia. On October 13<sup>th</sup>, 1968, Manuel Bandeira died in Samaritano Hospital. He was 80 years old.

The author is a reference in Brazilian Modernist poetry. His poems are of a unique delicacy and beauty: this is one of the reasons that makes his work still very important nowadays. Manuel Bandeira was influenced by Parnassianism, a literary style characteristic of certain French poetry during the positivist period of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and also by Symbolism, a late 19<sup>th</sup> century art movement of French, Russian and Belgian origin in poetry and other arts.

He was not concerned about suiting those trends, but rather conveying emotions in his writing. Although he was considered part of the Modernist movement, Bandeira did not lose sensitivity, which is a Parnassian characteristic, and some Romantic aspects enriched his poetry. But his work is modernist as he is a poet of sentimental accuracy, rejecting the ornamentation of the Romanticism. He wrote poetry, prose and anthologies. His work can be divided into three basic periods: the post-symbolist phase, which is related to the decadent spirit of Symbolism, the modernist phase, in which he "directs" his verses to a language wrapped in a conversational tone, making use of free and blank verse, and finally,



the post-modernist phase, in which he makes a sort of blend with the use of rhyme, free and blank verses, as well as popular forms such as rondo, characterized by a poem with only two rhymes and consisting of three stanzas, totaling fifteen verses. In all the phases, he mentions childhood, love and death.

Bandeira's work has influenced many writers, like Maria Helena Bandeira, and his readers have always mentioned him, keeping his work alive. Hence, he became immortalized and very important in Brazilian literature. The author discovered he was suffering from tuberculosis in the end of 1904. Usually this disease comes little by little, but with Bandeira it was different; it came abruptly and strongly. In those times, this diagnosis was like a death sentence, because tuberculosis was a very difficult disease to treat.

In order to live the healthiest life he could, Manuel went to Rio de Janeiro, looking for better weather conditions. He lived in Teresópolis, Petrópolis, moved to Juiz de Fora in Minas Gerais, Campos do Jordão, Maranguape, Uruquê and Quixeramobim. Finally, in order to find better treatment for his health problem, he went to Switzerland. While he was there, he said:

I was living like I could die at any moment... and in 1914 I asked Doctor Bodner how many years I would live, he answered: you have injuries incompatible with life. However, you don't have bacilli, eat well, sleep well, and don't seem to have any alarming symptoms. You may live five, ten, fifteen years, who knows? So I kept on waiting for death to come at any moment in my life, always living like it was provisory.<sup>1</sup>

Bandeira had big scars on his right lung and his left lung was completely destroyed. They became almost useless and Manuel suffered from long crises of cough that he learned to control when he was in Switzerland. Every morning he used to make what is called "bronchial toilet". He tried as much as he could to cough, in order to eliminate the phlegm that accumulated during the night. After lunch, he used to rest and only after that he used to go out to the city life. He had a hard life coping with the disease that never left his side. Although he was always waiting for his

<sup>1</sup> BANDEIRA citado por GOMES. Manuel Bandeira: o amigo do rei.

final day to come, he was a very positive man who believed in life until the very end. Bandeira did not die from tuberculosis as expected. He was 82 years old when he died from a heart problem.

It is clear there is a close relationship between Bandeira's disease and his work. In the poem "Pneumotorax" he makes reference to his illness with irony and sarcasm. He lists its symptoms and illustrates an appointment with his doctor, who concludes that given the impossibility of a pneumothorax, the only way out for him would be "an Argentine tango", as is written below:

"You have a hole in the left lung and seepage into the right."

"Well, doctor, isn't it possible to try a pneumothorax?"

"No. The only thing you can do is play an Argentine tango."<sup>2</sup>

Based on this diagnosis, Bandeira had nothing else to do except wait for his death and dream about another life. In the poem "Vou-me embora para Pasargada" (I am going away to Pasargada), Bandeira pursues utopia, evasion, and a place where he can escape from death, where the disease simply did not exist, where childhood might be revived. In his lyrical dreams, he is longing for a kind of paradise where the ordinary acts of life can be experienced, in contrast with his own life impossibilities, consequences of his illness. This poem has some other common themes addressed in his works, such as: the expression of love, eroticism, women, beauty, desire and the nostalgia of childhood, the opposition between childhood and adulthood, present time and past time:

I am going away to Pasargada  
There I am friend of the king  
There I have the woman I want  
On the bed that I shall choose  
I am going away to Pasargada.<sup>3</sup>

In the poem "Desencanto", he claims how difficult it is for him to write about himself, and how sad his life is and, consequently, his verses: "I write these lines as one weeping/Discouraged... disenchanting..."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> NIST. *Modern Brazilian Poetry: An Anthology*, p. 112.

<sup>3</sup> NIST. *Modern Brazilian Poetry: An Anthology*, p. 113.

<sup>4</sup> NIST. *Modern Brazilian Poetry: An Anthology*, p. 113.

“Andorinha” (Swallow), a poem of intensity, synthesizes the feeling of melancholy tinged with humor, so present in his poems about death.

Outside the swallow is saying:  
“I have spent all day in vain, in vain!”  
Swallow, swallow  
My song is yet sadder!<sup>5</sup>

Finally, in his poems, Bandeira represents the total eradication of being, a disappearing “of body and soul” that does not leave traces of their existence even in the historical memory of men. In “Morte absoluta” (Absolute Death) he is familiar with death, and shows his proximity to it.

To die so completely  
That one day when somebody sees your name on a page  
He will ask: “Who was he?...”  
To die still more completely:  
Without leaving even this name.  
I have spent all life in vain, in vain...<sup>6</sup>

After experiencing long years of illness, Bandeira found some beauty in life and lived it as fully as if he could and tried to enjoy the simplest things of life. This is clear in “Meu último poema” (My Last Poem):

I would like my last poem thus  
That it be gentle saying the simplest and least intended things  
That it be ardent like a tearless sob  
That it has the beauty of almost scentless flower  
The purity of the flame in which the most limpid diamonds are  
consumed  
The passion of suicidals who kill themselves without explanation.<sup>7</sup>

As a whole, Manuel Bandeira’s work has been a great contribution to Brazilian Literature, since he wrote several masterpieces of our literature and became a canonical writer. As many other important writers, Bandeira put his life experiences in his poems, and this fact enriched his

<sup>5</sup> NIST. *Modern Brazilian Poetry: An Anthology*, p. 114.

<sup>6</sup> NIST. *Modern Brazilian Poetry: An Anthology*, p. 115.

<sup>7</sup> NIST. *Modern Brazilian Poetry: An Anthology*, p. 116.

writings about death, love, childhood, and, in a special way, his disease. In addition, his influence on many authors and readers has been of great importance to keep his work alive until nowadays. For the present writers, what remains is to echo Bandeira's work with the same feeling and passion with which he wrote his poems and also to allow the appreciation of his talent and mastery.

## References

ALVES, J. P. M. *Aspectos da imanência transcendente de Manuel Bandeira*. Florianópolis: Núcleo de Pesquisas em Informática, Literatura e Linguística da UFSC, [s/d]. Essay. Available in: <<http://www.mafua.ufsc.br/joao.html>>. Access on: 29 Sep. 2011.

ARRIGUCCI JR., Davi. *Humildade, paixão e morte: a poesia de Manuel Bandeira*. 1<sup>st</sup> printing. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1992.

GOMES, Mauro. Manuel Bandeira: o amigo do rei. *Museu da Tuberculose*, São Paulo, [s/d]. Available in: <<http://www.pulmonar.org.br/?op=paginas&tipo=pagina&secao=6&pagina=70>>. Access on: 29 Sep. 2011.

NIST, John. *Modern Brazilian Poetry: An Anthology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962.

UOL EDUCAÇÃO. Poeta brasileiro: Manuel Bandeira. *UOL Educação*. Available in: <<http://educacao.uol.com.br/biografias/manuel-bandeira.jhtm>>. Access on: 6 Oct. 2011.

# The Use of Language in *Glengarry Glen Ross*

Adailson Vinícius Maciel  
Gabriela Silva  
Mariana Ines Martins Brancaglioni  
Pollyanna Ferreira  
Thalita Carvalho

David Mamet is an American playwright that first shocked audiences with his brutally direct language, but has since become one of the most admired dramatists of contemporary times. His work has a unique style built in his precise use of language and taut dialogues. Mamet's singular ability with the use of words, carefully written for effect, has granted him recognition in theatres around the world and has come to be known as "Mamet Speak". Although he is most known by his plays, Mamet's success is not limited to them.

He is also an eminent screenwriter, novelist, poet, essayist and director. His most successful play, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, is a powerfully written drama about life on the real estate market parodying the myth of the American Dream. In this play, four real estate agents fight to keep their jobs, resorting to bribing and crime in an attempt to succeed. For these men, triumph in their work also means triumph in life, they are defined by their jobs and how good they are at it. Through scatological language and the broken dialogues of his characters, Mamet talks about a society that is worried only about making money, regardless the means to obtain it.

This article will analyze the linguistic aspects of Mamet's Pulitzer Prize winner play, *Glengarry Glen Ross*. It will also explore some contexts and aspects such as the masculinity that helps build the "Mamet Speak" in this play, of which the language brilliantly used by him is strongly influenced by the economic, historical and cultural context in which the story takes place.

*Glengarry Glen Ross* had its first stage production in 1984. As already mentioned, the play is about four salesmen from Chicago, namely, Shelly "The Machine" Levene, Richard Roma, David Moss and George Aaronow, and their supervisor John Williamson. They work together selling real estate properties. The story begins when the bosses of the company, the unseen characters Mitch and Murray, decide to change the monthly contest. The winner would get a Cadillac, the second one would get a set of steak knives and the last two men would be fired. They use a chalkboard to keep track of all the sales and Roma is at the top of the list. The others are getting worried because they do not want to be fired.

In the first act, Levene is facing a bad streak and for that reason he wants better leads. Moss is angry at the company and with its policies, which according to him are really unfair and he complains about the entire system. He suggests that someone break into their office and steal the good leads to sell them. He wants Aaronow to break into the office, and if he refuses to do so, Moss will do it himself and, if he gets caught, he will tell the police Aaronow was his accomplice.

The second act takes place the next day in the office and we find out that someone had broken into it the night before. Baylen, a police detective, is interrogating everybody there. Levene comes into the office and he is clearly excited because he had just closed a big sale and that gives him a chance of not getting fired, meaning that now he will have access to the premium leads, which are assigned only to closers.

Next, the deal closed by Roma is cancelled because of Williamson, which makes Roma extremely angry with Williamson for ruining his sale. He insults Williamson just before he goes into the office to be interrogated by Baylen. Levene takes his turn in insulting Williamson and accidentally tells him that if he is "going to make something up, be sure it will help [...]"<sup>1</sup>. Williamson realizes that if Levene knows he was making up the fact that he had filed the contract, then he was the one who committed the break-in. Williamson goes to Baylen to report that Levene is the thief. Roma, not knowing what had happened, suggests Levene that they become partners. When Levene gets into the office, Roma, unaware of his colleague's fate, tells Williamson that he will earn fifty percent of Levene's commissions on top of the one hundred of his own from that moment on.

<sup>1</sup> MAMET. *Glengarry Glen Ross*, p. 98.

Mamet's language began to develop during his troubled childhood which affected the way he writes, for we can frequently find anger, violence and vengeance in his plays. According to Matthew Roudané,<sup>2</sup> Mamet released an autobiographical essay called "The Rake", in which we get to know about "his troubled childhood, the tensions stemming from his parents' divorce and a psychologically and physically abusive stepfather". After the stepfather threw Mamet's sister, Lynn Mamet (a California-based writer) across a room, she fractured a vertebra in her back. He never forgave his father, who died in 1992, the year he published "The Rake".

According to Christopher Bigsby,<sup>3</sup> the aggressiveness manifested by Mamet's characters' language is, in fact, an attempt to fill the lack of spiritual values and human relationships in their lives. In *Glengarry Glen Ross* the characters are businessmen who could be taken as criminals, given their questionable conduct. As the story is developed and we witness those characters perform acts such as bribery and robbery, deceiving their customers and fellow salesmen and trying to get advantage over every situation, the thought that inevitably comes to mind is that this is precisely what criminals do. In *Glengarry Glen Ross* it is hard to find the distinction between being a salesman and an outlaw, as well as the difference "between trade and theft in the capitalist USA".<sup>4</sup>

Although morally, spiritually corrupted and demonized, the characters are also victimized by Mamet, since they are victims of a system in which human relations are worthless, in which the relevant thing is how much people earn, and the only reward offered comes in the form of money. Bigsby calls Mamet a "poet of loss"<sup>5</sup> due to his concern with language as poetry: "If it's not poetic on stage, forget it. If it's solely serving the interest of the plot, forget it"<sup>6</sup>. This violent, sexualized language that Bigsby describes as a "fusion of lyricism and a linguistic brutalism"<sup>7</sup> can be seen as a substitute for the human values which these men seem to have lost. That loss became apparent in the incompleteness, unfinished thoughts and harshness of their speech.

<sup>2</sup> ROUDANÉ. *Cambridge History of America Theater*, p. 366.

<sup>3</sup> BIGSBY. *A Critical Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Drama*, p. 253.

<sup>4</sup> BIGSBY. *The Cambridge Companion to David Mamet*, p. 93.

<sup>5</sup> BIGSBY. *A Critical Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Drama*, p. 252.

<sup>6</sup> BIGSBY. *A Critical Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Drama*, p. 252.

<sup>7</sup> BIGSBY. *A Critical Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Drama*, p. 252.

Mamet Speak is his style of writing dialogue, cynical, street-smart, edgy, "syncopated like a drum solo"<sup>8</sup> and it is precisely crafted for effect. It received this name because it is distinctive of all his works. In *Glengarry* we can find the use of italics and quotation marks to highlight particular words and to draw attention to the characters' manipulation and deceitful use of language. Mamet's characters frequently interrupt one another, their sentences are usually unfinished, and their dialogue overlaps. The sonority of the words and rhythm is also evident. All of the mentioned characteristics can be noticed in the hilarious dialogue excerpt in which Moss and Aaronow distinguish the act of "speak" of the robbery "as an idea" from "actually talk about it".

Moss: No. What do you mean? Have I talked to him about *this*?

Aaronow: Yes. I mean are you actually *talking* about it, or are we just...

Moss: No, we're just...

Aaronow: We're just *talking* about it.

Moss: We're *speaking* about it. As an *idea*.

Aaronow: We're not actually *talking* about it.

Moss: No.

Aaronow: Talking about it as a...

Moss: *No*.

Aaronow: As a *robbery*.

Moss: As a "robbery"?! No.<sup>9</sup>

*Glengarry Glen Ross* deals with the daily life of salesmen in a time when the rich became richer and the poor became poorer, which is reflected in the characters' speech. The question is whether these salesmen dishonest attitudes are the cause or the consequence of their dog-eat-dog life. Mamet makes it appear to be a cycle and shows that nobody is immune from committing dishonest acts when living a critical situation. The characters' language is a way of showing desperation and it becomes hard and full of improprieties when it is necessary to show a dark side.

At the beginning of the 1980's, the US had high rates of unemployment and inflation, with one-third of the industrial plants lying idle and

<sup>8</sup> BROWNE. *Glengarry Glen Ross*.

<sup>9</sup> MAMET. *Glengarry Glen Ross*, p. 39.



an increase of 50 percent in bankruptcies. Ronald Reagan was elected president and he took some measures to save the country from the crisis. Although it worked after a medium term, at first it made things worse. Reagan's goal was to make the money circulate in the country and to achieve his intent, he reduced tax rates (supply-side economics), and cut investments on social programs. Regarding the workforce, Reagan took some measures that had strong impacts on the economy as well as on the lives of the working class. This was precisely what Mamet explored in this play.

Greed, consumerism, materialism, competition and unethical behavior can be identified throughout the play. All of these traits are due to the economic situation that the US were going through, as a result of Reagan's policy. The fact that the characters are willing to betray their colleagues or to commit a crime to stay in the job shows the desperation of that time, when it was difficult to preserve a job and even more difficult to get one.

In *Glengarry Glen Ross*, Mamet deals with the death of the American Dream as a naive concept which was corrupted by capitalistic ideas of money, success and power and with the way it turned into a dishonest and destructive dream. The demystification of the dream surrounds many of Mamet's plays: "American capitalism comes down to one thing [...] The operative axiom is 'Hurrah for me and fuck you.' Anything else is a lie".<sup>10</sup> For Mamet's salesmen everything revolves around making money, which is clearly exposed in the play's epigraph that is repeated by Roma: "Always be closing"<sup>11</sup> (referring to the constant necessity of closing deals). To live the American Dream people have to be on top and to be the best. *Glengarry Glen Ross* shows how destructive this dream is and also the fact that its loss compels the characters to be unpleasant and cruel at some moments, which can be noticed in the way they speak. The words and style used by Mamet are hard just as the environment created by him.

*Glengarry Glen Ross* is a play that explores the identity of man and relates the manhood with success and men's capacity to perform a

<sup>10</sup> BIGSBY. *A Critical Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Drama*, p. 472.

<sup>11</sup> MAMET. *Glengarry Glen Ross*, p. 72.

good job, to “always be closing”. To Mamet’s gang of salesmen, concepts as toughness, strength and cleverness are very important as part of their manhood, as also the characteristics that they have to demonstrate, such as sleekness, heartless, absence of any kind of conscience, greediness and taking satisfaction in competition. Failure is equal to lack of manhood, and the top salesman is a man of power, a winner.

All the characters go through this insecurity which is reflected in their language. Mamet poetically expresses himself by the use of the word “fuck”, which is a sexually violent term implying dominance and submission:

The term seems to stand as the overriding metaphor for the salesmen’s fears and desires. They want to fuck the competition or fuck their leads, but they do not want to be the ones who get fucked. The dominant, masculine position is the one which acts while the submissive, feminine position is one which is acted upon. Yet the constant repetition of this word ironically represents the ultimate powerlessness or impotence, the emasculation of these characters who can think only in terms of violence and betrayal toward the world around them. Ultimately, then, all fears and desires for these characters can be collapsed into this one word, a word that is burdened with too many signifies and thus itself collapses into non-meaning.<sup>12</sup>

According to McDonough, the massive use of this word represents the characters’ wish to “fuck” – or to subjugate – their counterparts and clients, and their desperation when they cannot achieve their goal. Since this subjugation is closely connected to their model of masculinity, such failing in subjugating represents a failure in becoming what these men consider to be a real man.

Moss acts like a man, using curses, imposing himself physically and mentally over the others, but it is all a façade considering the fact that he is not the top salesman. Aaranow is the nearest thing that can be considered as a woman in the play, because he does not act as a typical man, always fails in his sales and is often lead by the other characters. He speaks in a much kinder way, almost does not express himself by using curses and hard words. He surprises the reader in the end, since he was not the one who committed the robbery, and it makes him more feminine,

<sup>12</sup> MCDONOUGH. Every Fear Hides a Wish: Unstable Masculinity in Mamet’s Drama.

for he had not been “man enough” to do the job (the crime). Even Roma, the top salesman, with his smooth way to talk, shows some insecurity when he is not able to convince his client to maintain the deal and resorts to take advantage of Levene’s leads in the very end.

Women were left out of this play because of their “reputed values”<sup>13</sup>, such as generosity, compassion and tenderness, which are seen as weaknesses from the masculine point of view. The characters see women as inferior beings that are used by them to intimidate and to defame their competitors. There are several terms that are used with this meaning, like “children”, “fairy” and “slave”. As a result of the use of these terms, some critics considered *Glengarry Glen Ross* a misogynistic and homophobic play.

In *Glengarry Glen Ross* the use of language is vital, for it determines the character’s survival and success as salesmen. Mamet was able to use his personal experiences and the contexts in which the story takes place to create an incredible language, which sets the pace of the play, enthral the readers and becomes one of the most important characteristics of the theatrical piece.

Mamet’s language is not restricted to the words he uses, but it carries the meaning of the social origin of the words and of the context in which they are inserted. The rhythm of action in *Glengarry Glen Ross*, as in all of the playwright’s plays, is dictated by the language and the precise use of words that give life to meanings beyond what we find in the dictionaries.

## References

BIGSBY, Christopher W. E. (Org.) *The Cambridge Companion to David Mamet*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2004.

BIGSBY, Christopher W. E. David Mamet. In: *A Critical Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Drama*. Volume Three: Beyond Broadway. 2. printing. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990. p. 251-290.

BROWNE, Terry. *Glengarry Glen Ross*. In: GALENS, David (Org.) *Drama for Students*. London: Gale, 1998.

MAMET, David. *Glengarry Glen Ross*. New York: Grove Press New York, 1984.

MCDONOUGH, Carla J. Every Fear Hides a Wish: Unstable Masculinity in Mamet’s Drama. *Theatre*

<sup>13</sup> KANE. *David Mamet: A Casebook*, p. 174.

*Journal*, v. 44, n. 2, May 1992. Available in: <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3208739>>. Access on: 2 Nov. 2011.

NIGHTINGALE, Benedict. Glengarry Glen Ross. In: BIGSBY, Christopher W. E. (Org.) *The Cambridge Companion to David Mamet*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. p. 89-102.

ROUDANÉ, Matthew. Plays and Playwrights Since 1970. In: BIGSBY, Christopher W. E.; WILMETH, Don B. (Orgs.) *The Cambridge History of America Theater*. Volume Three: Post World-War II to the 1990's. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. p. 331-373.

ZEIFMAN, Hersh. Phallus in Wonderland: Machismo and Business in David Mamet's American Buffalo and Glengarry Glen Ross. In: KANE, Leslie (Org.) *David Mamet: A Casebook*. New York: Garland, 1992. p. 167-176.

**Publicações Viva Voz de interesse  
para a área de estudos linguísticos**

***De primeiro era assim: revelações do vocabulário  
de Águas Vermelhas – MG***

Vander Lúcio de Souza

**Questões sobre o hispanismo**

Elisa Amorim Vieira (Org.)

**Glossário de termos de edição e tradução**

Sônia Queiroz (Org.)

**As doçuras do sânscrito**

Carlos Gohn

**Nomes de estabelecimentos comerciais  
em Belo Horizonte v. 1 e 2**

Maria Cândida Trindade Costa de Seabra (Org.)

As Publicações Viva Voz estão disponíveis também em versão eletrônica no *site*: <[www.lettras.ufmg.br/vivavoz](http://www.lettras.ufmg.br/vivavoz)>.

**Publicações Viva Voz de interesse  
para a área de estudos literários**

**Chico Buarque: das canções à ficção**

Vander Lúcio de Souza

**Esta é minha carta ao mundo**

Fernanda Mourão (Org.)

**Poemas russos**

Mariana Pithon

Nathalia Campos (Org.)

**Representações do feminino no cinema brasileiro**

Helcira Lima (Org.)

**Respostas a Bakhtin**

Luis Alberto Brandão (Org.)

As Publicações Viva Voz estão disponíveis também em versão eletrônica no *site*: <[www.lettras.ufmg.br/vivavoz](http://www.lettras.ufmg.br/vivavoz)>.

Composto em caracteres Verdana e impresso a *laser* em papel reciclado 75 g/m<sup>2</sup> (miolo). Acabamento em kraft 420 g/m<sup>2</sup> (capa) e costura artesanal com cordão encerado.



As publicações Viva Voz acolhem textos de alunos e professores da Faculdade de Letras, especialmente aqueles produzidos no âmbito das atividades acadêmicas (disciplinas, estudos orientados e monitorias). As edições são elaboradas pelo Laboratório de Edição da FALE/UFMG, integrado por estudantes de Letras –bolsistas e voluntários – supervisionados por docentes da área de edição.