The SYSTEMIC and EMPIRICAL APPROACH
to LITERATURE and CULTURE
as THEORY and APPLICATION

EDITED BY
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The SYSTEMIC and EMPIRICAL APPROACH
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When I submitted my most recent book — a collection of applications in the systemic and empirical approach to various aspects of theory, genres, periods, selected primary texts, aspects of media and culture, translation theory, social discourse, etc. — for publication by an American academic publisher, one reader wrote that the main reason he/she did not like the book was that I am "proselytising." Regardless of the fact that the main title of the book, most tellingly, is *Legitimizing the Study of Literature*, and thus my trying to "sell" the theoretical and methodological approach I have applied in a specific context is legitimate twice over, I did some some soul searching. In the end, I came to the conclusion that this reader must be a scholar who, unfortunately, did not understand either my work or the problems the Study of Literature is facing these days and I decided that there is nothing wrong with an attempt at proselytising.

My basic premise is that in the current situation — where the Study of Literature is digging its own grave everywhere both intellectually and institutionally and is in a process of total marginalization — an approach that promises innovation where not only the approach but more importantly the results of study may have a chance to persuade the taxpayer, the politician, indeed, the general public, not speak of university administration, to recognize the importance of the Study of Literature as a socially constructive and necessary educational and life force, is worth "proselytising." It is in this context of an "attitude" and scholarly argumentation that I the present volume to our readers. I am doing this because I hope that the Text in Context *alias* The Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature and Culture — if and when the *methodological* precision that is *basically* common to the frameworks at hand, albeit to different degrees, is understood and recognized, may eventually innovate the Study of Literature. And I indeed hope that perhaps first signs toward innovation — or signs of an impending paradigm shift? — are already "in the air," as William H. Thornton (Professor of English, National Cheng Kung University, Taiwan) wrote to me in a recent e-letter:

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I think that there is a growing awareness that the absence of objectivity has had a deleterious effect on literary scholarship, contributing to what you somewhere call its "self-deconstruction" so far as social significance is concerned. I would simply mention two theorists, from opposite political poles, who are calling for a return to objectivity: Searle, on the right, and Michael on the left. I hope I'm correct in sensing that this objectivity is in the air. ... My present concern, since I've been reading your stuff and Featherstone's concurrently has been the relationship of ESL-type [ESL = Empirical Study of Literature] systems theory with Wallerstein-type world-systems thinking. Superficially, the two would seem to be worlds apart. Knee-jerk critics of your orientation might even argue that the systems you refer to are analogous to the "core" in Wallerstein's core/periphery model. But as you point out in that same footnote, the systemic approach simply brings critical attention to a system which is "obviously there." It doesn't create that system, or endorses the "coreness" of it. On the contrary, it could well serve as a subversive instrument against the hegemony of that system. ... At the very least we have a mutual interest in laying the foundation for a new objectivity in literary and cultural studies. (e-letter from thornton@mail.ncku.edu.tw, 24 February 1997)

I can only hope that Thornton is gauging the current landscape of literary theory right. And he may be right, indeed, if we consider the fact that in the last two decades or so several frameworks and methodologies emerged whose impact has begun to be felt in literary studies. These frameworks, whom I circumscribe by the rather wide umbrella designation Text in Context — here and with the present volume mainly aimed at English-speaking North American scholarship — I mean Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of the Literary Field (champ littéraire), Jacques Dubois's Theory of the Literary Institution (l'institution littéraire), Itamar Even-Zohar's Polysystem Theory, Niklas Luhmann's Systems Theory when applied to literature, and Siegfried J. Schmidt's Empirical Study of Literature (Empirische Literaturwissenschaft). Based on their conceptual affinities and similarities, I designated these approaches in English, since 1993, as The Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature and Culture. While the former, ad hoc designation of Text in Context is useful but much too wide, the latter designation is faute de mieux.

The way I see it, the main concept that interconnects the five approaches is the notion of "system." Both the term and the concept are difficult when it comes to the Study of Literature. On both sides of the Atlantic, the notions of "system" and "empirical" — the latter particularly so — but also, to a much lesser degree, "institution" and "field," evoke the criticism of neo-positivism, the accusation of "number crunching," the criticism of disregard for the primary properties of a literary text, the straight-jacket application of the "system" to literature the study of which scholars traditionally and most self-referentially regard — entréncched in hermeneutics — as a narrative and metaphorical exercise, etc. The argumentation that all these and other criticisms — mostly knee-jerk criticisms as Thornton suggested above — are based on misunderstandings, or, more often than not, on a superficial and/or dismissive reading of the theoretical and meta-
Introduction

I often and loudly argumentation. I invite our who are suspicious them to familiarize themselves in a "close-text" and "hermeneutic" reading of the frameworks.

The most basic differentiation between the Text in Context approach as defined here and the varied North American "contextual" approaches is that while the former approaches collectively have developed a varyingly and a more or less precise methodology and taxonomy, the latter lack such to a remarkable extent. However, if we observe internal differentiations among the five approaches, it is evident that there is a marked dividing line between three groupings: Bourdieu and Luhmann are careful not to argue too strongly against the hermeneutic tradition in literary scholarship, Even-Zohar attempts to place his framework in a mediating position, and while Dubois is largely unconcerned with the "text" immediately and focuses on the "institution" of literature, Schmidt's is the single framework that forcefully advocates a break with the hermeneutic tradition and employs both systems theory and the concept of the empirical. While I personally prefer and work with Schmidt's framework, at the same time I understand and recognize that all five frameworks have, in essence, much in common and that together they all are to various degrees delineations from the hermeneutic tradition. They all approach literature (and culture) as Text in Context.

For the sake of a simplified argumentation and to follow my suggestion that the common concept of all five approaches is the notion of "system" — albeit I am aware that the term is not used in all five approaches — I will briefly point to a few areas through which the notion can be easily understood. To take perhaps the most mediating and basic definition of system, which applies to both the straight-forward meaning of "system" as well as to "field" or "institution," Even-Zohar writes that "if by 'system' one is prepared to understand both the idea of a closed set-of-relations, in which the members receive their values through their respective oppositions, and the idea of an open structure consisting of several such concurrent nets-of-relations, then the term 'system' is appropriate and quite adequate" (Polysystem Studies, Poetics Today 11.1 [1990]: 12) and thus the notion of system is applicable to literature as 'the network of relations that is hypothesized to obtain between a number of activities called 'literary,' and consequently these activities themselves are observed via that network" (ibid., 28). Further definitions of "system" — social, cultural, or literary — and definitions of the champ littéraire or the institution littéraire — are available in a good number of works both in the original frameworks and in works following the premises and postulates of these approaches (please select from the Bibliography at the end of the present volume).

The general Text in Context approach, thus comprising the five approaches as proposed, unavoidably links with the "empirical," what Thornton calls "obje-
activity," for instance. However, while it can be argued that the notion of "system" may be a common concept to all five approaches, the postulate of the "empirical" is not. The notion is explicit only in Schmidt's framework and all others shy away from it or outright reject it. But here again, there are many elements and assumptions in the other four frameworks where the notion of the empirical is evident. It should also be noted that the notion of the "empirical" has been embraced by a critical mass of North American and European applied psychologists, media and communication scholars, cognitive psychologists, and scholars studying reading and reading processes. These scholars have developed sophisticated theoretical and methodological frameworks and presented outstanding examples of applications of such to literary texts. In the present volume there are a good number of articles by such empirical-oriented scholars who work in the area of reading and reading processes. While these studies are not necessarily "systemic," they represent nevertheless another important aspect of the Text in Context approach.

Whether in European or North American literary scholarship, the focus on the singular text is predominant. While this explication de texte is legitimate in many instances, it is of limited value unless it is performed in Context and with precise methodology and taxonomy and with clearly stated hypotheses and postulates. And as to the "how" of literary scholarship, the predominant mode of essayistic and metaphorical writing is of questionable value in literary scholarship. In other words, literary scholars may leave writing to authors of fiction or to critics assessing new works as well as reserving this mode for texts which are of a popularizing-of-scholarship nature. Instead, we ought to produce scholarship resulting in Context and Objectivity (as difficult, shifting, and questionable the latter notion may be or may appear to be). In sum, I argue that the five approaches figuring in the present volume respond, to varying degrees, to these basic and yet innovative premises.

With reference to the source of the articles in this volume, in the history of the International Society for the Empirical Study of Literature it is by now obvious that the originally "core" group of scholars who work with Siegfried J. Schmidt's Empirical Study of Literature has expanded itself by developments of new aspects of the approach as well as toward attention to similar or analogue approaches and that the Society by now has many members who either work exclusively with analogue approaches or "merge" many aspects of these analogue approaches. In the articles of the present volume this is obvious and one only needs to look at the Index in which the names of the "progenitors" of the five approaches are frequent to the point of interchangeability.

As president of IGEL, the International Society for the Empirical Study of Literature (Internationale Gesellschaft für Empirische Literaturwissenschaft) for the period of 1994 to 1996, it was my task to organize the Society's Vth Biannual conference which was held under the aegis of the University of Alberta
Introduction

I met at the Nakada Lodge Conference Centre near Banff at Morley, Alberta, in August 1996. Articles in this volume are selected papers from that Conference.

In the construction of the volume, I aimed at a thematic cohesion of the articles. The volume consists of a substantial theoretical and meta-theoretical section followed by applied studies. The latter section is then divided into two thematically cohesive sections, one on "literature, culture, and media" and another on "literature and reading." The last section of the volume is a selected bibliography focussing on the last decade of works in the systemic, empirical, and field approaches to literature and culture. To the selected papers from the Conference and the bibliography, I added the following articles I recently edited because they complement the present volume advantageously: Rita Ghesquiere's and Jean Perrot's articles from a special issue of Reader: Essays in Reader-Oriented Theory, Criticism, and Pedagogy (35-36 [1996]: 21-38 and 39-54) and Gebhard Rusch's, Steven Tötösy's, and Reinhold Viehoff's articles from the thematic section The Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature: Theory and Application / Théorie systémique et empirique. Théorie et réalisations in Margarida L. Losa, Isménia de Sousa, and Gonçalo Vilas-Boas, eds., Literatura Comparada: Os Novos Paradigmas (Porto: Afrontamento, 1996. 295-308, 309-15, and 369-75). I would like to thank the editor of Reader, Elizabeth A. Flynn, and the editors of the Porto volume for their permission to republish these articles in the present volume.

I would like to thank the readers of the Conference papers for their critical comments. Further, I would like to thank the University of Alberta Research Institute for Comparative Literature and Cross-Cultural Studies for approving the book for publication as the seventh volume in its publishing program. Last but not least, I would like to thank Péter and Ilona Tötössy, who, owing to IGEL's scarcity of funds, offered to print it in their printing firm, Zepetnek Nyomda, at Balatonvilágos in Hungary for a much reduced rate of cost. I and our Society are indebted to them for their support.

Finally, I would like to express my pleasure about the fact that the articles of the volume represent the work of scholars hailing from several continents and many countries thus indicating that the work of IGEL scholars is truly international and global. Following my "proselytising," I hope that the volume will be useful not only to scholars interested in in-depth studies in the mode(s) of Text in Context alias The Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature and Culture but also to scholars who would use the volume as a textbook, for both undergraduate and graduate teaching and I also hope that students of literature in general will pay close attention to the work of IGEL scholars.

University of Alberta
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THEORY and META-THEORY
Identification as a Basic Problem for Aesthetic Reception

1. Introduction

How do readers or viewers relate to the characters in texts and on the stage or screen? The concept of identification has figured prominently in analyses of this problem, although scholars disagree about what the concept means and even whether it should exist at all. The two primary views on this problem were expressed by the functionalist and psychodynamic schools. The functionalist perspective was at the heart of three papers in a 1995 issue of Poetics, edited by Frijda and Schram. The authors of these papers addressed the question, "Do readers identify with characters or are they merely sympathetic spectators?" (see Tan; Oatley 1995; Zillmann 1995). Theorists in the psychodynamic tradition take identification for granted and specify the ways that the self becomes involved (see, for example, Kreitler and Kreitler; Scheff). In this article, I compare the two viewpoints and discuss how best to integrate them. A comparison between weak and strong modes of identification for the functionalist and psychodynamic approaches, respectively, helps to bridge the gap.

2. The Functionalist Perspective

2.1 Nico Frijda and Ed Tan

Tan’s 1995 analysis of identification is founded on Frijda’s functionalist perspective and the concept of "action tendencies." These are "states of readiness to execute a given kind of action ... defined by its end" (70). For Frijda, "'action tendency' and 'emotion' are one and the same thing ... an ... inner state that predicts forthcoming behavior" (71). He traces the origins of his approach to the

The author wishes to express his thanks to Ed Tan for his helpful comments on an earlier draft of this article.

This study is founded on the premise that basic aesthetic principles, in this case regarding the process of identification, apply equally across stimulus domains including novels, plays, films, paintings, or interior spaces.

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notion where emotion is "felt action tendency" (see Arnold). Emotions are responses to situations as they are perceived by individuals in relation to their needs and concerns. These situations yield emotional meaning structures which can be described in terms of elementary features reflecting what the situation offers or withholds by way of outcomes.

Tan extends Frijda's analysis to account for emotions felt by a spectator while watching cinema. He treats each spectator as an "invisible witness" who "experiences the view of any scene offered by the camera as his or her own" (17). This "witness" stance is determined by the control of the camera over "gaze," an inability to materially act, and the simple fact that no one appeals to the audience in traditional cinema for help or advice. The spectator's essential helplessness in the cinema leads to "virtual action tendencies," a kind of vicarious preparedness to act. At the same time, knowledge that "this is a film after all" enables spectators to adopt the "imaginary witness" perspective.

Given the unique nature of aesthetic encounters in cinema, Tan prefers to describe viewers as adopting "empathic" emotions that "relate to the character's experience of the fictional world" and "appraisal of the situation" (18) in functional terms. Certain assumptions are built into Tan's analysis, such as the notion that spectators mentally "represent" the emotional states of characters and the significance of situations for them, as well as information about their plans and actions. Related to this is the idea that witnesses experience sympathy for the character "a virtual tendency to be near the character, to express support for the character's goals, to share things" with them "as attractive equals" (23). Accompanying "hopes and fears are anticipatory emotions" in which the "virtual action tendency is a desire to see the character do the right thing and witness his or her subsequent success" (24).

This leads Tan to the following commentary on identification which is linked to imagining "what it is like to be the protagonist" and an experiencing "of the very same emotion that the character is imagined to have" (24). A "literal" sense of having "the very same emotion," a "presumed sharing of concerns, is the difficult part of the identification concept" (24) because this "would mean that they do not understand or imagine those concerns, but have them — an obviously impossible situation" (25). Tan's resolution of this problem is to "imagine actually having a concern, which in turn results in an experience that parallels the character's "emotion' as closely as possible" (25). In the end, the improbability of "identity" in a literal sense disposed Tan to prefer the notions of sympathy and "empathic witness emotion" (25).

2.2 Keith Oatley

Oatley, a novelist (1993) and applied empirical psychologist, has proposed a cognitive treatment of identification (1992, 1995). At the heart of his analysis is a formalist account of how emotion is embodied in literature. Following Leo
Identification in Aesthetic Reception

Tolstoy, he argues that "Emotional connections are made by verbally mediated contagion; words allow the reader to feel what the artist is feeling" (1995, 56). This also fits with T.S. Eliot's notion of an "objective correlative" (qtd. in Oatley 1995) whereby words, situations, and chains of events represent the formula of an emotion: "when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience are given, the emotion is immediately evoked" (Eliot 107-08). Oatley's theory of identification involves a reinterpretation of Aristotle's concept of mimesis. Rather than treating a play as an "imitation" of life, Oatley prefers to use the computer based notion of simulation. A play offers a simulation of human actions founded on identification with one or more characters. Accordingly, "the central process is that the reader runs the actions of the character on his own planning processes, taking on the character's goals, and experiencing emotions as these plans meet vicissitudes... Literary simulations run on minds of audiences or readers, just as computer simulations run on computers" (Oatley 1995, 66). The focus of this simulation is the goals of the characters and their actions which are connected into "meaningful sequences by entering them into the same planning processors" (68-69). Emotions are experienced by readers or audiences when these plans run into unexpected events. Thus, identification is founded on adopting the goals and plans of protagonists and this is facilitated by "creating a mental model of an imagined world" (70). Achieving "an integrative coherence among disparate textual elements and between the construction from such elements and the reader's own self, emotions, and consciousness" (72) provides a basis for the value of literary encounters.

2.3 Dolf Zillmann

Zillmann dismisses the concept of identification completely and replaces it with various aspects of empathic processes (1995). His critique begins with Freud's notion — as explicated by Hall — that identification involves incorporating qualities of another person who is similar to oneself into one's personality. According to Freud's compensatory model, a spectator who wishes to fulfill thwarted desires and ambitions is provided by the playwright with a brief opportunity to spontaneously identify with a hero. In turn, Friedberg applied this to cinematic identification where an "other" displaces the self, however briefly, during the aesthetic encounter. For Metz, such ("secondary") identification may even extend to the actors in their extracinematic existence (i.e., as "stars").

Zillmann's critique questions whether a psychodynamic account of identification explains affective responses of spectators to cinema and other narrative art forms. Do spectators "place themselves, however tentatively, into essentially envied persona and then 'share' the emotions displayed by these personas?" (1995, 35-36). Do they "vicariously experience these emotions and thereby gain access to the gratifications experienced by these personas?" (1995, 36). Zillmann
argues that there is no empirical evidence in support of these dynamics and prefers to treat the recipient of narrative art forms as a kind of witness, much like the approach of Tan.

Zillmann’s theoretical bias leans toward a behavioural/cognitive approach favouring the use of terms such as stimulus generalization, which is reminiscent of his excitation-transfer model of music and video appreciation (1983). This theoretical stance is combined with a broad treatment of the empathy concept, encompassing the facilitative effects of motor mimicry, empathic reactions learned through stimulus-sensation linkages, and deliberate empathy in the form of perspective taking mediated by focused cognitive efforts. The central part of this thesis concerns positive affective dispositions toward characters that foster empathic reactions and negative dispositions that inhibit them. This necessitates that authors and playwrights ensure that "respondents must be made to care about characters, either in a positive or in a negative way" (1995, 48). Spectators can then respond to the characters as if they were friends or enemies from everyday life and accordingly invoke empathy or counterempathy as a generalization of everyday experience.

2.4 Summary

Tan and Oatley share in common a cognitive/functionalist approach to the problem of identification. Both describe spectators as forming mental representations (Tan) or models (Oatley) regarding the goals, plans, and actions of characters. While Tan describes the spectator as having experiences that parallel those of the character, Oatley develops the idea of spectators running mental simulations of the trajectory of a character’s actions. Tan and Zillmann share a view of the spectator as a sympathetic witness who engages in empathic behaviour. Tan describes spectators as supporting the goals of attractive equals, while Zillmann stresses their caring about sympathetic characters. Zillmann also analyses the different ways that empathic processes unfold, ranging from mere motor mimicry to intentionally adopting the other’s perspective.

Zillmann describes authors as ensuring the sympathetic or antipathetic qualities of the characters which are similar to those encountered by readers in their everyday lives. Oatley’s formalist analysis goes into greater depth as to how authors manipulate the perceived unfolding of emotional experiences. Sounding very much like a Lockean empiricist, Oatley adopts T.S. Eliot’s linear model to the effect that descriptions of external situations elicit sensory experiences and then emotions in the reader. But he also accommodates phenomenologically oriented reception theorists such as Iser who argues that the moral value of literature lies in an encounter between the structure of the text and that of the reader.

The emphasis that Tan and Oatley have placed on concerns, plans, actions, and outcomes can be related to Bruner’s literary "landscape of action" which pertains to "story grammar" and addresses "agent, intention, or goal, situation, instrument"
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(14). This domain fits well with accounts of emotion that focus on suspense about future events (see Cupchik 1996). But in doing so, Tan and Oatley have de-emphasized the "landscape of consciousness" which describes what characters "know, think, or feel" (Bruner 14). This is the domain of emotional experience in the present that addresses the problem of meaning and need not involve function, purpose, and the future (see Cupchik 1995). An account of identification should incorporate processes underlying both kinds of texts.

3. The Psychodynamic Perspective

3.1 Hans Kreitler and Shulamith Kreitler

The Kreitlers' comments about empathy and identification can be found interspersed in their in-depth discussion of the aesthetic process. Their analysis of empathy incorporates a "theory of representation" as well as Lipps's "theory of feeling-into." According to the "theory of representation," spectators make an effort to intellectually understand the aesthetic situation facing characters through a process of imaginative reconstruction that produces a quasi-perceptual representation. This reconstruction relies on chains of associations which extend back into the spectator's life, incorporating events that resemble the aesthetic situation. The process of "feeling-into," on the other hand, involves an involuntary imitation of perceived expressive movements which lead to the spontaneous experience of emotion and imputing of that emotion to the source character. The representation provides a narrative and the expressive imitation lends form to the feeling of knowing how someone else feels.

Empathy occurs when readers use their own experiences to understand the feelings of situated characters. The Kreitlers argue that the "fictitious" atmosphere of a text makes eliciting and satisfying repressed wishes appear acceptable. Two kinds of psychodynamic activities can be observed. Readers or spectators might "project" their own needs and motives onto fictional characters. Alternatively, they might "identify" with fictional characters by imaginatively assuming the roles of heros through a process of "analogizing." This cognitive and affective process enables spectators to experience temporary wish fulfilment through goals realized by their dramatic heros.

It is important not to forget the primacy of the character's emotions. When personal memories dominate the interpretive process and readers digress into their private lives "anamnestic" emotions result. Excessive fantasized reconstruction can impede the empathic process because people who are overwhelmed by their own personal recollections and emotional experiences — what Wimsatt called the "affective fallacy" — lose contact with the text (e.g., the plot). Of course, this is welcomed by theorists who favour the authorial role of readers (see Holland; Fish; Barthes) in the "effort after meaning" (see Bartlett).
3.2 Thomas Scheff

Based on Bullough, Scheff has offered a theory of identification that links the concept of catharsis with that of aesthetic distance. According to Scheff, a properly constructed drama enables spectators to come into contact with repressed emotions, but with sufficient distance that they are not overwhelmed. A "balance of attention" is created by the script enabling spectators "to be both participants in, and observers of, the dramatic scenes" (155). Playwrights and authors achieve this kind of "controlled identification" by making characters embodiments of ideal values (e.g., attractive, intelligent, courageous) who are similar to members of the audience, and through "awareness control" whereby the audience are "included in shared awareness with one or more of the characters, while one or more of the other characters are being excluded" (157). Thus, when literary structure and repressed emotion find each other under safe circumstances, catharsis occurs and the audience — and society — is better for it.

4. Unifying Concepts and Principles

Scholars who work in the functionalist and psychodynamic approaches agree that readers and spectators need to understand the situations in which characters find themselves. Functionalists, like Tan and Oatley, maintain that readers construct "mental representations" of characters's emotions that simulate the goals, plans, actions, and outcomes in their lives. This perspective is burdened with the epistemological problem that we can never "really" know in a complete sense what other people think or feel. As a consequence, we are all witnesses who are more or less sympathetic to others and our understanding is predicated on an ability to relate to the goals and concerns of characters living in aesthetically contrived worlds. The analogizing or simulation process is facilitated by common experiences that build a bridge from the spectator to the aesthetic event.

The psychodynamic approach emphasizes needs and unresolved issues which figure into the imaginative construction of meaning. In essence, a bond forms between the viewer and the situated character that is referred to as identification. Identification with heroes or idealized situations can serve a compensatory function providing temporary fulfilment of repressed wishes and needs. It can also serve a cathartic function; identification with normal characters whose circumstances resonate with events in the readers' or viewers' life history can provide a conduit for the release of pent up emotion. From an existential viewpoint, recognizing one's life dilemmas in the safety of a narrative provides an opportunity to objectively gaze at the episode and gain insight into the dynamics that surround it.

Under certain circumstances, the character experiences an aversive situation that strikes too close to home for the spectator who need not consciously be aware of the discomfort. However, a defensive process might take over if the
aversive intensity of the reminiscences elicited by the subject matter of the
dramatic work is too great. When this kind of "underdistancing" takes place (see
Bullough), the spectator might shift into an intellectualizing mode and pay
attention to formal aesthetic properties of the scene (e.g., lighting or decoration,
cinematography, etc.) in order to be distracted from the offending subject matter.
However, the cathartic process is weakened if a spectator becomes overwhelmed
by the emotional power of the scene and shuts down emotionally.

A synthesis of the functionalist and psychodynamic perspectives can be
achieved if we distinguish weak and strong modes of identifying with characters.
The weak mode of identification incorporates many of the ideas expressed by
Tan and Oatley in their functional analyses, as well as in Zillmann's behavioura-
list analysis of empathy. In essence, spectators are "witnesses" who adopt the
character's perspective (Zillmann 1995) and experience the world as if through
the character's eyes (ears, etc.). This helps them construct a mental representation
or "meaningful situation model that addresses the readers' goals, that is coherent,
and that explains why actions, events, and states are mentioned in the text"
(Graesser, Singer, and Trabasso 372).

On the subjective side, this first-person perspective enables them to respond
with fresh emotions and feelings to events in the lives of characters. Empathy
toward the characters can also enhance sensitivity to the connotative qualities of
the language embedded in the text. Thus, emotion can be elicited two ways; first,
through an appreciation of the ecological implications of the character's situation
(see Berlyne), and second, as a spontaneous affective response to the expressive
or physiognomic qualities of language (see Werner and Kaplan). Thus, the all-
embracing descriptive richness of a text and the diegetic effects of a cinema that
encompass the immediate world of the spectators (e.g., large screen, darkened
room, surround sound) ensure their response to the immediate moment.

The strong mode of identification is predicated on some kind of resonance
between the lived-world of the situated character and the emotional needs of the
viewer/reader and a consequent absorption of one in the other. From a
psychodynamic viewpoint, strong identification takes place when the needs and
personal history of the viewer/reader are engaged. This can occur because the
person is temporarily able to feel vicariously enhanced by the successes of the
heroic character. Alternatively, this identification takes place because the lived-
world of the character matches some important issue in the life of the viewer/rea-
der and provides an opportunity for the temporary catharsis of pent up emotion
or for new insights.

5. Selected Relevant Research

Before considering the relevant findings of a number of studies conducted in my
laboratory, I want to discuss the potential effects of spontaneous vs. instructed
identification. In spontaneous identification the spectator or reader chooses to identify with a character. The choice takes place naturally because there is a resonance between the life experiences of the person and the situated character. One would expect the Strong form of identification to take place when subjects can spontaneously identify with characters. Given a large enough sample space of situated characters, they find ones that are relevant to them. Under instructed identification the spectator or reader is told to approach the character as a sympathetic witness ("be a sympathetic witness") or in an identifying manner ("imagine that you are the character"). The experimenter in this case is the person who exercises choice in accordance with the principles of experimental design. When subjects are instructed to empathize or identify, one would expect a Weak form of identification because of the lower probability of resonance.

The studies which are surveyed below did not explicitly set out to test the Weak and Strong modes of identification described in this paper. However, they do stand in a meaningful relationship to the theory and the effects of the identification versus sympathy manipulations should be considered in that light. The person's "self" is engaged in Strong identification with all that it implies pertaining to personal meaning and memories, projection of needs, and defensive behaviour. The main idea behind Weak identification is that the spectator perceives the protagonist's situation in a literal way as if through his or her eyes. The person might experience fresh emotions in response to the scene or text, but the "self" is not otherwise engaged.

In the first study, Cupchik and László contrasted texts that emphasized outcome and experience themes and instructional sets that favoured identification versus action orientations in a within-subjects design. The identification set instructed subjects to "to identify with the characters and focus on what they may think and feel." The action set instructed subjects to "focus on what the characters are doing and how the story will end." Under the identification set, subjects read the experience stories more slowly if they were judged as "rich in meaning about life." This fits with the idea that Strong identification links the experiences of characters to meaningful concerns of spectators and readers. Under the action set, subjects read the outcome stories more slowly if they "evoked images." This can be related to the idea that Weak identification involves seeing the dramatic world as if through the eyes of the characters.

In the second experiment — by Cupchik, Oatley, and Vorderer — subjects read descriptive and emotional excerpts from short stories by James Joyce under two instructional sets in a within-subjects design. As spectators, readers were instructed "to feel sympathy" for the character. Under the identification set, readers were instructed to "imagine" themselves as the protagonist and "feel what it is like to be" the protagonist. Identification evoked "fresh emotions" in response to the descriptively rich passages. This fits with the Weak identification idea that readers would be responsive to connotative qualities of the text as an
extension of experiencing the character’s world through "his" eyes. The spectator set generally facilitated subjective responses regardless of type of passage. Subjects experienced both pleasant emotional memories and fresh emotions that were intense and fundamental (e.g., happiness or sadness). This shows that the "self" can also figure prominently when aesthetic distance is provided.

In the third experiment — by Cupchik, Levin, and Ritterfeld — subjects were shown slides of dining and living rooms that were fancy, familiar, or modern and were instructed to imagine living in the rooms (Self Set) or to imagine the person who actually lived in the rooms (Other Set). They rated each room on a variety of scales and later performed a recognition memory task in which they had to identify whether details shown to them were from rooms they had seen. As in an earlier study using these stimuli (see Ritterfeld and Cupchik), differences were found for the modern (i.e., geometric) rooms. Subjects were most accurate at recognizing details when they imagined the person who lived there (Other Set) and least accurate when they imagined living there themselves (Self Set). These findings are consistent with the Weak Identification notion that when subjects are instructed to imagine (i.e., identify with) the Other they shift perspective and literally see the scene (in this case the room) through the Other’s eyes. The Self Set (i.e., equivalent to the Spectator Set) makes subjects more personally absorbed and, hence, less aware of a physical surround to which they do not spontaneously relate (since they did not choose it).

The fourth experiment — by Cupchik, Leonard, and Irvine-Kopetski — examined responses to advertisements and showed the compensatory effects of identifying with characters. Subjects were presented with liquor and perfume ads that were simple (copy reinforced the image) or complex (ironic relation of copy and image) and were instructed to write a short outline of a scene for half the ads (narrative task) and to analyze copy-image relations for the other half (analytic task) in a within-subjects design. They also rated the ads on a number of 7-point scales after performing the interpretive task. Content analysis of the interpretive protocols showed that subjects wrote romantic narrative outlines in response to the simple perfume ads, while analyzing copy-image relations fostered seduction themes and a sensitivity to metaphor. After writing the narrative outlines for the simple perfume ads, subjects indicated that they would feel more masculine/feminine, successful, confident, and powerful if they wore the advertised product. This is very much a case of compensation that results through the identification with characters in idealized settings and supports the Strong mode of identification. However, when "overdistancing" is produced through an objective and detached analytical set, the compensatory process disappears.

The fifth study — by Cupchik and Wroblewski-Raya — examined responses by "lonely" or "sociable" subjects to eight paintings of solitary figures. They were instructed to identify with the figures in four paintings; "imagine yourself
to be the character... feel what it is like to be that person." For the other four paintings they were instructed to be spectators and "sympathize with the person from a distance." In general, when subjects were instructed to identify with the figures in the paintings, they preferred the *narrative* (what the painting was about) over the *style* (what the painting looked like) and found the paintings to be more personally meaningful. As might be expected, lonely subjects (based on the UCLA Loneliness Scale) also found the paintings to be more personally meaningful compared with sociable subjects. However, they preferred the style over the narrative, reflecting a defensive avoidance of the theme which resonated too closely to their own life realities. This exemplifies the defensive response that might eventuate when spontaneous Strong identification produces an aversive emotional state.

6. Conclusion

The above described studies show the value of attempting to reconcile what appear at first glance to be mutually exclusive viewpoints. The first step is to put aside the insurmountable epistemological issue of knowing "other minds" and adopt a contextualizing approach to theory construction. The question then changes from "which theory is right?" to "under what circumstances do the differing theories hold?" The second step is to develop multiple converging paradigms using diverse stimulus materials and determine which results favour the Strong and Weak versions of identification theory. The results of the various studies elucidated some of the processes surrounding both the Strong and Weak modes of identification.

Different aspects of the Strong mode of identification were observed in the experiments. In the advertising study, subjects felt enhanced after projecting fantasies onto the simple perfume ads. This is consistent with the *compensatory principle* underlying psychodynamic theory. Instructing subjects to identify with the characters in experience oriented stories enhanced the perception that the stories were rich in meaning about life and slowed the reading process. This kind of absorption would be expected from subjects who related to resonant themes. Instructing subjects to identify with the characters in paintings can also enhance the personal meaningfulness of the works and an appreciation of the narrative underlying the scene. However, the *defensive* results of spontaneous identification were also observed; lonely subjects found the works personally meaningful and pleasing, but favoured the style over the narrative which is interpreted as intellectualization.

The Weak mode of identification was also observed in the findings of these studies. Subjects experienced *images* in response to action stories and felt *fresh emotions* in response to connotatively rich descriptive language when they were instructed to identify with the protagonist. Similarly, they remembered details of
modern geometric rooms when they imagined the people who lived there. All in all, it bears noting that, while identification can engage readers and viewers, being a spectator provides enough aesthetic distance for them to become absorbed in their own subjective realities. Although this may isolate them from the "correct" appreciation of text valued in New Criticism, it provides the keen motivation to read understood by Reader-Response theory.

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Reception Theory or Preception Theory?

I.

Although the reception dimension has always played a role in discussions of literature, it was not until the arrival of Rezeptionsästhetik in the late 1960s that it became a key focus of literary scholarship. Despite claims to the contrary by Hans Robert Jauß and others, the new approach did not, however, constitute a paradigm shift. For in defining the reader as a function of the text reception-aesthetics remained tied to the ontological, work-immanent, presuppositions of hermeneutics and New Criticism. Thus, Jauß viewed the various receptions of a work of art as "the successive unfolding of the potential for meaning that is embedded in [that] work" (1982a, 30), and for Wolfgang Iser the reader was an implied reader who actualizes the meaning prestructured by the text (xii).

Partly as a reaction to this development, partly on the basis of work done in linguistics, pragmatics, and the social sciences empirical theories of literature did free the reader from the dependence on a pre-existing textual meaning (see Segers). This was undoubtedly an important step forward. But the empirical approaches, too, are not without their problems. However, since I have discussed this topic previously in a number of other publications, I shall ignore it here (De Berg 1995a and the references given in that paper). In this paper I want to look at another topic. I want to ask whether Jauß's theory, despite the many objections that have been leveled against it, does not contain some useful insights for contemporary literary theory. It seems to me that recent developments in literary scholarship, in particular those connected with the work of Niklas Luhmann, suggest a revaluation of Jauß's original proposal as outlined in his 1967 lecture "Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory" (1982a). And we should note that Jauß himself has moved in the opposite direction, his later work to a large extent abandoning the ideas of his 1967 paper (see, for example, 1982b.)

In order to gauge the possible fruitfulness of Jauß's proposal we must first identify its main problems. I shall do this by contrasting it with Luhmann's systems theory, especially his theory of communication (see 1995, chapter 4).1

1 For my interpretation of Luhmann's ideas see 1995b, which also discusses their similarities with speech-act theory.
The aim of this is not simply to criticize Jauß's theory but also to present some of the key ideas of Luhmannian systems theory to an English-speaking audience, who may not yet be very familiar with this body of thought.

II.

The key problem of Jauß's theory, as already noted in the introduction, is its ontological conception of the relation between text and reader, which is the result of his dependence on Gadamerian hermeneutics. For although Jauß criticizes Gadamer's definition of understanding as the self-unfolding of meaning because it neglects the productive dimension of understanding, he fails to shake off the shackles of the hermeneutical circle, which conceives the reader as a quasi-organic extension of the text. Jauß, too, posits a hierarchical relation between text and reception in which the latter is seen as a (partial) actualization of the meaning-potential of the former. The problem with such a hermeneutical approach is that it eliminates the communicative identity of the various receptions of a text. By linking reception texts directly to a supposedly primary parent text, Jauß neglects that reception texts, like all other texts, are communications — utterances which acquire their semantic profile within their own speech-situation, to use J.L. Austin's term. This is not to say that receptions are not receptions of something, but that as communications they are positions within their own, historically specific, discourses and as such are first and foremost reactions to contemporaneous texts. In other words, they receive their meaning as answers to contemporaneous questions, i.e., by setting themselves in opposition to specific other contemporaneous answers (communicative positions).

To put it in the vocabulary of systems theory (see Luhmann 1995, 139ff), meaning does not result from the actualization of a pre-existing system of potential meanings — as structuralism would have it — but is the product of contingent, and therefore historically unique, differences. It is produced by differences that are constituted in and by the communicative process itself. In this perspective, texts are part of a differentially determined communicative force field, and from this they receive their meaning. Thus, their identity is inescapably tied to contingent synchronous themes, topics, questions, etc. Jauß's concept of an effective history is, therefore, an idealization. If meaning is dependent on differences, and, if these differences are not linguistic but communicative entities, then reception history can no longer be seen as the unfolding of a pre-existing meaning potential. Reception is not a matter of diachronous identity, but of synchronous selectivity. Texts, including reception texts, never constitute the meaning of other texts, but only their own meaning. However, this does not mean that the parent text is unimportant, or that it is useful or even possible to study reception texts without first having analyzed the parent text. At the same time, it must be said that the role of the parent text is not infrequently restricted
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to the name of its author and a couple of (emotive) words (see, for example the controversy over the performance of Fassbinder's Der Müll, die Stadt und der Tod in 1985 or the discussions surrounding Christa Wolf's Was bleibt, discussed in Friederike Worthmann’s article in this volume).

It might be objected that such an extreme dissociation of parent text and reception texts reduces reception history to a random collection of isolated communicative events. If reception texts are seen as reactions to synchronous communications does that not mean that reception history, and indeed literary history generally, loses all coherence? I submit that it does not. The view of meaning proposed here does not deny the processuality of history; it entails redefining this processuality. As we have seen, for Jauß reception history is the successive unfolding of an original meaning and as such constitutes a unitary process. By contrast, for systems theory processuality consists of the connectedness of selections. Seen in this way, texts are linked not as part of an organically developing tradition but through contingent differences. For instance, a text B acquires its meaning through its selective relation to text A but can then become (part of) the selective context of texts C and D, while yet other texts can differentiate themselves from A, B, C, or D. The history of systemic communication is never linear or continuous but rather assumes the sort of pattern one can observe in dominoes. Or to use another metaphor, history is not the broad stream of effective history, stretching from past to present, but is made up of numerous communicative rivulets which all too often simply run dry. Only such a view can do justice to what Siegfried Kracauer has called the coexistence of the contemporaneous and non-contemporaneous.

In fact, the situation as described by systems theory is even more complex than this. For selective connections do not just occur on the level of self-reference (i.e., within the literary system) but on that of external reference as well. Systems such as politics or law react to literary communication as well. Such reactions, of which the recurrent debates on the pornographic or anti-social nature of works of art are the most obvious examples, can be profitably discussed only against the background of their own, historically specific, discursive situations. The same, of course, holds true for a phenomenon such as canon formation. The making of a canon is a contingent historical process, bound up with concrete communicative selections which only a naïve glorification of "culture" can mistake for an autonomous Überlieferungsgeschehen.

III.

After my fundamental criticism, it may seem as if there were nothing of value left in Jauß’s theory at all. But that impression would be incorrect. There is at least one idea which deserves serious consideration: Jauß’s concept of the horizon of expectations. Of course, this concept will have to be redefined in the light of
the criticism I have just made, i.e., it will have to be stripped of its substantialist implications. But as I will show shortly, in a revised form it can significantly enrich the theory of communication outlined above.

For Jauß, the horizon of expectations is the cluster of assumptions regarding such things as literary style or genre characteristics which are valid in a particular historical period. In other words, it consists of the intersubjective, or perhaps one should say transsubjective, ideas of how a literary work looks. As is clear from these two attempts at definition that there is a certain vagueness in the term, but I think that is inevitable with this sort of concept. The real problems with the term, it seems to me, lie elsewhere. They have to do, first of all, with the relation Jauß posits between the horizon of expectations and the literary text. According to Jauß, the identity of the text is dependent on its relation with the Erwartungshorizont, but he does not see this identity in communicative but in aesthetic terms. In other words, Jauß does not so much talk about the meaning of the text but rather about its aesthetic value. For him that work of art is most valuable which departs most from the expectations of its readers. But not only is such a value judgement extremely problematic in itself, it also leaves unanswered the question of the communicative, and therefore semantic, identity of the text. Secondly, the horizon of expectations, despite occasional claims by Jauß to the contrary, is very much a monolithic concept. It is conceptualized as a period-specific, unitary concept, which contradicts Jauß’s attempts to do justice to the heterochronicity of history. Here Jauß is clearly under the spell of the hermeneutic idea of tradition.

At the same time, the concept of the Erwartungshorizont is capable of making the differential conception of meaning developed by systems theory much more complete. For communication takes place not only as a reaction to other communication but also against the background of what people expect on the basis of previous communication. Communicative success or persuasiveness, for example, depends to a large extent on the specific expectations of the audience. But how can the Erwartungshorizont be built into Luhmann’s theory without simultaneously importing its hermeneutic implications? My proposal would be to incorporate the notion of the Erwartungshorizont into systems theory by reinterpreting it in terms of Luhmann’s conceptualization of systemic structures.

One of the key ideas behind Luhmann’s systems theory is its rejection of the structuralist notion of a deep structure: the idea that social action is a surface manifestation of an underlying systemic structure (see 1995, chapters 3 and 8). For Luhmann, the system’s structures consist of expectations, or to be more precise of expectations of expectations (Erwartungserwartungen). Here Luhmann takes as his starting point Talcott Parsons’s concept of double contingency, which highlights the intransparency of social actors to one another that makes all social situations fundamentally indeterminate and open. But whereas for Parsons double contingency is a hypothetical construct — the openness of social situations being
seen as no more than a theoretical possibility, which in reality is foreclosed by a pre-existing normative consensus — Luhmann sees it as an ineliminable fact of social reality and, as such, as the source of both communication and the accompanying formation of expectations. For Luhmann, double contingency is not a threat to be avoided but the very engine of social processes. For the openness of situations is by no means eliminated by expectations. The expectations, or rather expectations of expectations, facilitate the orientation in the double contingency that characterizes all social interaction (communication; see Luhmann 1995, chapter 4) but they do not determine anything. All communication takes place against the background of expectations but it can either conform to these expectations or disappoint them. This can — but need not — generate new expectations. But expectations do not just change over time. For since, as we have seen, communication is a heterochronous process, so too is the formation of Erwartungserwartungen: they vary not just diachronically but synchronically, from communicative situation to communicative situation, as well.

It is precisely this dynamic nature of Luhmann's concept of social expectations that allows for a re-interpretation of Jauß's ideas which avoids the pitfalls of hermeneutics. Of course, the re-interpretation suggested here implies a focus significantly different to Jauß's own approach. For shifting from an horizon of expectations to an horizon of expectations of expectations means exchanging a reader-oriented focus for a text-oriented one. It means shifting from a reception theory to what one might term a preception theory. Preception theory does not link up texts with supposedly ontologically given expectations — conventions, norms, values — but focuses on what from a production point of view are the expected (readers') expectations. This makes it possible to avoid the hypothesis of expectations into period-specific conventions, and hence to conceptualize texts as communicative events with their own past and future horizon. Positing period-specific expectations is possible only on the basis of a comparison with the postulated unity of other historical periods, i.e. on the basis of a post hoc perspective that creates a continuity which turns the contingency of communicative processes into an ahistorical linearity (for this problematic, see De Berg 1995a). Furthermore, a Luhmannian re-interpretation of Jauß's concept implies that it cannot be restricted to literary texts. It must be applied to reception texts as well and, indeed, to all forms of communication. From this perspective, all texts must be viewed not just in their differential relation to specific other synchronous communications but also against the background of

2 Here Luhmann introduces the distinction between cognitive and normative expectations (1995, chapter 8).

3 I borrow this term from Hermann Lübbe, who, however, uses it in a sense slightly different to the one here (191-211).
specific expectations. Only if both are taken into account — the text's communicative differences and the expectations to which it reacts — can the historical profile of texts be reconstructed.

Finally, this extended systems theoretical approach is also capable of throwing new light on the problem of literary innovation. Here, contrary to Jauß, who defines the artistic quality of a work in terms of its departure from its readers' expectations, I use the word "innovatory" in a neutral sense, i.e., without equating it with aesthetical value. In systems theory innovation is a difficult notion because in a way all communication is innovatory. According to Luhmann, a communication can only acquire meaning by negating other synchronous positions, that is, by differentiating itself from other communications. Thus, every communication implies change. Genuine innovation, then, is not so much a matter of communicative difference but depends on a departure from expectation structures. Of course, as I have explained, expectations must be conceived of as dynamic entities. But it is also clear that some expectations will be more firmly established and more durable than others. It is therefore possible to measure the innovatory nature of literary texts by establishing in what way they depart from which specific expectations. Now clearly this is a highly complex issue that still needs a lot of thinking through. In the following I will try to give at least some indication of how this abstract proposal can be made more concrete.

IV.

Following Niklas Luhmann and Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, Ekkehard Mann has proposed a typology of possible textual departures from expectation structures (see 1993, 1994). His proposal is based on Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht's application of Luhmann's systems theory, and was developed for the study of the literature of the former East Germany but it proves to be applicable for analyzing other literary systems as well. Mann's starting-point is the systems theoretical division of expectation-structures into three dimensions: a temporal, a social, and a fact dimension (see Luhmann 1995, 74ff). The temporal dimension refers to the extension of expectations in time and concerns the way they relate to past and future; the fact dimension refers to the generalized formal and thematic identity of expectations and concerns the relation between self-reference and external reference; the social dimension refers to the social validity or acceptance of expectations. Mann, then, offers a framework for analyzing the way texts situate themselves vis-à-vis these dimensions: temporally with regard to how they relate to the literary tradition and possibly — against the background of a literary

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4 To be sure, these dimensions are aspects of one and the same thing (i.e., expectations): they can be distinguished analytically but not separated.
manifesto, for instance — constitute or try out programmatic ideas for future writing; in formal and thematic respects in the fact dimension; *vis-à-vis* the criteria for acceptability applied by critics and other readers in the social dimension. Leaving aside texts that do not challenge any of these expectations, Mann identifies three main types of expectancy negation: asymmetrical negation, symmetrical negation, and recursive negation.

1) Asymmetrical negations comprise texts which negate only part of the three dimensions. Here Mann gives the example of texts from the former East Germany which refer more or less realistically (mimetically) to marxist-leninistically interpreted reality (external reference) while at the same time trying out new literary forms (self-reference). This category can be sub-divided according to the specific dimension(s) in which a text constitutes negations.

2) Symmetrically negating texts distance themselves from all three dimensions at the same time. Expectations and text possess no significant common characteristics. Dadaism, for example, ignores both the usual literary themes (external reference) and literary forms (self-reference). In the temporal dimension it completely departs from literary traditions and constitutes a radically new artistic programme. Finally, in the social dimension there is a break with what critics may be expected to accept.

3) Recursive negation can be considered a special case of asymmetrical negation. It occurs when texts violate specific prohibitions or taboos without negating any positive expectations. Such cases are of course more common in dictatorial régimes but they are possible in a functionally differentiated society as well. For example, in our society a positive treatment of the Holocaust or a disinterested presentation of racist protagonists would certainly contradict expectations of what literature ought not to do.

Against this background the history of innovations, literary evolution in other words, can be described as the heterochronous succession of successful negations. Of course, problems still abound. The internal consistency of the ideas presented here, their relation with other literary theories (the conceptualization of literary evolution in Russian Formalism springs to mind), and the possibility of their operationalization all require careful scrutiny. Only then will it be possible to determine whether this systems theoretical proposal can be a genuine contribution to the study of literature as a social science.

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5 For some critical remarks on Tynyanov's theory of literary evolution from the perspective of systems theory, see De Berg 1995b.


Effects of Literature: A Review

And I want to get the whole country reading, again. Those of you who haven't been reading: I think books are important. (Oprah Winfrey's *Book Club*)

1. Introduction

Reading literature is a transaction, and, obviously, a transaction involves a two-way deal. First, the construction of textual meaning is an active process. Readers ascribe sense to a text by choosing the frame of reference they see fit. They creatively resolve ambiguities and prove to be quite resourceful at inferring missing or incomplete information. In short, readers attribute meaning to texts. This is one way of the transaction. But what about the other? Readers give a text meaning; what do they get in return? There is no shortage of possible answers to this question. Plato warned that literature's misrepresentations may lead to misconceptions about our world. Nowadays, it is still assumed that, for example, fictional presentation of submissive and subservient female characters may affect readers' norms about appropriate female behavior. Aristotle proposed that literature may cause *catharsis*, a relief of burdensome emotions. This idea has led some to suggest that reading literature may reduce our destructive psychological impulses and enable us to make more considered judgments (e.g., Bertrand Russell in his Nobel Prize speech [qtd. in Beardsley 1958, 574]). Horace drew our attention to the possibility that literature offers an effective instrument for education, since it combines learning with pleasure. To the present day, this notion has brought people to use stories for didactic purposes. Many more proposals could be added.

Oddly enough, however, effects of reading seem a much less current object of empirical study, than, for instance, the effect of readers' background on response. This is curious, because many of our conceptions of literature include assumptions about its effects on readers' character, norms, and values. Odd also, because so many of these assumptions are present in today's discussions about literature's relation with ethics (e.g., Booth; DePaul; Nussbaum; Palmer; Rorty;
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Steiner), as well as in speculations about literature's potential contribution to moral education (e.g., Coles; Egan; Vitz). Odd, furthermore, because some of these beliefs are persistent, almost begging to be put to the test. Even in a time of omnipresent electronic media some still believe that reading literature is good for you (see Oprah's Book Club). Odd, finally, because readers themselves often claim that reading literature changes them in significant ways (Culp; Ebersole; Kuiken and Miall; Shirley).

Some may object that this way of looking at the transaction between reader and literature is taking the metaphor too far. The idea that reading is a form of "exchange" might pertain to the construction of meaning of the text only, with both reader and text getting their say. This article discusses the available evidence that the transaction indeed does go the two ways as suggested above: the reader influences the meaning of the text, but the text also influences the reader.

In this article, I will present selected results of a survey of the existing literature, focusing on experimental studies. In gathering the material I used the following sources. For the period 1980 to 1995, I systematically studied the Psychological Abstracts and Dissertation Abstracts International. To track experiments conducted before 1980, references in a number of articles and books — notably in Klemenz-Belgrad and Kimmel — were studied. Finally, forty scholars were asked for information about their own work, as well as whether they knew of any other relevant studies. The effort yielded data about a total of 54 experiments. Section 2 in my article here gives an impression of the sort of claims experimenters made, while section 3 estimates the credibility of these claims. To structure the field, the studies were categorized according to the effects researchers were seeking. Finally, Section 4 examines some conclusions the available evidence allows.

2. Overview

2.1 Attitude Change toward Outgroups

My first category consists of studies examining the possibility of changing subjects' attitudes toward outgroups. I found a total of sixteen studies with this purpose (Alsbrook; Beardsley 1979; Brisbin; Fisher; Frankel; Geiger; Gimmerstad and de Chiara; Hays; Heintz-Lawler; Jackson; Kimoto; Litcher and Johnson; Schwartz; Stone; Tauran; Zucaro). In this type of experiments, subjects listen to, or read, favorable stories about outgroup members. Litcher and Johnson, for instance, compiled a textbook with stories containing positive portrayals of ethnic minorities. For a period of four months this textbook was read in class by

2 The full text of this literature review is forthcoming in my PhD dissertation, The Moral Laboratory: Literature and Ethical Awareness.
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a group of Caucasian second graders. It replaced a regular textbook which only had white characters in it. The experimenters used a randomized pretest-posttest-control-group design, and registered a significant decrease in social distance toward colored people.

Interestingly, several studies examined negative effects on outgroup attitudes. Tauran and Stone compared effects of positive and negative presentations of outgroups. Both found significant effects in the predicted directions. Geiger examined effects of popular fiction about World War II. He registered negative effects on subjects' attitude toward Soviets.

2.2 Attitude Change toward Sex-Roles

The second category of experiments is concerned with the potential of literature to influence readers' conception of sex-roles. As far as I can see, there are six studies which deal with such effects (Ashby and Wittmaier; Barclay; Berg-Cross and Berg-Cross; Flerx et al.; McArthur and Eisen). Treatments generally consist of reading stories with either nontraditional or stereotypical sex-role representations. For example, Ashby and Wittmaier compared the effects of listening to stories about female characters in the role of a veterinarian or television director, with the effects of stories in which female characters are nurses or telephone operators. Using a posttest-delayed-posttest-control-group design, the researchers found significant effects on several measures. For instance, the nontraditional treatment caused female to be more broadminded as to which jobs they would enjoy in the future.

2.3 Effects on Norms and Values

Eight studies examined effects on norms and values (Berg-Cross and Berg-Cross; Brandhorst; Burt; Freimuth and Jamieson; Keener; Kigar; Milgram; Schram and Geljon). Here we may expect to find answers to questions such as "what effects can a story about friendship have on readers' conception of friendship?" Berg-Cross and Berg-Cross, for instance, found that reading stories which express a particular social value triggered subjects' awareness of the importance of that value. Schram and Geljon is one of the few studies that report unintended effects. The purpose of the study was to compare the effects of two didactic approaches to World War II literature: an affective an a cognitive one. In one group, subjects' empathic responses were stimulated. They were instructed to try to imagine themselves in the shoes of the character (e.g., a collaborator). In another group, subjects studied the "life and times" of the authors (cognitive approach). The texts used present an image of the war from which subjects were supposed to conclude that it cannot always be clear who was good and who was evil in World War II. Contrary to the researchers' expectations, the affective approach led to more radical denouncements of the characters than the cognitive approach. The affective group considered cruel vendettas of the resistance as justifiable. Subjects in the cognitive approach group tended to regard such actions
as useless, or too much vengeance-oriented without actually serving the aim of liberation.

2.4 Empathy

Four studies deal with the effects of reading literature on a group of variables related to empathy, namely role taking ability, motivation for prosocial behavior, and altruistic conduct (Bilsky; Healy; Milner; Wiley). Bilsky selected two stories, both involving prosocial dilemmas. Subjects read either one of the stories. Afterwards, an adaptation of Schwartz' *Awareness of Consequences Scale* was administered. This test consisted of short, two-paragraph stories describing prosocial dilemmas. Subjects were asked to envision the reflections the protagonist in the dilemmas might have. Next, subjects completed a *Prosocial Motivation Questionnaire*. Analysis of the data revealed highly significant gains on both tests.

2.5 Moral Development

Several researchers make use of Kohlberg's model of moral development. The model describes the evolution of children's moral judgments distinguishing a number of stages (see Kohlberg). In the survey eight experiments which attempt to boost such developmental changes with the help of literature-based programs were found (Biskin and Hoskisson; Gallager; Garrod; Johnson; Justice; Keele; Kinnard). Kinnard, for instance, examined the effects of reading two adolescent novels on level of moral reasoning. After reading the two books (*The Pigman* and *Killing Mr. Griffin*), the 14-15 year-old subjects either participated in structured group discussions (group 1); wrote an essay on the two books (group 2); or joined in group discussions amongst each other (group 3). Using Rest's *Defining Issues Test* as pre- and posttest, the experimenter compared the gains in moral reasoning with test scores of a control group. This yielded a significant effect of the read-and-write treatment only.

2.6 Critical Thinking

I found three studies investigating whether literature based curricula enhance readers' critical thinking (Bird; Dukess; Schulhauser). Bird examined the effects of a Junior Great Books Program on critical reading and thinking skills. Effects were established using a pretest-posttest-control-group design. Analysis of the data suggest that treatment resulted in higher scores on critical thinking and critical reading.

2.7 Self-Esteem

Six experimenters examined the effects on self-esteem (Doering; Trimble; Garrod; Koeller; Roach; Woodyard). Doering examined the effects of two literature programs on gifted and average children, using one measure for self-
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appraisal both as pretest and posttest. In one program texts were read to the subjects by a teacher; the other included additional discussions of the texts and self-concept activities. The analysis revealed significant gains for both treatments as compared to control group scores. Furthermore, it was found that gifted subjects responded significantly more positively to the listening program, while average children were more responsive to the listen-and-discuss program.

2.8 Anxiety Reduction

Finally, five researchers studied therapeutic applications of reading literature, more specifically the reduction of anxiety (Cutforth; Quale; Scheff and Scheele; Smith). Cutforth examined the effect of group bibliotherapy. Participants listened to teachers reading three books, for ten sessions, over a period of five weeks. Using the General Anxiety Scale for Children as pre- and posttest, a significant decrease of anxiety was registered for male subjects only.

3. Evaluation

In this section I will try to separate the above cited studies, deciding which offer direct evidence to support researchers' claims, and which do not. The criteria I used are derived from Cook and Campbell (37-94). They present a useful guideline for estimating the validity of experimental research. In my evaluation of the evidence, I took into account that not all these criteria are equally important. For example, in many studies treatment and testing were conducted by the same person. As a result, the outcome of these experiments may be open to the problem of "hypothesis guessing." Subjects may have related one task (e.g., reading a story) with another (completing a posttest). Having guessed the aim of the experimenter, they may have responded accordingly, trying to help the researcher to find what he or she expected of them. However, this need not be a serious threat to validity. As Cook and Campbell (66) stress themselves, there is no widespread evidence that subjects actually tend to provide answers that will please the researcher. Hence, the results of such experiments do not have to be dismissed immediately. A similar problem is the lack of a randomization procedure. Not randomizing subjects over experimental and control conditions means that a potentially relevant variable may intervene. On the other hand, when randomization is carried out, distorting effects may occur owing to the unnatural situation of breaking up intact groups (e.g., classrooms). Working with intact groups in field settings instead of individuals in laboratories may produce results which are more representative of reading in real life (Cook and Campbell 7). Some experimenters randomly assigned intact groups to treatments, and conducted pre- and posttest in all conditions. This seems a fair solution for this problem.

A considerable amount of studies suffer from more serious ailments. For
example, in one study it was obvious from the report that treatments within one experimental group were inconsistent (Koeller). The aim of the study was to examine the effects of reading story excerpts about Mexicans on Mexican school children’s self-esteem. A great number of teachers conducted the treatment. The experimenter explicitly told the teachers they were free to construe their task as they saw fit; only the materials were fixed. So, while one teacher may have simply asked subjects to read a story, another may have read it to them and led a discussion afterwards. Obviously, such an unregulated procedure does not allow any strong conclusions. Another problem I consider critical enough to discard the researchers’ claims, is the absence of a pretest combined with either a lack of a randomization procedure, or a control group. Such procedures cast too much doubt on the claim that differences researchers registered between groups were due to treatment. I also rejected experiments with more than two moderate threats to internal validity. A buildup of small uncertainties seems a justifiable reason to question researchers’ claims. Finally, none of the studies were given "the benefit of the doubt." For example, when the report did not mention whether subjects were randomized, I assumed they were not. In some cases such assumptions may have been unwarranted, since I sometimes had to rely on information from a dissertation abstract only. Several authors responded to my request for more details about their procedures and research design, but many others proved to be out of reach.

Table 1 (see Appendix) summarizes the result of my evaluation. The numbers in the first column indicate the total amount of studies found in each category. The second column represents the number of studies that were estimated to be unreliable. The next two columns contain the number of reliable studies which respectively rejected and confirmed the hypotheses.

In three of the research categories we find a substantial amount of evidence revealing an effect of the treatments: effects on sex-role concepts, moral development, and outgroup attitude. Results of sex-role research are unanimously positive. Five studies provide direct evidence for the assumption that reading may affect gender related behavioral norms, beliefs about natural differences between men and women (such as cognitive ability), and actual behavior. 3 Reviewing moral development research, I found five reliable studies with positive results (Johnson; Justice; Kinnard; Biskin and Hoskisson; Keefe). 4 These results show that literature-based programs may significantly enhance the natural development of moral judgment. Outgroup studies also provide a substantial amount of evidence revealing an effect of the treatments. Six studies were conducted

3 Of the six studies only Barclay was disqualified, because, as she reports, the purpose of the study leaked out.

4 Garrod’s and Gallager’s claims are impaired by more than two problems. Therefore, their results are not considered in my conclusions.
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Some results, however, are contradictory. In two well-designed experiments reading seemed to have had no effects at all (Beardsley; Schwartz). Further research should account for variables which may have caused these different outcomes. Meanwhile, it does seem relatively certain that reading stories with positive portrayals of outgroup members results in a positive change in attitude toward that group. Similarly, negative characterizations can be assumed to result in negative attitudes (Geiger; Tauran).

Empirical support for other categories is smaller. Two reliable studies support the claim that reading literature reduces anxiety (Cutforth; Scheff and Scheele). One study showed significant improvement in emotionally disturbed patients (McClaskey). I found only two methodologically sound experiments that yielded positive effects on empathy (Bilsky; Milner). One experiment did not result in significant effects (Wiley; Healy is left out owing to three possible problems). This is not an inconsistency. Whereas Wiley tried to establish effects on altruistic behavior, both Bilsky and Milner used a cognitive approach to empathy. Two experiments present direct evidence for the effect of literature on readers' self-esteem (the procedures of Doering; Trimble; Garrod; Koeller; and Woodyard were insufficient). Gross's literature program resulted in higher scores on personal adjustment. This suggests an increase of self-reliance, a sense of personal worth and freedom, a feeling of belonging, and the reduction of withdrawing tendencies and nervous symptoms. Furthermore, Roach found that literature programs can be used to boost subjects' perception of themselves as a student in relation to other students and their teachers. This means a higher appraisal of their own scholastic abilities, and a more positive attitude toward teachers and school.

Table 2 (see Appendix) shows that conclusions regarding the effects on critical thinking should be made with caution. Only one study, conducted by Bird, showed literature programs to enhance critical thinking skills (owing to more than two potential problems, studies by Dukses and Schulhauser were excluded). Table 2 presents the number of reliable studies in which the conclusions concern the effects of exposure to literary texts only, excluding studies in which all treatments combined exposure with other activities, such as taking part in

5 Albrook, Frankel, Gimmestad and De Chiara, Heintz, and Stone are not taken into consideration. In For these studies, the potential threats to internal validity exceed my criterion of two "only mild problems." In addition to having three such problems, Fisher's study seems unreliable because, as he reports, the "placebo treatment" (control condition) had a significant effect on subjects' attitudes. Kimoto cannot guarantee that treatments within one experimental condition were equal. Moreover, Kimoto registered an inexplicable change in attitudes between posttest and delayed posttest.

6 Quale's study presented more than two problems. Smith was disqualified owing to a lack of control; the design included neither a randomization nor were subjects pretested. Therefore, there is little certainty that differences between groups was caused by treatment.
postreading discussions or role playing. Such studies obviously do not allow conclusions about the effects of exposure itself, since their results may just as well be caused by the postreading activities alone, or by the combination of reading and such activities.

We see then that in sex-role and outgroup research still a number of studies survive. In sex-role research we find five studies (Ashby and Wittmaier; McArthur and Eisen; Berg-Cross and Berg-Cross; Flerx et al. [2]), in outgroup research four studies (Geiger; Zucaro; Litcher and Johnson; Jackson) that incontrovertibly show that exposure to literary texts may have significant effects on readers' attitudes. On the other hand, Schwartz and Beardsley were not able to establish any effects of "read-only treatments" on outgroup attitudes. As to claims about the influence on norms and self-esteem, we have only one affirmative piece of evidence (Berg-Cross and Berg-Cross; Gross; respectively). One study (Scheff and Scheele) demonstrated that listening to taped sketches without any discussion produced relaxation. In the remaining research categories — empathy, moral development, and critical thinking — none of the data show that the mere exposure to literature leads to significant changes.

To estimate the importance of these research findings some questions need to be answered. We need to know to what extent the effects were internalized, whether reading literature could affect how we feel about things, whether it would affect our behavior, and also, under which conditions the effects take place. In the next section I will highlight some of the conclusions of the review.

4. The Range of Claims

4.1 Stability

Do we know anything about the long-term effects of reading literature? In her evaluation of influence studies, Klemenz-Belgardt has already noted that one of the nagging methodological problems is the relative shortness of duration allotted to the experiments. Little has changed since then. In the present survey, none of the studies investigate longitudinal effects, and only six experimenters included a delayed posttest in their design (ranging from one to six weeks after treatment).

The evidence gathered pertains to the effects on outgroup attitude, moral development, and sex-role conceptions. As to the effects on outgroup attitude, three out of a total of sixteen experimenters conducted a delayed posttest (Jackson; Alsbrook; Kimoto). None of the results suggest that effects were still present. One experiment on moral development included a delayed posttest in the procedure (Justice). The initial effects on the Defining Issues Test were not retained after six weeks. Two sex-role studies included a delayed posttest (Ashby and Wittmaier; Flerx et al.); both showed that some of the effects found on first testing were retained over a period of seven days. However, they were not as strong, and they did not recur across all posttests.
In this respect it should be stressed that in field experiments — which is what we are concerned with here — it is almost impossible to isolate subjects in the period between first and second testing. Consider a study like the ones conducted by Flerx et al.: treatment consisted of reading stories about women in nontraditional roles. Chances are high that subjects will be exposed to numerous of traditional models in the week following the experiment. Hence, this appears reason enough to consider effects on second testing a notable finding.

Some evidence informs us on the durability of the effect of reading stories as compared to that of watching films (see Figure 1, Appendix). In one of the experiments conducted by Flerx et al., the effects of watching "egalitarian" films were compared with the effects of reading "egalitarian" stories. In the control group subjects read stereotypical stories. Figure 1 shows subjects' acceptance of nontraditional occupations for women. As one can see, the effect in the film group was only marginally stronger. As to the durability of the effects, one can see a sharp drop for films and stories between posttest and delayed posttest. Nevertheless, analysis of the data showed that in both groups the effect was still significant. It seems, therefore, that in discussions about the relative power of filmed versus written story we should not underestimate the effectiveness of reading.

4.2 Nature of the Effects

Sceptics may still protest that even if these changes are relatively stable, they may be a reflection of subjects' conception of social desirability rather than anything else. As to the true nature of the effects, it may be interesting to look at Brisbin's experiment. His subjects were randomly divided into two groups. The experimental group read and discussed stories containing positive presentations of black people, while the control group read literary texts with a subject matter neutral to the purpose of the study. After treatment subjects were first tested with a paired-comparison task to measure their racial preferences, and secondly, with a physiological instrument, namely Galvanic Skin Response.

Analysis of the results suggested a significant effect on the ranking task: black people were liked better in the experimental group than in the control group. No differences were found, however, on Galvanic Skin Response. This finding suggests that the effects of reading, at least the ones on outgroup attitudes, are merely verbalized changes. As Brisbin concludes, such treatments may be too weak to generate an emotional reorientation. However, McArthur and Eisen's evidence suggests that effects of reading can reach much further than that. In this experiment, thirty-six five-year-olds participated. They were randomly divided across three groups. One group heard a stereotypical story, depicting achievement behavior by a male character and helpless and passive behavior by a female character. In the second condition almost the same story was read, except that in this story characters' roles were reversed: now the girl is perfectly capable of looking after her own interests, while the boy waits for the girl to help him out.
The procedure was as follows. One experimenter takes each subject individually to a room and reads one of the three stories. Then a second experimenter, who is unaware of the condition subjects are in, enters the room and the first experimenter secretly observes the subject from an adjoining room through a one-way mirror. Subjects are instructed in the rules of a game they are invited to play while waiting for the first experimenter to return. It is made clear to them that they can stop whenever they want to. The game involves trying to stand up some flowers that are lying on their side in a terrarium, a difficult task for five-year-old children. The time they spend trying to stand up the flowers serves as the measure of subjects’ achievement-oriented behavior (see Figure 2, Appendix). The results show that boys persisted longer after hearing a story depicting achievement behavior by a male character than girls did. They also persisted longer in trying than the male subjects in the control group, and certainly longer than the males in the reversed condition. Obviously, the reversed story inverted the pattern. Girls who had listened to the story with the aspiring girl persisted longer on their task than the boys did. However, this last trend was not significant. In conclusion, it seems that reading can have behavioral effects.

4.3 Conditions

Little can be said about the conditions under which the effects take place. This survey does not comprise a meta-analysis. Such an approach requires mean scores on pretest and posttest and weighted average standard deviations. Because this information was often incomplete or missing altogether, it was impossible to compute overall effect sizes. Furthermore, too many different tests were used, and most categories contained too few studies to make a meta-analysis worthwhile. Consequently, we cannot compute the size of the effects relative to, for instance, the subjects’ age or gender.

Therefore, I will discuss the possible requirements researchers propose themselves: the relation of the text to subjects’ self; as to outgroup studies, the (un)familiarity of the target group in question; and finally, the effects of postreading activities.

In section 4.1, we saw that attitude change toward sex-roles may be lasting, while in the outgroup studies no stable effects were established. Looking at the nature of the effects in section 4.2 we found that direct effects on behavior occurred in a sex-role study, and one outgroup study suggested that no emotional orientation took place. It appears, therefore, that influence of reading on outgroup attitudes may be of a more superficial and transient nature than the effect on sex-role conceptions. One possible explanation is that outgroup representations do not collide with essential parts of readers’ self-concept, while changing their conception of sex-roles does.
The importance of self-relevance (i.e., readers relating what they read in some way or another relating to their self-concept) may also reveal itself in the fact that subjects' sex is an intervening variable in all the sex-role studies. In Flerx et al., for example, female subjects' beliefs about the cognitive abilities of boys and girls were more easily influenced than the beliefs of male subjects. The experimenters point out that the intended attitude change must have been a more pleasant one for the girls. Believing that boys and girls are equally intelligent may have seemed a more agreeable thought to them than the one they had before the experiment, namely that boys are cleverer than girls. For the male subjects however, it must have been too hard to give up the comforting idea of male intellectual superiority.

As to the outgroup experiments, researchers propose that the effectiveness of treatments may be influenced by subjects' familiarity with the target group in question (see Kimmel). This suggestion is based on the findings of mass media researchers. People's susceptibility to the influences of television is caused by the incompleteness of their knowledge of the target group from other sources. This may explain, for instance, Litcher and Johnson's results. As I mentioned earlier, they measured a strong effect of reading a multiethnic textbook. However, the experimenters reported that in the town subjects lived in only .02 % of the population was black. It may well be that the effect of the treatment was owing to the fact that in a homogeneous population racial tensions and prejudice tend to be low. Consequently, it seems plausible that the initially negative attitudes of the subjects were not rooted all that deep, and consequently were easily changed. However likely this explanation may sound, in the present survey I did not encounter any study which puts it to the test.

Many studies were confounded by combining exposure to literature with other treatment tasks (see Table 2, Appendix). This does not necessarily mean that reading has to be accompanied by some form of "postprocessing" to be effective. Because the present data do not allow a meta-analysis of the contribution of postreading activities to the overall effect, we cannot say anything definite about the necessity of postprocessing. Some studies suggest that postprocessing adds to the effects: reading without discussion did induce significant effects, but not as strongly as reading followed by discussion (e.g., Zucaro). Keefe even assumed that the effects he found on moral development were principally owing to postreading discussions, and less so to the texts the discussions had been based on. In his experiment he examined the effects of several moral development curricula. One of the independent variables he manipulated was the "genre" of texts read. Subjects either read stories or case-accounts of these stories. In eight sessions, eight stories were read, followed by all sorts of postreading activities. Keefe registered a significant effect on moral reasoning for all of his conditions, but no significant differences between the groups. Hence, it did not seem to matter whether subjects read stories or summaries of these stories. Perhaps this
inference is premature. Postreading activities were an important element in all his treatments. After reading the texts, an arsenal of techniques was put to work to enhance subjects' moral reasoning. It seems likely that Keefe's emphasis on postreading activities may explain why he found it hard to distinguish between the effects of story-treatments and case-account treatments. Moreover, whether effects are generated by the text subjects read, or by postprocessing tasks can only be resolved by a design which includes at least one read-only condition. Thus, the question whether it is postprocessing or the text that causes the effects still stands unanswered.

5. Further Research

Let me first summarize the conclusions of my review. The evidence for effects on sex-role concepts seems to be the strongest available. Almost equally strong support was found for the claim that literature can be used as a basis for moral development programs (five studies, and one study that failed, presumably because of the shortness of the treatment). A considerable amount of evidence supports the assumption that reading stories affects attitudes toward outgroups (six studies). However, in two studies no effects were found. Both positive and negative changes occurred, depending on whether outgroup members were portrayed positively or negatively. Little can be said about effects on self-esteem, the reduction of anxiety, norms, empathy, and critical thinking. Although there is some evidence for each of these alleged effects of reading literature, the conclusions could obviously do with some replication.

Therefore, further research is called for. However, in addition to replication there are several other problems researchers should consider. An important deficiency in the available evidence is that little is known about long-term effects of reading literature. Also, it needs to be sorted out what the relative weight is of exposure to "stimulus material" and postprocessing (e.g., discussion of the materials). Furthermore, we cannot rule out that social desirability accounts for some of the effects measured. Thus, future research should put more effort in concealing researchers' purposes.

Finally, I would like to stress two of my desiderata in particular, because, as I see it, two deficiencies are most outstanding: 1) The lack of hypotheses about which text features are responsible for which of the effects and 2) Few experimenters have taken the trouble to pinpoint the psychological processes which caused the changes they observed. Only two or three experimenters based their hypotheses on close analyses of their "stimulus material." I should note that this can hardly be meant as a serious imputation. Most of the researchers quoted in this review were exclusively interested in testing the effectiveness of some new curriculum, for instance to fight racial prejudice. The materials used are often selected on the intuition that the texts contain positive portrayals of some target
group. Geiger is an example of a more thorough approach. He found that reading World War II adventure books containing negative portrayals of Russian soldiers had a negative effect on readers' attitude toward the Soviet Union. Geiger based his hypotheses about the effects of his stimulus material on a content analysis of the genre. However, this approach still does not allow conclusions about which facet of the story caused the effects. Summing up the results of his content analyses, Geiger mentions several characteristics which may contribute to the effect. For instance, the texts are always written from the perspective of the German Wehrmacht; there is always a potential subject for identification: a virtuous and courageous commander; and images of Soviets are invariably negative. From the point of view of literary studies it should be interesting to find out which of these features, or combination of features, may be responsible for the effects Geiger measured.

A suitable instrument to control for text variables is text manipulation. The only example I encountered in my survey of the literature is that of McArthur and Eisen: they switched the gender of the main story characters. The experimenters found that their manipulation did not work entirely as they had expected. As you may recall, the reversed condition did not result in a significant reversal of the gender behavioral pattern. Some of the actions of the boy and the girl in the new version must have seemed strange to the readers, McArthur and Eisen suppose. Text manipulation may be a method to get at specific effects of text variables, but it is obviously an instrument one has to handle with care.

A second deficiency I would like to mention is that little attention has been given to the question which psychological processes may be responsible for the effects. Again, given the educationalist aim of most of the experimenters, this should cause no surprise. In section 4.3 several possible explanations were mentioned, but only to conclude that more research is needed. In addition to these solutions, some experimenters say that findings of sex-role research seem to be caused by social learning: because female "models" had an effect on female readers; and male "models" had an effect on male readers. However, effects of reading stories about black characters on white readers shows that this is not a cast-iron explanation. Whichever way we turn, questions keep popping up.

My proposals imply that what is needed, in general, is the kind of research some members of the International Society for the Empirical Study of Literature are involved with. Combining methods of psychology with those of literary (e.g., narratology) and culture study may enable us to understand which text variables may generate which processes of attitude change, and thus help us to predict the effects of reading literature more accurately (an attempt to such a synthesis can be found in my The Moral Laboratory).

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Works Cited


Kigar, H.J. A Study in Affective Sensitivity: The Use of Value-Oriented Literature at the


Table 1. Results of the Evaluation

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1. Unreliable: studies with three or more potential threats to internal validity.
2. Reliable: fewer than three potential threats to internal validity.

Table 2. Effects of Exposure to Literature Perse

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1. Confounded: studies which do not allow conclusions about the effects of exposure to literature perse, because all treatments combine reading/listening with other treatment tasks.
2. Unconfounded: studies that include at least one treatment that consists only of reading, or listening to literature.
Acceptance of women in non-traditional occupations.

Figure 1 Adopted from Flerx et al. (1976)

Egalitarianism

- Film
- Book
- Control
Figure 2 Adopted from McArthur and Eisen (1976)
Behavioral effects of sex-role models:
persistence on a difficult task
W. JOHN HARKER

Literary Texts as Models: Implications for the Empirical Study of Literature

I would do fifty miles on foot .. to kiss the hand of that man whose generous heart will give up the reins of his imagination into his author's hands. (Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*)

So here I am ... / Trying to learn to use words. (Eliot, *East Coker*)

1. Introduction

A dominant impulse in twentieth-century literary theory has been to reject the process of literary production as a subject. During the early years of this century, reacting against the historical and moralistic conceptions of literature that prevailed at the time, Russian Formalism and Czech Structuralism emphasized the text as the exclusive object of study; the response of the reader and the intent of the author were considered *ultra vires* in any legitimate consideration of literary art. In all of this, the process by which the text came into being was largely ignored. For instance, when Shklovsky stated that the function of literature was "defamiliarizing" or "making strange," he was speaking of how these qualities emanated from the text itself, and not how they came about in the mind of the author who produced the text. Similarly, in North America the prevailing influence of New Criticism, with its reaction against the kind of historicism represented by John Livingston Lowes's *Road to Xanadu*, paralleled European theoretical and critical tendencies. With its proclamation of the "intentional" and "affective" fallacies (Wimsatt and Beardsley), its insistence on the "heresy of paraphrase" (Brooks), and its belief in "tensions" (Tate) within the text, the New Criticism placed the text under scrutiny to the exclusion of the authorial process by which it was produced. The text was seen to stand imperiously before the reader, a "verbal icon" (Wimsatt and Beardsley), a "well-wrought urn" (Brooks), and the reader's role was to submit to it. In this regard, Wellek and Warren seemed to speak for their times when they contended that as a literary work of art the text "leads an independent life" (42).
This has changed, however. In place of the dominant text there has appeared recently the independent reader. Gone is the text as the central object of study; in its place has emerged the reader as the sole determiner of value. In the world of contemporary literary theory, the most that the text can provide are what Wolfgang Iser has described as "degrees of indeterminacy" (181) and "a frame within which the reader must construct for himself the aesthetic object" (107). For others, the text has disappeared entirely, its objectivity having become what for Stanley Fish is "an illusion" (140), its independence subsumed by the interpretive processes of the reader. In the North American theoretical landscape, the author remains more often than not in the background, either reduced to a cipher, a sometimes acknowledged yet always unknowable presence standing behind the text, hidden from view and rendered extraneous by its authority, or else made unnecessary and irrelevant by the pervasiveness of the reader's independent response to the text. With all of this, the process of literary production remains ignored. It is as though literary texts exist only for the scrutiny and explication of their critics, or for the response and interpretation of their readers, their means of production remaining unacknowledged and apparently unknowable.

In my article, I take a different approach. Rather than centering on either the text or the reader as exclusive determiners of value, the focus is on the manner in which authors go about conceptualizing and constructing what ultimately become their texts, and on the nature of these constructions in light of their manner of production. It will be argued that the character of the literary object is best revealed by viewing the process of its production. Moreover, it will be seen that an examination of this process serves to investigate both the aesthetic and empirical foundations of the study of literature and in so doing illuminates the nature of the literary object. The device used for this purpose is to consider a literary text as a model, and its author as a modeller, a maker of models.

2. Literary Texts as Models

In an interview in the Paris Review, Joseph Heller describes writing as "performing for people" (204). Here Heller reveals what is arguably the primary intention of authors: to communicate to readers. Although this in itself should hardly be surprising given the nature of their activity, the communicative impulse of authors is pervasive in their commentary on their work. For instance, John Cheever refers to the author's text as "our most intimate and acute means of communication" (119), while John Steinbeck compares the author to "a distant star sending signals ... he seeks to establish a relationship of meaning, of feeling, of observing" (183). Somewhat more succinctly, T.S. Eliot describes the author as "one person talking to another" (55), while William Wordsworth refers to the
author as "a man speaking to men" (339). The fact that authors' texts take on physical forms that are in turn presented to others is ample evidence of their communicative intent. As if to emphasize this, François Mauriac maintains that "an author who assures you that he writes for himself alone and that he does not care whether he is heard or not is a boaster and is deceiving either himself or you" (qtd. in Booth 88).

What authors intend to communicate gives insight into the nature of their literary productions. A prevailing theme in authors' commentaries is their desire, as William Faulkner puts it, to "arrest motion, which is life" (139). This representation of life is not the same as what authors ascribe to the perceptions of ordinary men and women, however. Rather, what is real to authors, what is to them the fact of their existence, turns out to be something different from the conventional. This dissatisfaction with the conventional, this inability to accept it, appears to derive from authors' confusion with their own lives, a confusion they try to reconcile through their work. Laurence Durrell states that "I'm not fundamentally interested in the artist. I use him to try to become a happy man, which is a good deal harder for me. I find art easy, I find life difficult" (282). Similarly, Wallace Stevens calls literature "an effort of a dissatisfied man to find satisfaction through words" (165), while John Cheever maintains that, through writing, "you've made sense of your life" (135). But, in reality, authors go beyond this. Not only do they try to reconcile the confusion within their own lives through their writing, but they try to communicate to their readers what they consider to be the superior understanding of the reality of human experience that this reconciliation has afforded. As Allen Tate puts it, "a poem is an indirect effort of a shaky man to justify himself to happier men, or to present a superior account of this relation to a world that allows him but little certainty, and would allow equally little to the happier men if they did not wear blinders — according to the poet" (248-49). It is in this way that Paul Valéry conceives literature to reveal an "extraordinary truth" (180), what D.H. Lawrence calls "a new world within the known world;' (255), or, as Robert Frost put it, "a revelation," something which "ends in a clarification of life ... in a momentary stay against confusion" (vi-viii).

In coming to terms with their communicative intent, authors are faced with a dilemma, however: they are forced to rely on a public medium — language — to represent what has come to be their highly personal conceptions of reality. This difficulty is recognized by Paul Valéry when he writes that "the poet's bitter and paradoxical destiny forces him to use a product of current practical use [language] for exceptional and nonpractical ends; he must borrow means of statistical and anonymous origin to accomplish his aim of exalting and expressing the purest and most individual aspect of his personality" (201). To achieve this, authors deliberately reshape the conventional forms and structures of language in order to make the public medium of language bend to their private theories of reality. Hart Crane makes this point when he states that "as a poet I may very
possibly be more interested in the so-called illogical impingements of the connotations of words on the consciousness — and their combinations and interplay in metaphor on this basis — than I am interested in the preservation of their logically rigid significations at the cost of limiting my subject matter and perceptions" (330). Or, as William Butler Yeats recollects, "it was a long time before I had made a language to my liking," a language which, when it evolved, displayed "a powerful and passionate syntax" (1961, 521). Similarly, Archibald MacLeish argues, "you create your words in choosing them" (42).

In literature, language is deliberately transformed in order to have it represent worlds that do not function according to the rules of operation and the standards of proof of the everyday world. Language no longer serves to represent the familiar; it is changed to represent the unfamiliar, what has become for the author a truer reality. The impulse to find this language is revealed by Joseph Conrad in describing his discovery of Lord Jim: "One sunny morning in the commonplace surroundings of an eastern roadstead, I saw his form pass by — appealing — significant — under a cloud — perfectly silent. Which is as it should be. It was for me, with all the sympathy of which I am capable, to seek fit words for his meaning" (67). In the opening of Lord Jim, the result of Conrad's search for "fit words" can be seen:

He was an inch, perhaps two, under six feet, powerfully built, and had advanced straight at you with a slight stoop of the shoulders, head forward, and fixed from-under stare which made you think of a charging bull. His voice was deep, loud, and his manner displayed a kind of dogged self-assertion which had nothing aggressive in it. It seemed a necessity, and it was directed apparently as much at himself than at anybody else. He was spotlessly neat, apparelled in immaculate white from shoes to hat, and in the various Eastern ports where he got his living as ship-chandler's water-clerk he was very popular. (9)

There is no deliberate violence to the syntax or lexicon of English here. Nevertheless, the full resources of the language are marshalled to create a text which represents and communicates the reality conveyed to Conrad by his chance encounter with his subject. Through his text, Conrad gives his reader a concrete linguistic delineation of the character upon whom his novel is to be based. To do this, he deliberately selects, manipulates, and shapes language into a form through which he can make his reader see as he sees so as to produce in his reader's mind through the public medium of language what is for Conrad the intensely private insight afforded by his experience.

This process is also apparent in poetry. The "powerful and passionate syntax" to which Yeats refers is clearly evident in his work:
The Dawn
I would be ignorant as the dawn
That has looked down
On that old queen measuring a town
With the pin of a brooch,
Or on the withered men that saw
From their pedantic Babylon
The careless planets in their courses,
The stars fade out where the moon comes,
And took their tablets and did sums;
I would be ignorant as the dawn
That merely stood, rocking the glittering coach
Above the cloudy shoulders of the horses;
I would be — for no knowledge is worth a straw —
Ignorant and wanton as the dawn. (1958, 64)

Here, deliberate violence is done to language, and the resulting confusions, contradictions, and puzzlements of the poem are not easily reconciled. There is a universe of meaning here that may be perceptible to Yeats, but to his reader it is won only at considerable cost. However, the reader does pursue this meaning, difficult though it may be, and in doing so the patterning of Yeats' metaphysic becomes clearer and ultimately it becomes inhabited conceptually by the reader. In this way, like Conrad, Yeats captures the reader within the ideational framework of his text by means of his particular use of language. Through this process, Yeats' passionate syntax remains not only his own, possessed privately by him and understood by him alone, but it becomes that of his reader as well as the theory of reality held by Yeats establishes itself in the mind of the reader through the language he uses.

It is in this manner that, as John Steinbeck puts it, an author "rearranges life" (183). T.S. Eliot makes the same point when he contends that "the poet's mind is in fact a receptacle for seizing and storing up numberless feelings, phrases, images, which remain there until all the particles which can unite to form a new compound are present together" (55). Similarly, Paul Valéry maintains that "the poet has essentially the 'intuition' of a special order of combination. A certain combination of objects (of thought) which has no value for a normal man, has for him an existence and makes itself noticed" (180-81), while Dylan Thomas writes that, for the author, "one of the great main uses of the intellect is to select, from the amorphous mass of subconscious images, those that will best further his imaginative purpose" (52). In this way, authors' conceptual relationships to the worlds of their experience are forged. By a process of selecting and structuring they evolve their theories of the world, cognitive constructs within which their experience of the world gains coherence. And it is these theories that receive expression through the language of the texts they write. The literary text represents the author's theory of reality; in its structure and concrete presence on
the page, it stands for this theory. It is in this sense that, as Wallace Stevens puts it, "every poem is a poem within a poem: the poem of the idea within the poem of the words" (174). Through its relationship with the theory it represents, the literary text is a model for this theory.

But there is more to it than this. The literary text not only models the author's theory of reality, but it also reveals in its language and structure the cognitive operations by which this theory has been formulated. In this way, the literary text displays the concrete result of the author's conceptual process while at the same time it illustrates the mechanism of this process. This would seem to be what Samuel Taylor Coleridge means when he describes poetry as "the figured language of thought" (394). The literary text is at once the tangible embodiment of the author's intention to communicate his or her theory of reality to the reader, and at the same time it stands as an externalized representation of the cognitive operations which have produced this theory. In this regard, as Ralph Waldo Emerson puts it, "the true poem is the poet's mind" (11). In its modelling of the author's theory of the world, the text reveals the process of constructing this theory — it reveals in its concrete form the conceptual worldmaking process of its author. The literary text therefore stands both as a model of the author's theory of reality, and a model of how this theory has been constructed.1

3. Models in Science

Samuel Taylor Coleridge wrote that "poetry is purely human: for all its materials are from the mind, and all its products are for the mind" (394). This statement raises the question of whether the creative processes of authors are the same as the creative processes of others involved in non-literary but nevertheless highly creative activities. In other words, is human creativity universal across all its dimensions, or is it specific to the kind of activity in which it is engaged at a given time? If the latter is the case, must the investigative methodologies employed in the study of any particular creative activity be themselves cognitively aligned to the specific activity being investigated, or are the methodologies appropriate to the investigation of one kind of activity transferable to other kinds of activity? And what does all this say about the methodologies to be employed in the empirical study of literature? In order to address these questions, the model building activities of scientists will be compared with those of authors.

Initially, the objectives of authors and scientists would seem to be alike. While authors intend to represent their theories of reality through their texts, so do scientists intend to explain reality. As Ernst Nagel put it over a quarter of a

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1 Some aspects of the content of this section, particularly as they apply to the question of authorial intent, have been discussed at greater length in a previous publication (see Harker).
century ago, it is the "desire for explanations" (4) that generates the scientific impulse. This view has been reaffirmed more recently by Wesley Salmon who contends that "we secure scientific understanding by providing scientific explanation" (ix), and by Bas van Fraassen who states that "scientists aim to discover facts about the world" (73). The way in which scientists go about doing this is to develop theories of how the world operates. As Rom Harre puts it, "a scientific explanation of happenings ... consists in describing the mechanism which produces them" (170). It is through their theories that scientists specify these mechanisms, that they articulate what they think the world is like and how it behaves. So it is that Hilary Putnam describes a theory as "a set of laws," "statements that we hope to be true ... by the nature of things, and not just by accident" (227). Similarly, Richard Boyd characterizes a theory as providing "the best available explanation for some important phenomena" (62), while Nancy Cartwright refers to a theory as "an explanatory scheme into which phenomena of interest can be fitted" (42). It is this explanatory framework that theories provide, this way of representing constructions and explanations of reality, that gives them their value in science.

It is also through theory construction that scientists set the agenda for their programs of empirical research. Theories provide the basis for the experimental investigation of observed phenomena — in what they propose about the nature of reality, theories initiate this investigation. But at the same time they benefit from this investigation as theoretical positions are refined and extended in the face of accumulated experimental evidence. In this way, the conduct of science is inextricably linked with observation and verification, with trying to explain the nature and meaning of observed phenomena in the natural world. To the degree that correspondence is achieved between the concept of reality proposed by a theory and observations obtained from experimental investigations testing this theory, the empirical validity of the theory is established. In this way, observation and verification always involve scientists in an ideational commerce between their theoretical constructs and the phenomena they encounter in the natural world. In order to facilitate this commerce, scientists use models.

The relationship between models and theories, at least as these terms are frequently used, is a troubled one. While in the social sciences, they have often become conflated so as to be used interchangeably, this has not been so often the case in the physical sciences. Despite this, however, terminological difficulties remain. Wojcicki, for example, speaks of the "notorious ambiguity" (158) of the term "model" while at the same time acknowledging a need for a term that can be applied "to denote those parts of the theory that provide a relatively complete account of particular regularities of phenomena in the scope of the theory" (159). It is in this denotative function that the character and value of models can be seen. As Giere has observed, "nature does not reveal to us directly how best to represent her" (93). In science, models answer the need to control and concretize
the abstractions permitted and encouraged by theories. They answer the need for representational devices that will illustrate theories in a pragmatic and disciplined fashion, devices that allow theories to be extended from abstract descriptions of phenomena to more concrete, empirically manageable representations of these phenomena. In this way models reveal their heuristic value. They provide what Wartofsky calls "inference machines" (30); they function to generate predictions implicit within theories, predictions that are in turn testable through the established procedures of empirical science. In this manner, models both embody the purpose of theories, which is to explain the natural world, and at the same time they are instruments for carrying out this purpose. As Wartofsky puts it, models "serve the heuristic function of rendering a complex theoretical domain intelligible, or of suggesting direction of thought" (31). In this sense, models stand as intermediate entities between the theories they represent and the natural phenomena that these theories propose to explain.

Scientific models do this primarily by means of articulating the structural relationships implicit in theories. It is this structural quality of models that is arguably their defining characteristic. Rubinstein maintains that "a scientific model may be defined as a set of propositions that describes entities and relations between [sic] entities" (131), while Granger contends that "models of science ... outline a provisional structure of the object" (126) under investigation. It is through representing this structure that models overcome what Redhead calls "the computation gap" (156) that can occur within the complexity of theories. In this manner, models clarify theories by demonstrating their underlying structure. As Van Fraassen puts it, "you can think of the models as representing the possible worlds allowed by the theory" (47), or, as Wartofsky contends, a model is "a selective or abstract duplication of some aspects of the world," it provides "ontological claims about the nature of things" (xv). Models present what Giere calls "idealized systems" (157), or, as Dilworth maintains, they give "a conceptual perspective" (105) on a theory; they illustrate what Arbib and Hess call "potentially empirical worlds" (170) proposed by a theory. But models do more than this. Through their models and the structural concrete depiction of the theories they represent, scientists create devices which not only serve to further their own experimental work, but which also communicate their theoretical claims to other scientists thereby rendering these claims accessible to empirical verification or repudiation by others besides themselves. In this way, scientific models, like the texts of authors, serve as communicative devices as well.

Moreover, just as the models of authors — the literary texts they produce — reveal the cognitive operations underlying their construction, so too do the models of scientists reveal the manner in which scientists have cognitively gone about building their theories of the natural world. Wartofsky makes this point when he states that models represent "the mode of their own production" (xiii). Similarly, Arbib and Hess contend that "scientific models are a prototype,
philosophically speaking, for imaginative creations or schema based on natural language and experience" (161). In this way, the models of scientists represent not only the world of their experience, but they also illustrate the process of their cognitive engagement with this world. As Wartofsky argues, "we can therefore always read back or reconstruct the modeller from the model itself" (xxiv). It is this reflexive characteristic of models, the way in which they reveal not only the structural qualities of the theories they represent, but also the way in which these theories have been constructed in the minds of those who have created them, that is one of their most fascinating aspects.

What is communicated through models is not as easily determined as might be expected, however. This difficulty is illustrated by Richard Miller's statement that "I have never met a self-proclaimed positivist" (3). Here Miller reveals the current state of the philosophy of science when issues concerning the truth value of theory construction are raised. In the past, during the time that logical positivism dominated scientific thinking, the purpose and outcome of science seemed relatively straightforward. Theoretical positions were proposed, and through the process of empirical investigation these positions were either supported or refuted. This was the classic "scientific method." Through the implementation of this method and the observational procedures it involved, it was held that science could induce the natural world to reveal itself, to state its objective truth for all to see. This has changed in recent years, however. Rather than assuming that science reveals immutable truths, the capacity of science to determine these truths and even the possibility of such truths existing is being questioned. The result is that there is now in the philosophy of science a debate between those who propose a form of scientific realism and those who argue for various forms of anti-realism.

Scientific realism asserts that theories and their associated models represent actual natural phenomena. While scientific realists do not usually speak with the certainty of their positivistic predecessors, they still argue for the existence of an objective, independent universe having a determinable existence. Moreover, this universe remains accessible, however imperfectly, through the methods and procedures of experimental science. A major premise of scientific realism is that the explanations provided by empirical science give literal and true, although often incomplete, descriptions of an independent natural world, and that the acceptance of these explanations constitutes an affirmation of the existence of this world. Speaking from this perspective, Miller argues that "actual empirical justifications in science look like efforts to show, with all fairness to rival appearances, that a favoured hypothesis does better than its rivals at explaining why relevant facts are as they are" (7). In this way, the natural world is something that scientists discover rather than invent. As Wesley Salmon puts it, speaking from this position, "we have, I believe, sound reasons for taking such entities as flavors, rocks, and sneezes to be real" (5).

The reality of such entities is placed in question by anti-realists, however.
Whereas realists accept the objective truth of the natural world, anti-realists question the possibility of knowing such a world or even the possibility of its existence. While the theoretical formulations of anti-realists may claim value in explaining natural phenomena, no claim for the revelation of truth in any absolute sense is made for them. Rather, these formulations are seen only to be cognitive constructions of possible realities based on observation, rather than articulations of any necessarily true state of the world. In this way, these formulations serve the explanatory aims of science, but not in terms of providing accounts of an irrefutable, externally situated, objective reality. For this reason, the acceptance of a theory does not bring with it the assumption that what the theory asserts is necessarily true. It may only be that the theory provides a comprehensive framework for existing data, that it is acceptable for specific purposes, and that its associated models possess what Van Fraassen calls "empirical adequacy." As Van Fraassen puts it, this involves the "construction of models that must be adequate to the phenomena, and not discovery of truth concerning the unobservable" (5). For the anti-realist, therefore, the natural universe is unknowable as a separate entity whose truth awaits the discovery of science. Such truth, if it exists at all, remains essentially inaccessible to science. The best that science can ever do is present relative descriptions of natural phenomena based on observation. Varela expresses this position in stating that "our knowledge, including science, can be accurately empirical and experimental, without requiring for it the claim of solidity or fixed reference" (277).

Although the dispute over scientific realism animates any consideration of the nature of theories and models, it does not intrude itself in any direct way into the present discussion. Giere makes an important point when he argues that "there is little connection between what philosophers of science say about the nature of theories and what historians, psychologists, or sociologists might learn about the use of theories in actual practice" (276-77). It is this distinction between philosophical speculation and actual practice that permits models in science to be taken as a basis for examining the text-building activities of authors. It is the actual use to which scientists put models that encourages this comparison. Whether what is modeled is proposed as a cognitive construction of reality possibly having no necessary connection to the real world, assuming such a world is knowable or even exists, or whether what is modeled is proposed as an approximation of a phenomenon actually occurring in a definable, externally situated reality, is not at issue. In both instances, scientists use models for explanatory and communicative purposes, and it is from their use in this way that their value in illuminating the nature of literary text production derives.

4. Science and Literature

There are distinct similarities between the models of authors and those of scientists. In the first instance, for both authors and scientists, model making is
a highly creative enterprise. Moreover, both authors and scientists create models in an effort to communicate their theories of reality to others. They do this is by illustrating in their models the structural properties of their theories. In this way, models become concretized representations of the theories they depict, they become iconic statements of these theories. And, as has been seen, the models of both authors and scientists serve not only to provide structural representations of their theories of reality, but also, through this structure, they illustrate the cognitive operations by which these theories have been formulated.

In these ways, the models of authors and those of scientists are alike. But they are also different. In one of his earliest essays, Robert K. Merton identified four "sets of institutional imperatives" that he considered characteristic of science as a cultural institution. One of these he called "disinterestedness" which he described as being situated in "the public and testable character of science" (270). It is in this characteristic of science that the primary distinction between the models of authors and those of scientists can be found. The disinterestedness of which Merton speaks derives from the institutional nature of science that demands that the conduct of science be governed by the established criteria of logic and predictability. Arbib and Hess describe this as the "pragmatic criterion" (157) of science, its requirement that "the criteria of adequacy are those of prediction and control" (170). They contend that "scientific theory provides constructed models of scientific reality that are distinguished from other types of social and poetic construction by being constrained by feedback loops involving experimentation in the natural world" (159). It is this constant reference back to the natural world, no matter how imperfectly conceived or understood, that constrains scientific models. They may be created by scientists, but they are not the products of an unconstrained imagination. They always remain subject to verification against observed phenomena in a manner that conforms to the demands imposed by the institutional requirements of empirical science. In this way, the models of scientists are always subject to what Arbib and Hess refer to as "a self-modifying sequence of prediction and test" (176). It is this demand that constitutes the fundamental distinction between the models of scientists and those of authors.

The logic of science is not the logic of literature, and the constraints that institutional science places on its practitioners do not apply to authors. The work of authors is to model through language the theories of reality conveyed to them by their awareness. But it has been shown that for authors, the theories of reality conveyed to them through their encounters with the world are not conventionally conceived ones nor is their existence testable by means of the procedures of empirical science. The models of authors are not constrained by science's demand that natural phenomena be predicted with increasing accuracy and control. The standards of proof are different. To the author, what the scientist designates as the phenomena of the naturally occurring universe are often less real than those revealed through the author's own experience. Wallace Stevens
dismisses the natural world by claiming that "reality is a cliché from which we escape by metaphor" (179); moreover, he states that "metaphor creates a new reality from which the original appears to be unreal" (169). It is by denying the constraints of scientific method and the standards of proof which it imposes, and by employing in their place standards of internal consistency and coherence for the representation of their own theories of reality, that authors construct the models (or metaphors) which become their texts. As Hart Crane puts it, "in poetry the rationale of metaphor belongs to another order of experience than science, and is not to be limited by a scientific and arbitrary code of relationships either in verbal inflections or concepts" (332). Similarly, Allen Tate states, "in poetry all things are possible.... They are possible because in poetry the disparate elements are not combined in logic, which can join things only under certain categories and under the law of contradiction; they are combined in poetry rather as experience, and experience has decided to ignore logic" (251-52).

The implication of all of this for a description of literary production is that the aesthetic foundations of literary art can never be denied in an attempt to explain it. Although this may seem obvious, it is not always the case. For example, in a recent discussion of literature, Paisley Livingston calls for "a sociological and historical framework for the study of literary phenomena, freed from the aesthetic a priori" (197-98). Taking a different approach, William Paulson has contended that literature expresses "the noise of culture" (180), that it exists on the margins of culture where it functions to encourage new ways of thought and linguistic performance through which culture is enlivened and extended. Another perspective has been adopted by Mark Turner who places literature at the centre of culture, arguing that such a placement will "rejoin the study of language with the study of literature, in concert with the study of mind and the brain" (viii).

What these statements have in common is their displacement of the literary text as an aesthetic object in order to have it serve as an instrument for investigating broader fields of human activity. But to do this reduces the significance of literature as it becomes blurred within what is often a confusing array of vaguely defined cultural phenomena. There can be no doubt that literature exists within sociological and historical frameworks, that it relates to broader conceptions of culture, and that it is the product of language and human cognition. But it is more than this, and in its uniqueness its identity can be specified. Literature is the production of the human mind functioning in cognitively specific and specialized ways. To take literature out of this framework and to make it the handmaiden for investigating other disciplines strips it of its significance. As has been seen, it is in its unique mode of production, a mode of production that is fundamentally aesthetic in nature, that the reality and identity of literature exists, and within which its significance is to be found.

What does all this mean for the Empirical Study of Literature? Does the highly specialized aesthetic identity of the literary text render it inappropriate as an object of investigation through the methods and procedures of empirical
science? The evidence from the comparison between the creative processes of authors and scientists undertaken here as well as the large corpus of works by scholars investigating literature and the literary system within an empirical framework suggests otherwise. Although the standards of proof imposed on authors and scientists/scholars differ, the cognitive operations that give rise to their models appear highly consistent. What this means for the empirical investigation of literature is that so long as the objects of this investigation — the literary texts that authors produce — are not relegated to some broader and less specific category of human activity in which their aesthetic significance is lost, the methods and instruments of empirical science can provide a promising and productive approach to answering the myriad questions concerning the nature of literary production and its objects.

University of Victoria

Works Cited


Electrocortical Evidence for the Anomaly Theory of Metaphor Processing: A Brief Introduction

1. The Serial Anomaly Model

The basic idea of the anomaly theory is that each sentence is first interpreted as a literal expression (Henle 174, 182). In the case of a metaphor, this leads to an absurdity. For example, "the harbor is a mouth" (Snoek 655) is literally not true. A harbor is a place of shelter for ships, not a place that eats food. Thus — as the anomaly theory assumes — the process is disrupted and the temporary anomaly is recovered by commencing a second stage in which the expression is interpreted figuratively. If the figurative interpretation is successful, the expression is a metaphor; otherwise it is an anomaly.

How should these stages be understood? What is a literal stage and what a figurative one? The anomaly theory envisions metaphor processing as a search for commonalities (Henle 180). The similarity between "harbor" and "mouth" is established by searching for semantic features which are the same for both terms. In the literal stage, the search takes place between the literal features of the terms. A harbor, for instance, has ships and a mouth has lips, and although they rhyme, these are not identical features. Thus, in a metaphor, the descriptive — or literal — features do not establish enough matches between the feature sets. According to the anomaly theory, the literal shared set is too small to call the expression literal and thus a second stage is entered where in a figurative stage, the figurative features are searched for matches. Harbor may stand for shelter or for openness to the world and a mouth may be understood similarly. Thus, the anomaly view claims that in the figurative stage, the figurative shared set is large enough to call the expression a metaphor. If the figurative shared set is not large enough, the expression turns out to be an anomaly. The transition from the one stage to the other would be accompanied by an electrocortical effect of anomaly (see Figure 1; Appendix).

1 This present study has been supported by a grant from the AiO-Netwerk Literatuurwetenschap, now the Research School of Literature (OSL) at Vrije University, Amsterdam. The full text of the work is forthcoming in Hoom (1997).
For the purposes of the study, the expressions were first judged as good literals, metaphors, or anomalies by a norm group. All subjects in the experiments were university undergraduates in literature and language.

In a feature elicitation experiment, another group of subjects created feature sets for the two terms of the metaphors ("the harbor is a mouth"), literal ("the harbor is a place"), and anomalous counterparts ("the harbor is a pop"). After completion, the subjects categorized the features as literal and/or figurative.

Computer analysis revealed that literal expressions had large literal feature sets with large literal shared sets and small figurative feature sets. As well, metaphors had large literal and small figurative feature sets. However, metaphors also had large literal shared sets as well as large shared sets of features which were literal for the one term, and figurative for the other. Anomalies had the smallest feature sets and the smallest shared sets of either type. In- or exclusion of context — the source poems — did not affect these patterns.

The results of the experiment were at odds with the serial anomaly model for several reasons and all concerning the metaphors while the results for literal and anomalous expressions were as expected. Literal expressions established many literal matches, after which a figurative stage was unnecessary. Anomalies yielded insufficient matches for both feature types, so that they were neither literal nor metaphoric. Metaphors, however, established literal shared sets that were as large as those for literal expressions. This set of results proves to be impossible when the search for figurative matches is engaged in the case where not enough literal matches are found. With this number of literal matches, the metaphors should have been judged as literal expressions by the norm group.

The figurative shared set was, similarly, not what the serial anomaly model would predict. It did not consist of features that were figurative for both terms. In fact, the sizes of those sets could not distinguish the expression types in a statistically significant manner. The shared sets that distinguished metaphors from all the other expression types contained features which were literal for the one term and figurative for the other and the reverse was also true. In other words, a harbor may "swallow" the goods to distribute them throughout the country, while the mouth swallows goods to distribute throughout the body. In the first case, "swallow" is a figurative feature of harbor, whereas in the second, "swallow" is a literal feature of mouth. In the serial anomaly model, literal information — the literal features — is not allowed to "leak through" to the figurative stage, so that mixed matches should not occur.
3. Reaction Times

Figure 1 is not only a model of matching features determining the sort of decision that is made for a particular expression. It is also a model for the order of processing the different expression types.

Literal expressions are processed the fastest. Since the literal shared set is established and checked for its size first, literal expressions are the first to stop the process. No second stage is encountered, so that the least time is necessary to understand literal expressions. In turn, metaphors and anomalies should be slower because a new stage of calculating the figurative shared set separates the decisions for literal expressions on the one hand and from metaphors or anomalies on the other. The decisions for metaphors and anomalies were derived from the decision diamond, which asks for sufficient figurative matches. Since they are the two sides of the same coin, no differences in processing time are expected for metaphors and anomalies.

However, if anomalies are viewed as rejected metaphors and taken into consideration that no-responses are often a little slower than yes-responses, anomalies might be processed a bit slower. Notwithstanding, according to the model, this inference is unwarranted. Consequently, the Reaction Time (RT) predictions of the serial anomaly model are that literals are fastest, followed by metaphors and anomalies of equal although there may be a trend that anomalies are a little slower: RT (L < M ≤ A).

A two- and a three-choice decision task was employed, in which subjects decided among the three expression types as soon as the last term ("mouth," "place," "pop") was projected to complete the expression. An experimental trial, thus, looked as follows:

the harbor is a 
the harbor is a _____.
the harbor is a mouth.

Put differently, the subjects first saw an incomplete expression, after which the blanks were filled in by a fixation line followed by one of the possible terms replacing the fixation line. The subjects then decided whether expressions were literal, metaphoric, or anomalous, while the RT was recorded from stimulus onset to decision key press.

Although the type of choice task had considerable effects on the RT results, they will not be reported here. All in all, the general finding was that anomalies were the fastest, whereas literals and metaphors were equally fast, with an insignificant trend for metaphors to be the slowest. Again, adding context did not yield interesting differences. In other words, the results showed that: RT (A < L ≤ M). This result turned out to be contrary to expectation based on the serial anomaly model.
4. Electrocortical Measurements

The mind is a connecting organ: it works only by connecting and it can connect any two things in an indefinitely large number of different ways. ... As the two things put together are more remote the tension created is, of course, greater. That tension is the spring of the bow, the source of the energy of the shot, but ... bafflement is an experience of which we soon tire, and rightly. (Richards 125)

With "the spring of the bow" and "the energy of the shot," Richards refers to an energetic effect that should occur when two remote things — the terms of a metaphor — are hard to connect, so that a tension is created.

Tension is measurable and Kutas and Hillyard presented words that completed sentences in diverse degrees of nonsensicality ("he took a sip from the transmitter," "he mailed the letter without a check") as opposed to normal completions ("he took a sip from the coffee," "he mailed the letter without a stamp") (1980a, 1980b, 1981). During the presentation of the completing word, an electroencephalogram (EEG) was sampled at various locations on the scalp. The EEG averaged over subjects showed that a negative polarity (N) was found, 400 milliseconds after presentation of the anomalous word. The height of the amplitude of this brain potential, labelled N400, varied systematically with the degree of anomaly.

"As the two things put together are more remote, the tension created is, of course, greater" (Richards 125). Therefore, if tension is proportionally related to remoteness, literal expressions should evoke the lowest N400 activity: metaphors moderate and anomalies the highest. The subjects received a three-choice decision task, with a trial build-up as described in the previous section. Apart from RT, the EEG was sampled from various scalp locations when the completion of the expression was projected.

It was found that anomalies evoked the highest N400 activity, followed by metaphors. However, this difference was insignificant. Literal expressions had the lowest N400 activity while the presentation of context erased all differences. Thus, the results of the electrocortical measurements resulted in N400 = (A ≥ M > L). Indeed, this is exactly what one would expect from the serial anomaly model. After the literal shared set is found to be too small, evidently, the two terms are hard to connect, and an anomalous moment transpires. The metaphor is capable of reducing that tension; the anomaly, however, is not.

However, things are not as simple as they seem. Observe that there is a considerable dissociation between the ordinal pattern for the reaction times: RT (A < L ≤ M) and that for the EEG: N400 (A ≥ M > L). If a brain potential is part of a process, it is supposed to follow the pattern of RTs. Thus, N400 should have been the largest for anomalies, followed by literals, and the smallest for metaphors. This was obviously not the case.

An explanation of this discrepancy may be that metaphors and anomalies
The Anomaly Theory of Metaphor Processing

provided a mismatch between the semantic categories of the two terms whereas this situation was not the case for literal expressions. Literal expressions matched an instance with an appropriate category ("the harbor is a place"), whereas metaphors ("the harbor is a mouth") and anomalies ("the harbor is a pop") did not. N400, then, would be the manifestation of the success with which the first term could be integrated into the category of the second.

5. The Magic Hat: Parallel Anomaly Model

At first glance, these results seem confused and contradictory. Most importantly, the serial anomaly model is strongly questioned by the evidence obtained. However, the results suddenly make sense if the anomaly model is understood as a parallel process (see Figure 2; Appendix). Figure 2 starts with modelling the results for the N400: if N400 represents a category mismatch, the first question is whether the first term of an expression is a positive instance of the category of the second term. In the case of literal expressions, this is true. No N400 occurs, and it may be that the route to establish the literal shared set is facilitated, whereas the one for metaphors and anomalies is inhibited. In the case of the latter two, a category mismatch does occur. N400 is elicited, and the route to arrive at a decision for "metaphor" or "anomaly" is activated more strongly than the route for "literal." Owing to the category mismatch, N400 would thus form a preliminary indication whether the expression is literal or not.

It should be taken into consideration, however, that with the facilitation of the literal or figurative route, N400 is attributed a functional role in the metaphor process; a process which in fact may not be present. Since the status of this process module is questionable, it is represented by broken lines in the Figure.

Next, literal features are compared with each other to calculate the literal shared set. At the same time, however, they are also compared with figurative features to determine the (mixed) figurative shared set.

Anomalies establish the smallest shared sets of either feature kind. They have small literal and small figurative feature sets, so that the "end of file" is reached soon in the process of looking for shared features.

Literal expressions accumulate large literal shared sets, whereas the (mixed) figurative shared sets remain small. Literal expressions have large literal, but small figurative feature sets, so that the "end of file" is reached soon for the latter set type while looking for shared features.

Metaphors accumulate equally large literal shared sets. However, they are not recognized as literal expressions because they accumulate large (mixed) figurative shared sets as well. Yet, literal and figurative set sizes for metaphors equal those for literal expressions, so that the processing speed of both expressions types may be the same. Thus, decisions between literal expressions and metaphors depend on the nature of the shared sets (literal vs. literal and mixed figurative), whereas
speed depends on the size of the feature sets. Thus, the expressions tested for the size of both shared sets are literal and mixed figurative. If there is not sufficient overlap for either kind, the expression is an anomaly. Consequently, anomalies are not only fast because they have small feature sets but also because they are checked first. Further, it needs to be asked whether the mixed figurative shared set is large enough. If this is not the case, the expression must be only a large literal overlap. Otherwise, the expression is a large literal and mixed figurative overlap. As a consequence, literal expressions are processed equally fast as metaphors, because the decisions are derived from the same decision diamond. However, if metaphors are slower yet, it may be that establishing two shared sets costs more effort than only one shared set.

Vrije University

Works Cited

SERIAL ANOMALY MODEL

 electrocortical effect!

 literal overlap? no conclude anomaly
                               yes

 literal expression

 figurative overlap? no
                               yes

 metaphor anomaly
Figure 2:

PARALLEL ANOMALY MODEL

- Category mismatch?
  - no
  - facilitate literal route
    - calculate literal overlap
    - sufficient literal and figurative overlap?
      - yes
      - sufficient figurative overlap?
        - yes
        - metaphor
        - no
        - literal expression
      - no
      - anomaly
  - yes
    - N400
The Laws of Literary History

1. Introduction

A number of evolutionary theories of sociocultural change have been proposed. The three factors necessary for either biological or sociocultural evolution are 1) Presence of variation; 2) Consistent selection criteria favoring one sort of variant over others; and 3) Mechanisms for preserving the selected variants. At any point in time, a number of variants of a cultural artifact are produced, and the most useful or pleasing is chosen. Then, at the next point in time, there is variation of the new form and the process continues. Evolutionary theory gives us a general framework for explaining change in the arts.

2. A Psychological Theory of Aesthetic Evolution: Aesthetic Variability

Many theorists have pointed out that if art is characterized by factors such as novelty and disruption of expectation, a necessity for change is built into it. If a work of art must be novel, each successive work of art must be different from prior works, or it will not qualify as a work of art at all. The Russian and Czech Formalists argued that poetic devices involve "estrangement" or "deformation." What gives poetry its effect is the use of words in ways that are unusual or unexpected. The deformed word usages in poetry intensify perception and attract attention. With repetition, linguistic deformations and estrangements gradually become "automatized" according to Tynjanov. They lose their effect. Several Formalist theorists such as Shklovsky and Mukafovsky derived from this fact the hypothesis that literature must necessarily evolve. If aesthetic effects arise from deformations, and if deformations are gradually automatized, then there is a constant pressure on successive artists to produce new deformations. These theories have been based upon intuitive or common-sense psychological assumptions. A more comprehensive formulation can be derived from psychological theory.

3. Selection Criteria

According to Berlyne, preference for any stimulus is based upon the arousal potential or impact value of that stimulus. The arousal potential of a stimulus is
determined by collative properties (e.g., novelty, complexity, surprisingness, unpredictability), ecological properties (signal value or meaning), and psychophysical characteristics (e.g., stimulus intensity). There is a good deal of evidence to support Berlyne's hypothesis that people prefer stimuli with a medium degree of arousal potential.

Repeated presentation of a given work decreases that work's arousal potential or impact value, so that a work of art — or any stimulus — gradually loses its arousal potential. A work of art with medium arousal potential will not keep on having medium arousal potential forever but will gradually lose its capacity to elicit interest, liking, and attention. It follows that, if a series of artists kept producing the same or very similar works of art, liking for their productions would decrease across time. To compensate for this habituation, it is necessary for successive works of art to have more and more arousal potential. In principle, this could be accomplished by manipulating any of the components of arousal potential. Successive composers could create louder and louder musical compositions, or successive painters could paint larger and larger paintings. However, there are practical limits as to how loud a piece of music can be or how large a painting can be. In a medium such as poetry, it is impossible to compensate for habituation of arousal potential by increasing stimulus intensity. Arousal potential can also be increased by increasing the meaningfulness of an artistic work. There are several difficulties with this technique. People vary widely in what is meaningful to them. A poet cannot be sure that what is more meaningful for him will also be more meaningful for his audience. On the other hand, collative properties such as novelty or unpredictability are much freer to vary in all of the arts. Thus, the necessity to increase the arousal potential of aesthetic products over time eventually comes down to a pressure to increase novelty, incongruity, unpredictability, and other collative variables. Another way of putting this is that the Second Law of Thermodynamics (Bertalanffy) applies to the art world just as to the physical world: Entropy, disorder, or unpredictability must always increase and can never decrease.

4. Hedonic Selection

The selection criterion in aesthetic evolution is analogous to Darwin's 1871 idea of sexual selection or hedonic selection rather than to his more well-known selection criterion of "fitness" to the environment first proposed in 1859. Both selection criteria operate on artistic products, but their effects are quite different. Selection on the basis of preference has presumably been present ever since works of art were first produced. Habituation is a universal property of nervous tissue. Thus, hedonic selection has exerted a constant pressure in the same
direction throughout the entire course of human history. On the other hand, social
direction has varied wildly across time. Pornography has low fitness in a
puritanical society, moralistic literature has low fitness in a licentious society,
and so on. Thus, fitness has not exerted a consistent, unidirectional pressure on
works of art.

I am not asserting that artists are motivated solely by a quest for novelty. Artists are interested in accomplishing many other things besides making their
works novel. However, what these other things are varies quite unsystematically,
whereas the pressure for novelty is constant and consistent. Thus, only it can
produce systematic trends in artistic form and content. This is true even if need
for novelty is a comparatively unimportant motive for any specific artist.

5. The Direction of Aesthetic Evolution

Formalist theorists such as Mukařovský, Tynjanov, and Jakobson agreed that
their evolutionary theory could not explain the direction of aesthetic changes, that
it is necessary to look to extra-artist social or cultural forces for such an
explanation. One of the merits of the psychological theory proposed here is that
it makes specific predictions concerning the sequence of contents and styles that
would be expected in any artistic or literary tradition.

These predictions arise from a consideration of the psychological means
whereby works of continually increasing novelty could be produced. How do
successive poets produce poetry that becomes more and more novel, original, or
incongruous over time? To answer this question, it is necessary to ask how novel
ideas or works of art are produced in the first place. According to Kris, novel or
original ideas arise from a biphasic process. An initial inspirational stage
involving "regression" is followed by a subsequent stage of elaboration with a
relatively less regressed mode of thought. By regression is meant a movement
from conceptual thinking toward primordial thought. The conceptual-primordial
continuum is the fundamental axis along which states of consciousness and types
of thought vary (see Fromm). Conceptual cognition is abstract, logical, and
reality-oriented. Primordial cognition is concrete, irrational, and autistic. It is the
thought of dreams and reveries.

Primordial cognition is free-associative. This increases the probability of novel
combinations of mental elements, which form the raw material for a work of art.
This raw material must then be put into final form (e.g., be made to conform to
stylistic rules) in a rational or conceptual state of mind. Novel ideas could
emerge in two ways from the inspiration-elaboration process: Holding the amount
of elaboration constant, deeper regression toward primordial cognition should
lead to more free-associative thought and thus increase the probability of new
ideas. To produce a novel idea, one must regress to a primordial level. To
produce an even more novel idea, one must regress to an even more primordial
mode of thinking. Holding the amount of regression constant, decreasing the
degree of elaboration can lead to statements that are original by virtue of being
"nonsensical" or nonsyntactic in varying degrees.

Because increasing the novelty of utterances by decreasing level of elaboration
is more drastic than increasing novelty by increasing depth of regression during
inspiration, poets seem to favor the method of increasing depth of regression
rather than the method of decreasing level of elaboration. If possible, successive
poets should engage in deeper and deeper regression while maintaining the same
level of elaboration. Each successive poet must regress further in search of usable
combinations of words not already used by his or her predecessors. We should
expect the increasing remoteness of similes and metaphors to be accompanied by
content indicating the increasingly deeper regression toward primordial cognition
required to produce them.

Eventually, a turning point — caused by audience pressures or the difficulty
of deeper regression — will be reached. At that time, further increases in novelty
would be much easier to attain by decreasing level of elaboration — i.e., by
loosening the stylistic rules governing the production of poetry. This corresponds
to a period of major stylistic change. Hypothetically, stylistic change allows poets
to return to word combinations composed of relatively close associates. This is
accomplished either by changes in the poetic lexicon such that entirely new
words are dealt with or by loosening the stringency of poetic rules so that
previously forbidden word combinations are allowed. There should be a partial
return from primordial toward conceptual cognition during periods of stylistic
change: Because the rules have been changed, deep regression is not needed to
produce novel ideas. Once such stylistic change has occurred, the process of
increasing regression would be expected to begin again.

A very clear example of stylistic change can be found in the history of modern
French poetry. Until 1900, French poets accepted the common-sense stylistic rule
that the word "like" had to join like words. Thus, if a poet wanted to compose
a simile, "A is like B," then "A" and "B" had in fact to be alike in at least some
arcane way. By the end of the nineteenth century, a lot of French poets had
written a lot of poetry. It had become very difficult to comply with the stylistic
rule without repeating what someone else had already said. Around 1900, this
rule was quite explicitly abrogated (see Martindale). It became acceptable poetic
practice to combine unlike words with the word "like." Thus, Eluard's surreal
image, "the earth is blue like an orange," was perfectly good poetry. Surreal
images tend to be composed of close word associates such as "blue" and
"orange." No great regression is needed think of "orange" given the word "blue".
I have elsewhere presented quantitative evidence that successive nineteenth-
century poets did in fact regress more and more up to about 1900, when the
process was reversed and depth of regression decreased, presumably because of
the loosened stylistic rules (see Martindale).
6. General Predictions

If the theory is valid, four predictions can be made about any series of literary products produced within a given tradition: 1) Indices measuring collative properties such as novelty, complexity, and variability should increase monotonically across time; 2) Indices of primordial cognition should increase over time; 3) However, there should also be cycles of increasing and decreasing density of words indicative of primordial cognition thought superimposed on this uptrend; and 4) Periods when primordial cognition content decreases should show evidence of stylistic change.

7. Empirical Investigations

A number of studies have been conducted to test the evolutionary theory outlined above. Those concerning literature include investigations of nineteenth- and twentieth-century French poetry, fourteenth- through twentieth-century British poetry, seventeenth-century English metaphysical and non-metaphysical poetry, eighteenth through twentieth-century American poetry, and an experimental simulation of literary change. These studies are summarized in Martindale, as are studies of the history of painting, architecture, music, and science. Below, I outline the latest results for the study of British poetry.

8. The Evolution of British Poetry

8.1 Sampling

The epoch from 1290 to 1949 was divided into 33 successive 20-year periods. For each of these periods, the poets born during the period were ranked on the basis of number of pages devoted to them in the relevant Oxford anthology of English verse. For the last 20 periods — 1550 to 1949 — this caused no difficulties. The seven poets assigned the most pages were included in the sample. For the earlier periods, it was not always possible to find seven poets because of uncertainties about birthdates and because very little poetry from the earliest period has survived. The sample now consists of 170 poets.

Once poets had been selected, the most complete and recent available edition of their poetic works was obtained. Fifty random samples were taken by drawing 50 page numbers from a table of random numbers. The first eight lines were counted off and the sample for each page was terminated at the first phrase delimiter at or after the end of the eighth line. The mean number of words per poet was about 3000, and the mean number of phrases per poet was about 200. Old spellings were consistently modernized to facilitate dictionary look-ups. Such modernization was confined to minor spelling changes. We end up with a sample totalling 521,566 words.
8.2 General Method

Because of the large amount of text analyzed, computerized content analysis was employed. To attempt to test the theory using a traditional humanistic or qualitative approach would have been impossible. The task of reading the works of 170 poets and deciding whether arousal potential increased in a monotonic fashion across time completely exceeds the capacities of human memory.

8.3 Arousal Potential

The first question of interest concerns the prediction that the arousal potential of poetry has increased over time. I constructed a Composite Variability Index to measure the collative properties of texts. The goal was to create an index of the degree of complexity, surprisingness, incongruity, ambiguity, and variability of texts. In creating the index, several steps were involved. First, non-redundant measures with face validity were selected. Then, because many of them are spuriously related to number of words or phrases in a text, the effects of these variables were removed with multiple regression techniques. That is, residual scores with the effects of number of words and number of phrases statistically removed were computed. Finally, a Composite Variability Index was created by adding together the variables in standard score form (to give each equal weighting). The index is composed of measures such as the Hapax Legomena percentage (percentage of words occurring only once in a document), mean word length, the coefficient of variation of word frequency, of word length, and of phrase length.

The Composite Variability Index is for the most part a measure of unpredictability or entropy. A text that is unpredictable should be surprising. The more unpredictable a poem is, the less certain we are what the poet is going to say next. The Composite Variability Index gets at unpredictability on a very basic linguistic level.

The Composite Variability Index varies across periods in a highly significant way. Differences among the periods are much greater than differences within the periods. Seventy-one percent of variation in the index is due to differences among periods. As predicted, these differences are due to a monotonic uptrend over time. The best fitting trend line is

\[
CVI = \frac{1}{-10.23 + 10.41e^{-0.0036P}}
\]

where \(e\) is the base of the natural logarithm, and \(P\) is period. The equation accounts for 76.5% of variation in the mean values. As is obvious from the
equation, the rate of change in Arousal Potential has accelerated across time. Note that Arousal Potential has been changing and accelerating according to the above equation since before Chaucer. It is speeding up in its rate of change, but this has always been the case rather than being a modern phenomenon.

8.4 Primordial Content

To test the predictions concerning trends in Primordial Content, we need a measure of the latter. The Regressive Imagery Dictionary contains 2,900 words assigned to 36 categories. Each word is assigned to only one category. The basic categories are summed to yield two summary categories that measure primordial and conceptual content. The primordial content categories are grouped into subdivisions of Drives, Sensations, Perceptual Disinhibition, Regressive Cognition, and Icarian Imagery. Each of these has been suggested by various theorists as being important in primordial cognition. The categories measuring conceptual content have, likewise been used by theorists in describing this type of thought. Martindale presents evidence concerning the rationale and reliability of the coding scheme. In order to obtain a general measure of primordial content, the five component primordial content categories were added together and the conceptual content category was subtracted from this sum.

Primordial Content rose over time but a cyclical or oscillatory trend is superimposed on the uptrend. Sixty-two percent of the variance in Primordial Content is accounted for by inter-period differences. The remaining 48% is due to variation among the poets within periods. That is, to individual differences. We find that 70% of the variation between periods is due to a monotonic uptrend. This trend is purely linear. It does not accelerate or decelerate across time. The other 30% of variation is due to the quasi-periodic oscillations around the trend line. Presumably, the linear uptrend has occurred because more and more primordial cognition has been needed to think of useful word combinations. Theoretically, the oscillations indicate stylistic changes. Primordial Content does tend to begin declining during periods commonly seen as involving initiation of new styles: Chaucerian, Skeltonic, Tudor, Jacobean, Neoclassic, Pre-Romantic, Romantic, Post-Romantic, and Modern. It begins to rise once the new style is established. Martindale presents quantitative evidence to support this contention.

Theoretical considerations and the fact that the cycles vary in their periods suggest that they arose from stochastic rather than strictly deterministic causes. Stylistic change allows primordial cognition to decline. After the stylistic change is completed, primordial content begins to increase again. It has to, because poets must engage in more primordial cognition to find the increasingly rare useful word combinations allowed by the style. How far primordial content falls or how long a cycle in primordial content lasts will depend upon how extreme the style change was and how fruitful it was in producing useful poetry. We would find cycles of exactly the same duration and amplitude only if all style changes were
equally useful. This is unlikely, because the poets who begin a stylistic change cannot know ahead of time how fruitful the change is going to be. To know this would mean that they already knew all of the useful similes and poetic devices implicit in the style. If they knew this, they would themselves have used all of these poetic devices.

An autoregressive statistical analysis of the cycles is most appropriate. In such an analysis, one attempts to predict the mean score for one period from the mean scores for prior periods. Of course, this is consistent with the evolutionary theory, which involves the assertion that the main cause of poetic content in any period is the poetic content of prior periods. Partial autocorrelations — the autocorrelation at a given lag partialling out the effect of autocorrelations due to earlier or intervening lags — fall to about zero after a lag of two. This is the pattern expected with a second-order autoregressive process (see Gottman). It is of great interest that a completely different pattern of autocorrelations would have been found if reflectionist theories of artistic change (primordial content in a given period is due to extra-literary "shocks" in the current and/or prior periods) were true (Gottman). Because the first autoregressive parameter is statistically insignificant, the best autoregressive model for Primordial Content in a given period ($PC_t$) is $PC_t = -0.368PC_{t-2}$. That is, amount of primordial content in the poetry of a given period is a function of primordial content two periods prior ($PC_{t-2}$) to the period.

University of Maine

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Dimensions of Meaning in Modern Narrative: A Systems-Theoretical Approach to Narratology

1. Introduction

Until fairly recently, narratology has been haunted by a strange discrepancy: while claiming to concern itself with all kinds of narrative, it has almost exclusively relied on examples from fictional or literary narrative. This state of affairs can be traced back to the early twentieth century, when the emergence of the novel as an aesthetically self-conscious literary genre coincided with the first attempts at theorizing narrative. Since then realizations of narrative in literature or other discourses have been based on anthropological and ahistorical attention, from the specificity of modernity to narrative strategies in general. Further, the linguistic foundations of structuralist narratology made sure that this veil of "naturalness" remained largely intact in spite of the most thorough scientific inquiries. The following observations will argue that this lack of historical consciousness can be remedied by adding a systems-theoretical dimension to narratology. Focusing on communication rather than language, narrative will be interpreted as a mode of meaning production in specific social systems within a larger framework of socio-cultural evolution.

In recent years, narratology has been called upon to pay attention to empirically testable communicative situations and the closely related area of reading research (see, for example, Fludernik 1993). To date, the most extended attempt is Monika Fludernik’s reconceptualization of narrative and narratology in terms of pragmatics, reception theory, and constructivism in her recent book, Towards a "Natural" Narratology (1996). While sharing many basic assumptions with Fludernik’s enterprise, the approach presented in this article is much more

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1 Compare for example the relationship between title and content in standard works such as Barthes; Genette; Stanzel. Notable exceptions to this rule can be found in the English-speaking world: see the titles of Chatman or Rimmon-Keenan. For recent surveys of the field see Jahn and Nünning (from a systematic — as opposed to the systemic — point of view) and Onega and Landa (from a historical point of view).
historically and sociologically oriented. In my article here, I propose that a systems-theoretical perspective will provide a suitable starting point for a historical contextualization of narratological categories.

2. Systemic Contexts of Modern Narrative

Expanding on what may be termed the anthropo-linguistic view embraced in structuralist narratology, the following observations will focus on the complex interrelation between individual and cultural factors governing the narrative apprehension of reality and history in modern Western society. In a theoretical design based with modifications on Niklas Luhmann's theory of social systems every narrative can be read with regard to specific horizons of meaning. These horizons are opened up by possible contexts of communication which can be described in systems-theoretical terms. Generally speaking, systemic communication of this kind is conditioned by three basic systemic references which all have their share in determining what a narrative can mean:

1) In a society based on functional differentiation, the emergence of a social system must be motivated by a specific function that only this system fulfils for society as a whole. On this level, the meaning of narrative is inseparably linked to the historically contingent structure of society which nevertheless provides comparatively steady semantic paradigms.

2) On a different level, a social system is characterized by specific relations of reciprocal performance with other systems in its environment. Although psychic and social systems differ as to their basic operational form — consciousness and communication, respectively — both operate on the basis of meaning. It is meaning in this sense which makes complex processes of co-evolution and reciprocal facilitation between psychic and social systems possible. Thus, an investigation into the meaning of narrative can be grounded in specifically modern conditions of what might be termed performative interpenetration between psychic and social systems.

3) Finally, the identity of a social system is based on reflexivity, i.e., regulative self-observation and self-description controlling the relation between function and performance. On this level, the system works out a specific "symbolically generalized" medium and a specific "binarily schematized" code of com-


3 For this double-edged concept of performance focusing on the interpenetration between psychic and social systems, see Reinfandt (1995, 59-61) and, in detail, Reinfandt (1997, 29-41).
A Systems-Theoretical Approach to Narratology

munication. It is here that specialized horizons of meaning can be established.

Even in such general terms it is obvious that the systemic references of function and reflexivity point to functional dimensions of meaning aimed at maintaining a system's specific communication at the cost or reward of evolving increasingly specialized structures. However, functional dimensions of meaning regulate the availability of content-based or semantic dimensions of meaning. Systems-specific versions of these are then worked out on the level of reflexivity before they are put to the test of communicability on the level of performance. It is here that a system joins the "ecology" of meaning resulting from the complex interplay of psychic and social systems in modern Western society. The central characteristic of this specifically modern culture is the lack of an overriding principle of integration: ever since the eighteenth century modern culture has been oscillating between claims of "objectivity," subjective experience, and a reluctant recourse to reflexivity.4

With this framework in mind, modes of narrative presentation can be examined A) With respect to their potential for "objective" and subjective dimensions of meaning negotiated on the level of performance and B) With regard to reflexive dimensions of meaning implying the systemic references of function and reflexivity. These dimensions are to a certain degree "present" in every modern narrative and can be realized in actual contexts of communication. However, specific systemic contexts "sublimate" tendencies which might disrupt the system's horizon of meaning. It is interesting to note that those social systems which can be regarded as the most obviously relevant contexts of narrative in modern culture, that is, literature and science (especially historiography), seem to occupy diametrically opposed positions in this respect: while scientific communication with its claims of "objectivity" has to establish a fairly rigid horizon of meaning, flexibility is the fundamental characteristic of literary communication (see, for example, Nütting 129-205).

Nevertheless, literary and scientific communication share one fundamental feature which may serve as a suitable starting point for comparison: the specific systemic communication of both literature and science employs written texts ("works of art" and "publications," respectively) as symbolically generalized media of communication. In Luhmann's theory, a written text provides traces of two levels of selectivity. On the one hand, it recurs to selections of what is being communicated (information) and, on the other hand, to selections of how it is

4 In this context, the grands récits of modernity of "enlightenment," "idealism," and "historicism" (see Lyotard 1984) may be labelled as "objective," "subjective," and "reflexive" dimensions of meaning.
being communicated (message). However, a text will only be realized as communication if the difference between information and message is negotiated on a third level of selectivity, in Luhmann's terms understanding (1990, 24-26, 178-79). Thus, meaning emerges from a complex interplay of textual features and possible contexts of understanding in modern society. If a text serves as a symbolically generalized medium of communication, the latter are invariably systemic contexts.

In this respect, the social systems of literature and science can be described as follows: with regard to the functional dimensions of meaning, literature can be plausibly "reduced" to the rather abstract function of entertainment by interesting texts. Thus, the binary opposition "interesting vs. not interesting" suggests itself as the specific code of modern literary communication. Within this theoretical design, the most striking feature of literary communication is the semantically variable dependence of its code on the interpenetration between the literary system and psychic systems. Thus, the confrontation of the modern individual with an increasingly pluralistic social context which no longer provides reliable paradigms of personal identity becomes the focal point of literary performance. Negotiating information from all spheres of society, modern literature integrates the many truths of modern society with special reference to psychic systems' needs and makes this achievement its very own truth.

In the light of the above notions, it becomes obvious that many of the aspects traditionally considered to be "functions" of literature, such as, for example, the propagation of educational ideals, religious beliefs, scientific knowledge, political views or patterns of private experience, will have to be dealt with on the level of performance. This specific flexibility of the literary system's horizon of meaning finds its institutional equivalent in an asymmetric mode of inclusion: only a minority of psychic systems who actually contribute new texts are actively socialized in the system, while the majority of psychic systems involved in literary communication are passively socialized and do their reading in private.

In contrast to literature's leanings towards private, individual, and subjective experience and its confrontation with the many truths of modern society, scientific communication aims at an elimination of just these aspects of meaning. On the functional level, science specializes in the communicative production and

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5 Schwanitz uses the term "utterance" which seems to me an inadequate reinstatement of anthropocentric models of communication within a systems-theoretical framework. While "communication" would be adequate enough, it would also spoil the clarity of the terminological hierarchy. Therefore, I prefer the term "message" which also implies the material existence of written texts.

6 Systems-theoretical definitions of the function and the code of literature have so far been offered by Luhmann; Schmidt; Plumpe and Werber (for an overview see Reinfandt 1995, 58-59). My own position follows the one put forward by Plumpe and Werber (see Werber; Plumpe and Werber; Plumpe).
verification of knowledge as truth. In doing so it employs the specific code of "true vs. untrue" — on this and some of the following aspects of my postulates, see Luhmann 1990 — which avoids the semantic variability of its literary counterpart and calls for linguistic and textual features of precision and transparency worked out by the systemic context itself. As a result of this rigid specialization, scientific communication emerges on the institutional level as the only social system that does not establish an asymmetric mode of inclusion: the increasing specialization of academic discourse leaves no room for amateurs, all psychic systems involved in scientific communication have to be actively socialized in the system.

3. Narrative in Literary and Scientific Communication

So how do these differences of systemic context affect the functioning of narrative? The most obvious difference between literary and scientific realizations of narrative is the seemingly clear-cut distinction between fictional narrative on the one hand and factual or historical narrative on the other. This distinction has lately been commented upon by narratologists Gérard Genette and Dorrit Cohn, for example. Both agree that, as Genette puts it, "most of the characteristic textual indices of fictional narrative ... point to the same specific trait, that of direct access to the subjectivity of characters" (1990, 761). Thus, Genette's category of mode which comprises aspects of focalization is of central importance for distinguishing fictional and factual narrative. Following up on this argument, Cohn illustrates the implications of a specifically narratological perspective when she states that "in this sense we might say that the modal system of historical (and all other nonfictional) narration is 'defective' when compared to the virtual modalizations of fiction" (786): while literary narrative is characterized by its variable realization of the full range of Genette's types of focalization, historical narrative is limited to a type of focalization not even adequately covered by Genette's terms. Neither internal focalization, which can be considered a fairly reliable signpost of fictionality, nor zero focalization, which comprises passages of internal focalization, nor external focalization with its strict exclusion of any kind of comment or conjecture, seem to be applicable to historical narrative. In consequence, Cohn calls for a new category of zero focalization in a narrower sense which eliminates the option of variable internal focalization and smooths over the mimetic strictness of external focalization by drawing on what she terms "a language of 'nescience' ... of speculation, conjecture and induction (based on referential documentation)" (787).

In spite of all the difficulties in finding reliable markers of fictionality, the

7 As Genette's categories have been deduced from literary examples this point should be fairly obvious.
difference between the quality and range of focalization employed in fictional or factual narrative seems to be the most important feature which could be considered "a point of narratological divergence between the two types" (Genette 1990, 763; my emphasis). Nevertheless, this narratological divergence can be more adequately explained if it is seen in the light of contextual processes of systems differentiation. If one takes an anthropological dimension of narrative for granted (in the sense of, for example, Ricoeur 1984-88; Iser; see also Fludernik 1996), unrestricted narration in zero focalization seems to be the most "natural" type of narration. Someone who is telling a story either knows "what happened" or she/he is making it up anyway. The idea that this "natural" type of narration stands at the beginning of a process of differentiation induced by increasingly specialized systemic contexts can be supported with regard to the history of the modern novel from the eighteenth century to the present (for a detailed account from a systems-theoretical perspective see Reinandt 1997, 123-254).

Early examples of modern novel writing are either in the autobiographical mode such as, for example, Defoe’s *Moll Flanders* (1722), or in the authorial mode such as, for example, Fielding’s *Tom Jones* (1749). In both cases, there is a strong emphasis on the "objectifying" effects of retrospective or conventional narrative distance. On the other hand, the evolution of modern literary communication shows a strong tendency towards presenting the subjectivity of characters in more or less unmediated ways: after beginnings at least partial legitimization of verisimilitude in Richardson’s *Pamela* (1740), the seeming immediacy of presentation is increasingly legitimized by conventions established in literary communication itself, the most prominent of these being free indirect discourse. The conventional character of subjectivistic modes of presentation in internal focalization is finally driven to extremes in modernist novels, thus provoking the emergence of its obvious counterpart, an "objectivistic" mode of presentation in external focalization. Both types of modernist narrative technique were implicitly claiming to be superior ways of apprehending "reality." However, since then the realization of the inherently and ultimately fragmented character of the specifically modern "ecology" of meaning has increasingly undermined such claims. As a consequence, the hybrid horizon of meaning in literary communication has reached a new evolutionary stage. This is instructively illustrated by the state of contemporary fiction: at the end of the process of differentiation marked by the broad categories of "realism" and "modernism," literary narrative can freely employ all those modes which have been played through so far, but in "postmodern" times the "naturalness" of yore has become one literary convention among others (see, for example, Vitoux 1991, 1992). Nevertheless, the self-conscious and self-confident interplay with all dimensions of meaning available in modern culture remains the central performative achievement of literature.

Scientific communication, on the other hand, seems to have imposed stricter
rules on the seemingly "natural" transparency of realist modes of writing developed since the eighteenth century. In accordance with the scientific ideal of "objectivity," nineteenth-century historiography relies on a strictly neutralized act of narration creating the illusion of events speaking for themselves. As Hayden White has pointed out, nineteenth-century narrative historiography tends to locate its meaning "objectively" in the order of things as manifested in, for example, Hegel's state (20-22). This, however, as White's work indicates, is not the end of scientific processes of specialization. If retrospective second-order observation made possible by the increasing specialization of scientific communication casts doubt on the narrative strategies employed in nineteenth-century historiography by laying open the particularities of their ideological context, the only alternative is to locate the meaning of a critical narrative historiography reflexively in the scientific discourse itself. Thus, the evolution of the social system of science aims at a rigidly controlled horizon of meaning: as opposed to literature, scientific communication has neither room for subjective dimensions of meaning nor for "objective" dimensions of meaning imported from other social systems. Science produces its own truth while literature negotiates and integrates the many truths of modern society.

However, both literature and historiography make use of the strange phenomenon that "forms of narrative blithely overrun the boundary between fiction and nonfiction" (Genette 1990, 773). From this observation Genette draws the conclusion that it is "urgent for narratology to follow their lead" (1990, 773). It is here that systems-theoretical approaches may come in useful because of their potential for establishing a historically grounded polycontextual frame of reference which sheds light on the interrelation between socio-cultural evolution, empirical communicative situations, the pragmatics of reading, and aspects of narratology.

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Works Cited


1. Introduction

Literary studies employ many categories and terms covering periods of literary history and types of literature such as epochs, styles, genres, etc. These categories and terms allow for a general ordering of literature and the comparison of literary types, styles, themes, motifs, etc. These terms are mostly text-oriented in the sense that they emphasize and distinguish grammatical, syntactical, and semantical features of texts. Following the basic theoretical assumptions of the Empirical Study of Literature, I propose that in the context of a socio-psychology (or psycho-sociology) of the communicative system it is necessary to be able to distinguish different types of media subsystems. Taxonomical and category differentiation, I argue, would be necessary for the purposes of observation, comparison, historiographical description and evaluation, for societal design, political planning and future developments of the arts, etc. In order to do so we are in need of a standard or measure for comparing media subsystems, literary or other. It is evident that such a standard should not only be text- or product-based but must include non-textual features of media and media use. Thus, the present article has the purpose to stimulate discussion about general dimensions and parameters for the description of the media system. In the following, I will present some suggestions concerning 1) Ecological-; 2) Economical- and technological-; 3) Political- and social-; 4) Cultural-; and 5) Media-specific preconditions and constraints of media use in general, of literature in particular, and of certain types of related actions (writing, reading, publishing, etc.). This effort aims at a set of dimensions or categories which allow for a systemic and systematic ordering — to some extent in quantitative terms — of media-systemic unities (e.g., national literary systems).

2. Media and Media Analysis

The term "media" covers the whole range of communicative action from non-verbal signs and natural language to the most advanced communicative technologies like electronic mail, TV-conferences or cyberspace communication.
Media analysis thus affords a differentiated and specialized set of descriptive and explanatory tools. The basic communicative configuration — the dyadic or dialogic structure — relates subjects who employ communicative means in their interaction such as sender and receiver; speaker and listener; communicator and communicant; etc. In a circular way, the term "communication," then, is defined as interaction via natural (spoken and written) language or other sign systems. In this sense, media and communication are conceptually bound to each other, i.e., they are reciprocally defined. This conceptual interrelation is one important reason that media as communicative means cannot be analyzed adequately without attention to the communicative configurations in which they occur. "Configuration" here includes the situation, the subjects, the action or interaction the subjects are involved in, etc. In other words, "configuration" represents the contexts of the media.

But what do situations, subjects, as well as their respective actions and interactions do to media? In the first place, it is individuals who create media which then matches their (interactive) communicative needs on the one hand and meets the observed (i.e., realized) situational requirements on the other. Moreover, media are determined in substance and shape by the performative, receptive, and intellectual capacity of (interacting) subjects. Further, media as semiotic objects refer to socially and culturally defined items (objects, facts, etc.). Media, then, can be looked at as generated by the complex reciprocal effects of all such aspects. They are closely bound to people who use them for their purposes, to culturally and socially shaped ways of living. Analyzing media, therefore, has to take into account not only the communicative means used in a society — e.g., natural language utterances or texts and their grammatical, syntactical, and semantical features — but the whole set of interwoven factors and mechanisms which all together generate and determine the kinds and features of media.

3. The Systems Approach

Conceptualizing media in the sense indicated above makes the systems approach appear to be well suited for media analyses. The term "system" — since the early days of systems-theoretical thinking (see, for example, Bertalanffy; Angyal) — implies the idea of a dynamic unity or whole, that is, holistic organization. It is this concept we need for describing and explaining the genesis, maintenance, and development of media. However, at the same time, some serious problems arise, namely: 1) The type of system to be chosen for media analyses (i.e., what kind of system do we have in mind when thinking of media-generating mechanisms? What do we have to take as a systemic whole in media analyses? How can we
empirically identify the considered systemic unity?) and 2) The problem of systems borders (i.e., where does the system end? What does belong to the system? What is inside, what is outside of the system?). As I have argued elsewhere, the appropriate level of complexity for media analysis is the level of social and cultural organization (see Rusch 1991, 1993). The systemic unity for media analysis, therefore, is society, that is, the community of media-users. It is the complexity of society which allows for the kinds of (self-)regulations, mutual controls, and positive as well as negative feedback necessary for the emergence and maintenance of communicative actions. It is the interpersonal regulation of political, juridical, economical issues, the regulation or balance of power, of human rights, of ways of living, etc., which frames the conditions or constraints for the genesis and the use of media — i.e., the conventions, codes, symbols, signs, and signals in the use of verbal, non-verbal, graphophonic, cinematic, television, electronic, etc., communicative actions. I postulate that in this context media studies unavoidably turn into Socio-Psychology in the context of and combined with Cultural Studies (for an elaboration of the Empirical Study of Literature into Applied Cultural Studies, see Töttösy 1994).

4. Society and Media: A "Soft" or a "Hard" System

In human communication the instances of communicative action (e.g., verbal and auditive action strategies, visual signs, etc.) were distributed within society. Humans always made use of language either spoken and/or written. Therefore, communicative action was integrated into and was made part of different social contexts. The development of communicative action took place under the constraints of different social contexts or different domains of action (such as family or tribe, hunting, agriculture, making of tools and weapons, rites and religion, etc.). What sociologists like Niklas Luhmann call the functional differentiation of society into (autonomous) sub-systems (e.g., politics, justice, economy, culture, etc.), and what they consensually originate in Antiquity, appears to be anticipated — and then mutually reinforced later on — by a functional differentiation of communicative action, for instance, such as the development of terminologies for special communicative purposes, the development of speech styles (e.g., private vs. official, juridical vs. aesthetical) and verbal techniques (e.g., for mnemotechnical or ritual reasons). Visual, sensory, and tactile abilities have also been involved in the development of communicative action form the very beginning. Wo/man made objects like graphics, paintings, sculptures, etc., to serve his/her communicative purposes (among other functions) as in symbols, signs, representations, etc. Notational systems for religious, scientific, and administrational purposes were developed for the specialization and expansion of what had already been at the actors disposal. The breakthrough of notational systems in changing the old world
within some centuries from oral into literal only succeeded after the invention of practicable and effective graphemathical systems representing the phonetic structure of spoken language, namely, alphabets.

The specialization or functional differentiation of communication and communicative action, respectively, brought about some far reaching consequences, however. Specialized language use (oral and literal) more and more became bound to certain professions and action roles. The differentiation of communication and action-roles also has a commercial aspect. As soon as the ability to produce certain products in demand or performances is unequally or asymmetrically distributed among the members of a society, these products or performances can be commercialized. This general assumption also holds for communicative products or performances. The recognition that one can make a living by providing services in communication, manufacturing goods, by teaching reading or writing, etc., and the social stabilization of such action-models and action-roles, maintained by imitation, reputation, prestige and income, paves the way for a growing interest of people in this kind of business. The commercialization of communication, therefore, reinforces the process of communicative differentiation and specialization. Here are some general constraints which shape the evolution of communication and media:

1) The growth of population causing an increase of demand on the one hand and — at the same time — an increase of competition on the other hand.

2) The development of a market for communication involves a growing number of people acting as, for example, producers, publishers, distributors, or mediators of media.

3) The increasing competition intensifies the processes of the specialization and differentiation of media within the domains or branches of communication, e.g., growing numbers of literary genres. Competition feeds back a latent force for innovation, novelty, and change; a force that becomes overwhelming when markets are satiated.

4) Therefore, an increasing shortage of primary texts can be observed only to some extent and only for the so-called "bestsellers." There is no shortage of manuscripts or any other types of media products (most material publishers receive find their way into wastebaskets). But — as will be pointed out later — the technological and economical conditions of printing, publishing houses, and other media producers and outlets in the age of information and technological (media) revolution demand bestsellers. And this is because very large numbers of media products are needed to cover the costs of both production and technological advancement as well as to maintain the necessary competitive edge.

5) Education and literacy have become one of the main objectives of all societies. Today, the social sciences and media research reflect the importance of education by its use as a functional variable. Fields and levels of education determine the kinds of media people attend to and the intensity of their media use. Thus, education not only strengthens communication in general, but pushes
the continually developing process of media differentiation and specialization. In addition, the relative homogeneity of knowledge, wishes, values, etc., in the population seems reduced to the level of so-called "special interest groups." Correspondingly, communicative demands and media have specialized.

6) The development of new technologies such as the Gutenberg press, the telegraph, photography, telephone, gramophone and records, film and video, electronics, and computers always and at all levels influenced communication. Not only the speed and volume of message transfers increased rapidly, but moreover, new kinds of media appeared on the scene. The project of bridging all distances in space and time by communicational means is now being developed toward the so-called age of cyberspace.

7) The development of structures, institutions, and the organization of society and the development of personal interests, needs and demands altogether generate specific genres (i.e., communicative forms) and communicative objects (i.e., themes).

8) In this sense some basic types of problems shape social development. For instance, the management of conflict gives rise to the judicial system; the handling of the unknown forwards religion and philosophy; curiosity and the generation and administration of knowledge furthers the sciences; the regulation of power develops the structures of military, politics, and diplomacy; self-assurance, representation, personal and social identity, demonstration of status, entertainment, etc. generate production in the arts.

Summing up the above criteria and phenomena, we may say that the generation of different types of media and different styles of handling media is driven by the development of different types of communicative needs or demands. In the long run, this connection bestowed us with the communicative domains or branches — and the several niches within them — we are familiar with today: print, radio, TV, computers, the internet, etc.

The next question takes us back to the notion of the systems approach. Can these communicative branches or domains be taken as systems? Confronted with problems of this kind the most appropriate answer, in my opinion, is: "Well, it depends." Generally, there is no sense in rejecting the idea of describing communicative domains as systems. However, the concept of system I postulate as applicable to the problematics outlined has to be clarified very carefully. If one considers the term "system" to mean — in a very wide sense — any kind of connection among discriminable objects, no problems will arise at all. But such a "soft" concept of system does not afford much clarity about openness or closure, about boundaries or organisational principles. One may chose the objects of consideration following pragmational criteria. On the other hand, as soon as further explications of "connection" or selections of objects or object-types enter the scene, the application of a "hard" concept of system becomes also highly problematic. At this point, all I am able to do is to position the argument that different concepts of systems may be needed for different levels of description.
I will concentrate on the question, whether communicative domains can be considered of as autopoietic systems as it is held (e.g., for the literary system) by most scholars who subscribe to Luhmann's theory of social systems.

From my point of view, communicative domains cannot be described as autopoietic or self-regulating and self-maintaining systems for reasons as follows. 1) They are not totally self-regulating but also regulated by other instances, e.g., justice, economy, technology; 2) They are not self-sufficient but depend on resources and constitutive instances form elsewhere, e.g., several row-materials, technical equipment/machinery, themes and thematized objects, people, etc.; 3) They are not self-maintaining but depend on being maintained by people and their actions; 4) They are not completely self-referential but refer to other instances and objects different from themselves; and 5) They are not operationally closed but are open for operational impact from other domains of society, e.g., justice. These are the reasons to think of communicative domains as "soft" systems or no systems at all. Communicative branches do not form closed units and are not holistically organized or governed by a single organizational principle. Nevertheless, they (e.g., the book market, literary life, or printed media) can be identified as open and dynamical interactional networks integrating actors, actions, objects, institutions, enterprises, etc., at the same time lacking borders and a single organizational regime. It is worth keeping in mind that these interactional networks are maintained by people but at same time are not identical with these people. People may be generally taken as the components of society, but each member of society may chose (to some extent) the interactional networks she/he wants to participate in. People always and unavoidably take part in creating and maintaining or in disintegrating and destabilizing society by whatever they may be doing. But they do not always and unavoidably take part in one or all interactional networks created within society. People always are members of a society, but they are partakers in (inter)actional networks only optionally and from time to time.

Based on the above, therefore, I prefer to use the concept of "soft" system (e.g., action or interaction system) or just to talk of domains, branches, or interactional networks. The components of such interaction systems are people, material objects, and processes which are constitutively necessary for running the system in question. Each component may also play its roles within other systems or networks.

5. Literature: A Domain in/of Society

The meaning of the term "literature" is far from being self-evident. Traditionally, the term "literature" was characterized from the perspective of "production," including the producer (e.g., the aesthetics of the genius, creativity, etc.), the process of production (e.g., inspiration, prophetic eye, mimesis, construction following a set of poetical rules, directions, or norms), and the product (e.g.,
special language and text-type, special syntactical, semantical, and stylistic features). Only a few decades ago had another view of literature been introduced into the discussion, namely, the perspective of reception and audience including the recipient, the process of reception, and the results of this process. While the proponents of the production perspective put forward that literature is defined by the derivation and the material features of literary texts, the perspective of reception prescribes that any text, independently from genesis and surface features, can be taken as literary, if the reader/audience decides to do so. But these two standpoints contradict each other only at the first glance. If we go into the matter more deeply, we also have to take into account the cognitive-social mechanisms regulating the relation of authors, texts, and readers, namely, the notion of the cognitive-social perspective. From this point of view literariness appears to be a time-, culture-, and milieu-sensitive variable within the interactional network of authors, texts, publishers, printers, readers, etc. Rather than an immanent feature of texts or the psychological characteristics of an author or the decisions of readers, literariness turns out to be a matter of "arrangement" and mutual adjustment. Usually, authors want to be successful, they want their texts to be appreciated by an audience, they aim at acceptance by critics, they strive for authority, prestige, income, etc. Therefore, they have to meet the expectations, interests, and wishes of that audience. They have to apply marketing strategies to be able to produce the best appreciated or best selling products. On the other hand the audience (including the authors) is acquainted with (i.e., educated and trained) all kinds of texts available (e.g., paradigmatic and canonized texts of any kind) which shaped their textual experiences, their reading-expectations, and gratification. The dynamics of the interactional literary network then process the balance of literary textual offers and demands.

It seems to be a worldwide consensus not only among literary scholars but also of literary professionals in general (authors, publishers, critics, bookmarket researchers, etc.) that the term "literature" denotes written or printed material only. That is to say that film is not "literature," and the same holds for radio plays, TV-plays, tele-novellas, comedy shows, etc. Nevertheless, there is also agreement that such media products may be based on literature or — to say the least — grounded upon some written or even printed text base (i.e., a script), which may be perceived as literary.

What, then, might be the differentia specifica of literature? Looking at the written and printed we have to distinguish several kinds of literature following the lines of social and communicative specialization. Almost all relevant fields of social activity have their own literature (Schriftum), e.g., religion (e.g., the}

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8 It should be noted, however, that the recent development of electronic media (text and visual) of the so-called "techno-culture" challenges this notion in both as regards literature proper and artistic creation and production and as regards literary research (see Tóth 1996).
bible), justice (e.g., legal codes), science and philosophy (e.g., reports, theoretical expositions), personal relations (e.g., correspondence, memoirs), education (e.g., text books), and so also the domain of the arts (e.g., music, painting, performative arts, *belle lettres*).

The case of the *belle lettres*, however, draws our attention to a kind of literature, which might be characterized as artistic and aesthetic. Literature — in the narrow sense of the word, then, can be identified as the manifestation of artistically expressed written language, the result of artistic writing or artistic production of print media. But what does "artistic" mean here? Again, we should recall the distinction between the production and the reception perspectives. From the point of view of production it seems well arguable to call the production of *belle lettres* artistic. Generally, artistic literature is considered to show special features, which may need the genius and expertise of an artist, such as 1) Syntactical features like versification or meter (e.g., in poems), hypotaxis for extremely intensified or even hypertrophic exposition of people, situations, actions, etc. (e.g., in novels); 2) Lexical features like rhyme, idiosyncratic terms or uncommon usage of words (in poems and novels); 3) Semantical features like fictionality, i.e., the invention of a fictional universe; 4) Thematical features: preference for love, crime, generation conflicts, etc.; 5) Pragmatical features like purposes texts are made to serve, e.g., entertainment, thrill, involvement, intellectual pleasure, emotional arousal, etc.; 6) Contextual features like the image of the literary author, e.g., poor, obsessed with his ideas, Bohemian lifestyle, etc.; and 7) Stylistical features which make a difference from author to author or text to text.

Whether these features really allow for distinguishing artistic literature from other kinds of literature or the artistic use of language from ordinary language use will be discussed later. Before that, we should turn to the perspective of reception. Is artistic reading possible? What does the reader do in literary reading? Is she/he capable of artistic perception? Can readers make any text artistic-literary by their artistic-aesthetic reception? And if so, why do readers not read news-texts or scientific texts the same way? As these questions already indicate, this approach seems to be misleading.

But what, then, does literary reading mean? From the cognitive-social point of view it only can mean a kind of reading with the reader expecting, searching for and detecting or constructing certain "literary" features if and when she/he has a reason to do so. Literary reading seems to be driven by literary expectations, which are based upon or triggered by certain observations (see the list of literary features above). Only few observations of any of the literary features may be necessary for orientating or tuning the whole process of reception to the literary mode. Therefore, only a reader who has learned to observe literary features and to perform literary reception can actually experience literature.

Modes of literary reception may differ for different social groups as well as
the kinds of texts (and their respective features) which are for literary reading. Therefore, we not only have to discriminate different literary genres (macro-, meso- and micro genres) but also different types and concepts of literature (e.g., "high brow" literature, popular literature, elite literary aesthetics, popular literary aesthetics, highly artistical and experimental literature, etc.). All this is not only a factor in literary reception. The production of literature aims at several audiences and several reading expectations, diverse concepts of literature (see Barsch). As said above, the author, therefore, has to decide what kind of literature she/he is willing to create and consequently the author will be identified with her/his product. And, similarly, the reader has to select the kinds of gratifications she/he is after. All these decisions are framed by social and personal demands (see Borgeest). Selecting reading matters not only depends on social background but on social and personal aims and wishes as well. Schmidt suggested that literature is whatever is taken to be literature (see 1982, passim). But this seemingly nihilistic definition must not be mistaken in the sense that anything could be literature at any place or time. Rather, it means that literature is a matter of social conventions.

Taking a closer look at literary phenomena will teach us to realize the complexity of relations among the interactional frameworks which make up modern societies. Here are some general constraints with regards to literary activity.

1) Urbanisation and mass culture seem to be one of the catalysts for philosophy, science, literary, and media development. A critical mass of people, a certain level of literacy, a chance for contact of people who share certain interests, etc.

2) A minimal distribution of a certain level of educational degree among the population not only enables people to offer communicative and literary products but also makes possible a necessary minimal demand for literary products.

3) The social value structure among a critical mass of people must value literary activities (writing, reading, publishing, etc.). Only this will maintain and reinforce literary action within a society.

4) Growing communities and enlarged distances between communicative partners and literary actors (e.g., authors and publishers, publishers and readers) need an effective infrastructure to ensure (within certain limits of time) the availability of products and consumers, respectively.

5) But even the best educational preconditions will not suffice to maintain, stimulate, or increase literary activity if the time available to people does not allow for literary action. Until modern times it were the social elites who developed philosophy and the arts. They could spend large amounts of time for developing their active and passive artistic skills. Producing and reading literature takes time and people must be able and willing to invest their time in literary action.
6) Literary activity not only consumes time but also money. When the West and Central European literary systems emerged in the eighteenth century, books, journals, newspapers and other types of printed matters were offered for sale. And only the rich could afford books. It took another two hundred years to bring the book into the households of modern societies of the Western hemisphere. The financial budget of households must allow for buying literature.

The literary domain is run by actors or participants of different kinds. During the centuries of development a number of action roles have emerged and have been institutionalized. Some of them have become professions with a special education and training at professional schools and universities. Others have been created to represent the interest of groups of actors. Some have been founded by the administration and government. Some examples are: Personal actors like authors, publishers, booksellers, lecturers, editors, critics, literary agents, librarians, students, teachers, professors, readers, literary scholars, etc.; Collective actors, e.g., the PEN-Club, writers’ associations, publishers’ associations, labour unions, etc.; Corporate actors, e.g., publishing houses, book stores, printing shops, literary agencies, national and international media groups, etc.; and Institutional actors such as literary research institutes, schools for professional education, social security organisations, cultural administration, literary juries, etc.

As I stated above, the most prominent literary medium is print. But there are some others which are based upon writing and/or print: Print in general (all kinds of books, newspapers, journals, magazines, advertisement flyers, posters); Electronic media (radio, TV, CD-ROM books, electronic journals, electronic list servers, the internet, etc.); Performative media (recitation, reading, theatre, etc.); and Film and video.

The running of the literary network requires mechanisms and devices for production, printing, distribution, etc. A large interactive set of infrastructure, starting with the machinery and buildings and ending with vehicles used for transportation is a necessary prerequisite of literature. No such interactional network will run without the devices to keep information, goods, and money flowing, to make people mobile, to enable new contacts among literary actors, and to renew the existing contacts from time to time. These infrastructural preconditions are necessary for the development of regular demands, regular offers, the regular flow of goods, regular ways of ordering and payment, etc., which in turn are necessary for planning (personal, group, administrative, etc.). It is these conditions that allow for the development of aesthetic literary standards and for a satisfaction of literary demands. More, it is this infrastructure that allows for aesthetic literary innovation (deviations from the historically contingent standards), which, in turn, reinforces the development of its own basis.

The actors who keep the literary network running have to perform certain acts which together make up the activities of the literary system. These activities are
as follows.

1) The domain of literary production: writers and authors have to produce texts, they have to contact publishers, critics, etc., they have to earn their living (if they cannot make it by writing only), they have to correct or rewrite their manuscripts and proofs, they have to offer public readings of their texts in bookstores, galleries, schools, etc., they have to advertise their products, they have to comment on their own work and explain it to their audience, etc. Even this short list of actions shows that the writing of texts which have certain literary features is but one of the tasks an author has to accomplish for the production of literature. Literary writers also have to act more often than not as their own mediators, lecturers, editors, advertisers, etc. The action profile of the literary writer probably has become more and more differentiated historically. Writers always had to adapt to the historically contingent conditions of communication and media and so the domain of production always overlapped with the domains of mediation, distribution, and reception.

2) The domain of literary mediation and distribution: Similarly, this domain is made up by a variety of different actions performed by people acting in different and historically emerging, changing, and sometimes vanishing action-roles (publisher, editor, printer, dealer, teacher, critic, librarian). For instance, looking at the action profile of a publisher clearly demonstrates that even a single action role may include very different tasks and actions. Running a publishing house cannot be reduced to the acquisition of productive and original authors and promising manuscripts but, at all times, it included economic management, personnel management, program management, etc. Today, publishers' action profiles almost completely comprise administrative, economical, and representative action.

3) The domain of consumption, reception, and audience: Obviously, the reception of texts plays an important role within all the domains mentioned. Consumers of literature are the audience of literature. But consumers are not audience only. They also have to decide whether to read or not, they have to decide whether to buy or lend a book or not. They have to select the places and opportunities for getting reading material. And in the end they will evaluate their reading experiences for future decisions.

As it holds for social action in general, all the actions contributing to the literary interactional network are governed by conventions, rules, and laws. Some of these social regulators are specific for communication, some are media-specific, and some may even be literature specific. Generally speaking, the more specific the regulations, the more pre-conditioning they are and dependent on less specific conventions, rules, and laws. No domain of social action is excluded from some level of conventional regulation. And it seems that the different fields of actions do not differ so much in the single conventions which are valid in each but in the weight or relevance that is given to certain conventions or certain configurations or sets of conventions. This also implies that the cognitive-social
construction of conventions and fields of action (as characterized by the validity of certain conventions) rests upon some basic continuities such as the temporal continuity of action, the local continuity of action, the continuity of action in spite of different purposes, the continuity of the actor, the continuity of an actor's social relations, etc. A scientific author will be best appreciated when he/she can produce readable and stylistically well-formed texts which will be read for its value of information as well as with pleasure. But although stylistic features of scientific literature may play an important role for the reader (and for his acceptance of the writer's ideas), she/he will not expect to detect some other literary features such as fictionality. It is the mixture, or better, the composition, of conventionalized features, that is, the validity of a whole set of conventions which — on the one hand — distinguishes different fields of action and — on the other hand — makes the borderlines fuzzy and flowing.

Besides conventional regulation, most domains of action are governed by special juridical laws, e.g., the production and sales of goods and services (e.g., commercial laws), personal relations (e.g., penal codes, civil rights, human rights); language use (e.g., freedom of speech), copyright laws, etc.9 With regards to conventions we have to take into account the variety of different conventional regulations. The most important conventions in the case of literature may be the conventions of literary textual design (including syntactical, lexical, semantical, and pragmatical sub-conventions as well as genre-conventions). These conventions have a Janus nature: to the producers of literary texts they show their face as a kind of recipe or orientating device while for the readers of literary texts they manifest expectations and observational guidelines for selecting a satisfactory or adequate mode of reception. Schmidt had postulated the aesthetic convention as a macro-convention dominating all actions in the domain of literature (see 1982, passim). He postulated that the obligation for truth and reference to reality is abandoned in arts and literature. In other words, it allows for fictionality. Without any doubt such a fictionality convention is a powerful discriminator and a central element of the convention-sets valid for the literary network. But fictionality is a semantic feature of semiotic matters and it is just one feature among others. Furthermore, it needs some observational anchors at the surface of written or printed texts in the case of literature. It requires conventions for text-surface codes of fictionality.

Another convention postulated by Schmidt is the polyvalence convention. Here he postulated that readers of literary texts not only may tolerate but strive for a diversity of meanings. Groeben and Schreier suggested to distinguish a weak and a strong version of the polyvalence convention which allow for ambiguous readings among different readers (weak version) and ambiguous readings for one

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9 As I have shown elsewhere, the relevance of the individual's legal status for understanding and semantics cannot be overestimated (see Rusch 1992).
and the same reader at different (but in some cases very close, almost equal) points of time (strong version). Empirical research in literary reading primarily backs the weak version. Most people tend to construe the one reading of a text which is most convincing and most satisfying for them, but they are willing to accept that other readings may differ. It should be realized that the polyvalence convention — other than the aesthetic convention — can not be traced back to certain textual (e.g., semantical) features. This is what reading experiments really showed: Any text (literary, scientific, journalistic, etc.) can be treated as polyvalent and multidimensionally meaningful if the reader is willing or has some reason to do so. Decontextualized or literarily recontextualized texts (e.g., scientific text presented as literature) increase the polyvalence effect as it might have been expected (see Meutsch). The polyvalence mode of reading, then, paves the way for taking a text as fictional, not vice versa! This not only questions the primacy of the aesthetic convention but also makes another argument for the notion of a flexible reader's response.

6. The Dynamics of the Literary Interactional Network

The dynamics of the literary interactional network include certain patterns I would like to briefly elaborate on. Single actions are always joined to complex action or interaction patterns. The single action segments of the production of a novel, for example, are linked by being a part of a complex creative process. This process covers all the actions from the emergence of the very first idea of the story at the beginning of the productional process until the delivery of a manuscript. Within such complex action processes some parts may become standardized action patterns or routines. This may hold, for example, for 1) Certain segments of the production processes, such as the gathering of data, the search for interesting themes, the writing of manuscripts with the help of mechanical or electronic devices, etc.; 2) Segments of mediation and distribution processes such as lecturing and editing routines, typesetting procedures, marketing operations, sales and services, correspondence routines, printing of books, delivery of printed matters, etc.; and 3) Segments of reception processes such as the selection of reading matters, the reading of a novel chapter by chapter, etc.

A further aspect of the dynamics of the literary interactional network is the recurrence and the rhythm of certain events such as the regular appearance of papers, journals (daily, weekly, monthly, biannual, etc.) and new books. Such events may include the frequency of book sales, the frequency of book fairs, the frequency of visits of commercial representatives of publishers in the book stores, the frequency of literary awards, or the frequency of new products of an author, etc. These dynamics also have some important impact on the life-cycles of literary products (e.g., titles, authors, themes, and genres).
7. Toward a Media Description Standard

Following the above considerations, I would like to propose some dimensions for a media description standard. This proposal aims at a set of general parameters and variables which allow for the description of the media system in quantitative or qualitative terms. It will be a matter of further discussion to develop a valid and efficient instrument to implement such a standard. What I propose here is provisional.

1) Ecology and Culture. Population figures, literacy, education, bureaucracy, and administration, communicational standards (number and kinds of communicative means, institutionalized media, frequency of use and distribution among population), social differentiation (societal domains of action), etc.

2) Politics and the Legal System. Types of political and economical system-participation of the population (chances or institutions for participation, percentage of participation in elections), political structure, the population’s political impact, the legal status of the individual (human rights, civil rights), legal codes for communication and media issues, commercial laws for media, copyright laws, the political status of communication and media, etc.

3) Economy and Technology. Economic infrastructure (type of economy, institutions, enterprises, groups), economic relations between social action domains, media and communication technology (standards of development), the economical status of communication and media, the distribution of income among population, what money can buy, the costs of communication and media, time budgets in the population, free time, time spent for media, the availability of media to the population, the chances for using new technology, new media literacy, etc.

4) Social Structures and Regulations. Communicative means and domains of action, communicative action-roles and professions (degree of professionality), conventions of communication (in the given domains of action, e.g., truth convention, aesthetic convention, polyvalence convention), conventions of media-design (surface, themes, semantics), media genres, etc.

5) Media Proper. Media production and products, kinds and quantities, costs, technology, institutions, enterprises, groups, etc., the distribution of media products, distribution systems, etc., the consumption of media products, sales figures, media use of figures, the social structure(s) of media use and audience gratification, etc.

The next step of my project will be to work out the dimensions and the list of variables in more detail. This also means developing quantitative explications of some of the concepts so that they become measurable and thus more evaluative. Here one may also think of the construction of new (quantitative) concepts which may serve as media-systemic signifiers. Such concepts, e.g., a Literary Systems Index, should combine several features such as the percentage
of literacy of the population, annual production of book titles, the number of literary genres, time needed from book order until delivery, sales figures, ratio of the number of professionalized jobs and the total number of employees in the literary domain, etc., to indicate and value the performance and change of the media system and its subsystems such as the subsystem of literature. Furthermore, some qualitative indices could be built, e.g., a Literary Aesthetics Index combining aesthetic value structures, literary conventions (for textual design, literary semantics, and communication about literature), the kinds of literary products available and expected or realized gratification of literary action.

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Works Cited


Comprehension vs. Understanding of Literature

1. Introduction

The concepts of comprehension and understanding should be differentiated very carefully. They are far from being identical. And the concept of understanding is far from being of any interest except to philosophers. From a psycholinguistical perspective, understanding turns out to be an important complement of the information processing approach. Comprehension covers only the subjective mental, intellectual, or psychological aspect of communicative processes, while understanding includes the reciprocal effects of communicating subjects, i.e., the inter-subjective, inter-personal aspects of communication.

Empirical literary studies, Linguistics, and Psychology have paid almost exclusive attention to the mental aspects of communication, i.e., the comprehension of literature, the informational processing of literature, mental models of literary genres, story grammars, etc. The systems-theoretical approach to literature now paves the way for a more adequate and comprehensive perspective, integrating psychological and sociological aspects. This widened perspective has already yielded some interesting insights into communication: A certain pattern of interaction and communication (i.e., understanding) selects mental activities and styles of thinking and behaviour. The social mechanism of understanding works as a kind of cognition selector. The criteria for understanding (i.e., socially adequate behaviour) originally stem from outside the head of the person who is trying to understand. The communicator's expectations and communicative aims function as criteria for the attribution of understanding.

The comprehension of literature is organized by socially and communicatively established ways and manners of treating texts (i.e., defining the task, looking for certain textual features, using certain phrases for commenting on the text, looking for a certain type of finishing the task, etc.) Understanding is the mechanism encoding the social values, norms, and conventions in the heads of readers, students, and all other participants in literary communication. Therefore, the study of literature and literary reading must include the social sets of norms and conventions and expectations that govern literary action (mental and overt) within each society and culture.
One of the consequences of this assumption is the following: The social impact on mental processes, i.e., the cognitive-social determination of cognition, unavoidably turns psychology into a "social" science. Needless to emphasize that — the other way around — sociology must be supplemented by psychological approaches. The systemic approach thus generates a cognitive-social point of view, i.e., it is more integrative and widens our understanding of literary phenomena. In the following, I will deal with the very heart of hermeneutics, that is, the concepts and the problems of understanding. First, I will outline the hermeneutical proposals for coping with the phenomenon of understanding. Second, I will briefly discuss the psychological or cognitive approach to understanding. Finally, I will present a socio-psychological and constructivist perspective displaying a complementary relation between understanding and comprehension.

2. Hermeneutics as the Theory of Understanding

Hermeneutics as the theory of understanding or, in other words, the art of interpretation (ars interpretandi) originates from the problem of how to handle written texts adequately. Thus, the ancient ars interpretandi may be seen as an immediate reaction to the rise and distribution of writing, especially with regard to the asymmetry of the distribution of literacy among people: the social (i.e., religious, political, aesthetical) elites for centuries kept and cultivated the secret of writing almost exclusively; they learned to use writing and scripture in order to stabilize their power and to govern the illiterate mass of people by telling and teaching them what was encoded in the scriptures.

The principles of interpretation had been a matter of debate from the beginning: 1) The Alexandrine School (e.g., Eratosthenes, Aristarchos from Samothrace) preferred a grammatical, rhetorical, and etymological interpretation aiming at the intention of the author. On the other hand, 2) the Pergamon School (e.g., Krates from Mallos) taught an allegorical interpretation, transferring the literal sense of a text into other contexts (i.e., figurative sense). These two positions were the very first which — in principle — marked the two possible poles of the interpretation-debate: 1) The intentionalist position, which may be characterized as conservative because it adheres to the principles of oral communication and 2) The allegorist, or "modern" position, taking the openness or underdetermination of the meaning of a written text as a starting point for a creative use of writing and reading. Both positions, however, share the view, that the writing cannot and will never be able to stand for itself, but is in need of interpretation, comment, or explication (see Raible).

The conflict between the two positions also dominated the further development of hermeneutics in the Middle Ages. Most important — not only in this respect — are the works of Origines and Augustine, as the doctrines of the multiple
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The doctrine of the multiple sense of the written turn out to be strategies of coping with the increasingly obvious fact of semantic openness and underdetermination of the pragmatically decontextualized written text. While the number of literate people slowly increased, the barriers between the traditional social classes became more and more fragile, trade and crafts slowly developed the middle classes, and writing became a social technique present in all domains of human action, private and professional. The proponents of the multiple-sense-doctrines both accepted the semantic openness of writing and restricted or controlled it by formal criteria. And this is the main advantage of these doctrines: 1) They harmonize (or neutralize) the extremes of the intentionalist and the allegorist position by integrating them into a more abstract and more integrative position as formal and methodical principles, 2) The most important aspect, however, is that a certain type of relation between the different senses, namely, congruity, correspondence, accordance, consistency, etc., represents an abstract, formal and controllable criterium for the adequacy of interpretations. This step finally emancipated the ars interpretandi from the culture of oral communication. From then on all kinds of interpretations of all kinds of texts could be argued for by formal correctness or adequacy. The authority of the authors finally had become superfluous. Instead, the interpreters, the commentators, the teachers, etc., assumed this authority.

The doctrine of the consistency of literal, allegorical, grammatical, etc., dimensions of readings dominated hermeneutical theory throughout the Middle Ages. It was practised as a hermeneutics of problematic passages of texts, hardly recognizable phrases, unknown words, and terms. It was the so called "hermeneutics of text segments" (Stellenhermeneutik). In fact, this is still the dominating paradigm of interpretation courses everywhere in schools and universities and independent from the changing fashions and so-called methods of interpretation, e.g., Close Reading, History of Ideas, Psychoanalysis, Structuralism, New Criticism, History of Mentalities, Feminism, and Post-Structuralism. Despite all their differences, all these approaches set out from the basic assumption of the coherence of readings of literary texts. And they must have done so, because their plausibility and persuasive power depends on coherence in the first place. A tour de force along the lines of hermeneutical traditions will illustrate this (see Birus).

At the turn of the eighteenth century Friedrich Schleiermacher investigated the hermeneutical approaches from a philosophical point of view, strongly influenced...
by Immanuel Kant's idealism. Schleiermacher realised and emphasized that the understanding of written texts (written language) is not in principle different from understanding people (spoken language) and that the understanding of written or spoken texts always and unavoidably is a matter of — as it were — lucky guesses, a matter of hypotheses about the meaning, which in the ongoing communication or reading process may (or may not) turn out as suitable, consistent, fruitful, or personally satisfying. Further, he pointed out that because one never knows for sure whether one understands correctly or truly, misunderstanding has to be taken as the usual (and not as the exceptional) case. From this he concluded that, although working on a text and its contexts may then reduce the degrees of misunderstanding, one will never really know when this work is finished. Thus, Schleiermacher generalized hermeneutics as a theory of understanding of all kinds of texts and universalized misunderstanding as the natural basis and outcome of communication.

Almost a hundred years later, Wilhelm Dilthey elaborated on the psychological dimensions of understanding. Like Schleiermacher, he conceptualized the process of understanding as a reconstructive creation of the author's situation, motives, intentions, and actions. Like Schleiermacher, Dilthey generalized this concept of understanding to cover all types of communication. However, Dilthey believed in true understanding among all human beings across the borders of space, time, history, and culture. This belief, finally, paved the way for Dilthey's most influential — and most disastrous — idea: the idea of the opposition of the humanities and the natural sciences. For Dilthey, understanding in the sense of going deeply into the thoughts and actions of the other was the only adequate way to treat human utterances (verbal or non-verbal). Consequently, understanding became the rational tool for the explanation of human action, whereas explanation became the rational tool for understanding all other natural phenomena.

Martin Heidegger, with his existentialist approach again widened and further universalized the concept of understanding. He defined "understanding" as a basic and necessary task of human beings in order to realize their own identities as well as the identity of the environment around themselves. In this sense, understanding becomes the elementary operation one has to perform as a cognitive being. Understanding texts, then, is only part of the complex and lifelong process of creating and understanding the world. This view includes all cognitive activity within the frame of understanding.

Hans-Georg Gadamer followed Heidegger in the universalizing of hermeneutics. He took understanding as a constituent of human social life. Interpretation, then, has to reflect critically the historical conditions of understanding and, thereby, fuse the intellectual horizons (Horizontverschmelzung) of authors and readers across all historical and cultural borders. This idea is based upon two — contradictory — assumptions: 1) That historical conditions of text
production are contingent and unique, and 2) That the interpreter, who is aware of this, will be able to fully understand ancient sources by clarifying such presuppositions. But historical relativism on the one hand and hermeneutical optimism on the other hand do not match very well and Gadamer was heavily criticized for this and other inconsistencies in his work (especially by Hans Albert).

The critical-theory approach to understanding, as it is represented by Apel and Habermas (following Marcuse and Adorno), aims at a better, more egalitarian and more satisfying social life. One step to attain this goal is supposed to be a better understanding of each other. This, however, was thought to be achieved by a critical hermeneutics and symmetrical communication (i.e., no asymmetry in power, status, authority etc., among communicants).

The phenomenological and reception-aesthetics approach in the line of Husserl, Ingarden, Iser, and Jauß appears to be a radical reduction of hermeneutics to the reader's or recipient's perspective and to the psychological dimensions of the reading process. The author and her/his intentions and meanings are marginalized and the construction of meaning by readers (in past and present) becomes the central aspect. However, this approach only seemingly answers the question of the proper meaning of texts. Historical (collections of) documents of reading are, without any doubt, interesting material. But, recalling Schleiermacher, we must realize that these readings are at best lucky guesses. And, remembering Gadamer, we have to consider the historical relativity of these readings, too. Altogether, this means that the basic hermeneutical problem of understanding another person or her/his utterances is multiplied by reception aesthetics, instead of being solved.

One of the latest developments, deconstructionism, celebrates a simple sign-theoretical insight, namely, that meaning of a sign presupposes the difference between signs and the difference between sign and designation. Because of these differences, however, Jacques Derrida's sign philosophy ends up with the assertion that an understanding of signs must be absolutely impossible. In this respect Derrida's position meets the latest developments of German systems-philosophy, created by the theoretical sociologist Niklas Luhmann. From his point of view, successful communication is improbable because of the closure and operational autonomy of the involved systems (i.e., the difference between consciousness and communication). Positions like these mark the negative pole of a scale running from impossibility (e.g., post-modern positions) and several degrees of probability (e.g., socio-psychological positions and hermeneutics) towards self-evidence of understanding (naive everyday hermeneutics).

Summing up this brief overview we may state that after Schleiermacher hermeneutics developed into two alternate directions: the psychological and the historiographical approaches to understanding, the only exception being Heidegger's existential-ontological approach. To put it bluntly, the communicative problem hermeneutics once was invented to solve was no longer
treated in its full complexity by scholars after Schleiermacher. Instead, it was reduced to, or transformed into, a psychology of reading and a history of text-production and reception. These frames of thinking paved the way for the more and more independent development of the two branches of the study of understanding, the psychological and the historical approaches. While the former moved closer and closer to psychology, cognition theory, and artificial intelligence research (i.e., the information-processing paradigm), it not only generated a large number of models and theories of text production, perception, and reception but also produced a new discipline, that of psycho-linguistics. This could hardly be explained without the fundamental idea of understanding as a mental and intellectual operation. At the same time, the divergence of the two branches of research in understanding reached its peak at this stage of development.

3. The Information-Processing Approach to Understanding

The following presents only a brief characterization of what I designate here as the "information-processing approach." One of the most significant features of text-processing approaches is, by and large, the avoidance of the term "understanding." Instead, scholars generally employ the terms "comprehension" and "processing." One may speculate that these concepts are taken as substitutes for "understanding" because of their different (i.e., non-hermeneutical) connotations. While "understanding" is supposed to be an object of thinking for philosophers, philologists, and literary scholars, terms such as "comprehension" and "information processing" promise to designate objects of inquiry, i.e., of scientific research done by psychologists, linguists, neuroscientists, etc. This terminological demarcation not only indicates a differentiation of the concept of understanding but different paradigms of research in understanding.

Surprisingly, one of the most important representatives of the comprehension approaches may be Kant, who was the first to introduce the term "schema" (Schemate) for mental or cognitive structures (scenes) which let things appear in our perception (on the stage of consciousness) as they appear. Later, Ebbinghaus introduced the idea of an active, creative memory, while Bartlett investigated the constructive nature of remembering, and Miller explored the breadth and functioning of working memory and reported his findings in his famous "Magical Number 7" article. Minsky, Winograd, Rumelhart, Lindsay, Norman, Schank, Kintsch, Van Dijk, Johnson-Laird, and many others developed models of semantic memory, the concepts of frames and scripts, propositional representations of discourse, story grammars, the concept of macrostructures, the theory of mental models, etc. The whole enterprise was to work out theories, models, and machines which conceptualize, represent, or generate what human information processors do, starting from sensory perceptions and ending up with
related behavioral outputs.

Our current state of affairs may be summed up as follows: Information processing is viewed as an interactive process between e.g., text and reader:

— This process is directed by top-down and bottom-up operations;
— Information processing requires an organized multidimensional knowledge base which is supposed to be kept in memory (short-term and long-term memory);
— As a cognitive process information processing is generative, constructive and creative, and synthetical (Neisser) rather than analytical or reconstructive;
— Information processing is a hierarchical and sequential process tending towards the creation of coherent and subjectively satisfying or appropriate structures. At the same time this process shows some tolerance for ambiguities and inconsistencies;
— Information processing is socially contextualized or embedded. That is to say, there is some impact of social and situational factors on cognitive operation;
— The principles of information processing nevertheless remain psychological or neuro-physiological principles.

Summing up these aspects, one may conclude that from the information processing point of view, understanding is conceptualized as a certain type of cognitive operation or process associated with conceptual coherence and problem solving effects (see Hörmann; Groeben; Schmidt). From a socio-psychological perspective, there is no need to reduce the phenomena of understanding to a certain kind of cognitive activity.

4. A Constructivist Concept of Understanding

As a motto for the following considerations I take a piece from Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations* § 154: "Don’t think of understanding as a ‘mental process’ because this is the speech that confuses you" (my translation). As cognitively autonomous, self-referential, self-maintaining, and self-regulating systems, human individuals operate within their personal frames of sensory-motor-coordinations, on the basis of their personal experiences, knowledge, and abilities. Each individual cognitively constructs the concepts, schemata, and behavioral patterns functioning as the building blocks of the world she or he experiences (just by employing these operables and operations). Each individual performs her/his behaviour on the ground of her/his so far developed cognitive inventory, with respect to personal values and attitudes as well as personal needs, motivations, goals, wishes, or aims.

Communication is no exception from these general constraints. In communicating, the subject tries to attain her/his personal goals by performing
sequences of verbal (and non-verbal) behaviour or by treating others with vocal noises and other overt behaviour (like gestures and touches), respectively. Vocal action (i.e., goal-related vocal behaviour) is successful when the actor observes the desired or intended effects. If we "translate" this into the semantics of understanding we may say that the communicator can mean something with his/her utterances only with regard to some related expectations, wishes, or intentions. The meaning of the utterances, therefore, can be nothing else than the communicative expectations held by the communicator. Only if these expectations match with the observed effects of an action, is the actor/communicator able to state that the recipient or addressee did understand.

It is important to realize that the communicator is the only instance to decide whether the communicative expectations are met or not. This is to say that only the communicator is able to decide about the understanding of the partner. Understanding, thus, turns out to be an ascription or an attribution attached to a patient (a listener, reader, or viewer) who meets the (communicative) intentions of an actor (speaker, writer, or performer). In fact, this general relationship is the very basis of an apparent ambiguity of the concept of understanding, namely, the understanding of others (as actors), the understanding of behaviour (as action), the understanding of language (as verbal action), and the understanding of nature (objects, events, situations, facts as action-like process elements or effects). The close connection between these different kinds of understanding and their common roots in human interaction can hardly be overlooked.

To go one step further, we may now realize that the final attribution of understanding is — in principle and actually in the early stages of ontogenesis — irrelevant for the recipient. The addressee synthesizes her/his behaviour autonomously with respect to her/his own cognitive resources, moods, needs, and motives. And because the communicative expectations of the communicator are not available for or accessible to the recipient she/he cannot decide on her/his understanding. Communicative experiences (active and passive) gathered over the years of ontogenetic cognitive development teach people to employ hypotheses about the communicators intentions. Such hypotheses, then, guide the synthesis of behaviour which may be — with a certain probability — expected, adequate, appropriate, or right. At the same time, however, these hypotheses allow for a self-attribution of understanding. In the end, and under certain political and legal conditions (e.g., democracy, powerful individualism, personal rights, distribution of power, free expression of opinion, weakening of the importance of canons and canonized readings of important texts, etc.) this may give rise to immunisations from communicative demands — in conversation, education, interpretation — and, thereby, cause serious problems for interpersonal relations, teaching, and learning. People who immunize themselves against communicative demands no longer feel obliged to listen or try to modify or to extend their cognitive inventory by learning. They simply ascribe understanding to themselves
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independently from any feedback by a communicator.

The instances of understanding in human interaction and communication are socially and emotionally emphasised because understanding means success for both, the actor/speaker and the recipient. The speaker realises her/his communicative goals while the recipient is rewarded with praise, attention, positive emotional feedback, or other positive experiences. The most important effect of this twofold emphasis is the reinforcement and social coding (i.e., conventionalization) of the respective actions.

Putting the above assumptions together, we reach a very clearcut and demystified concept of understanding: "Understanding" means "to meet the interactive / communicative expectations of a communicator" (see Rusch 1983, 1986, 1992).

5. Conclusion: Comprehension and Understanding of Literature

The perspective outlined above opens up some interesting consequences: Understanding must not be viewed as a mental or psychic process but can be taken as an attribution assigned to a recipient by a communicator. The "mental nature" of understanding, however, is lost. What we gain instead is an observation-based attribute or ascription, a predicate rather than a process. Thus, the essence of Wittgenstein’s recommendation and understanding becomes demystified from this point of view. No fusing of mental horizons is necessary for an explanation of understanding, there is no need for a general human "Geist" to explain the success of communicative efforts. And there is no need for a special cognitive process or ability to be identified as understanding. The hermeneutic concepts of understanding turn out to be ad hoc hypotheses for the explanation of the phenomenon of understanding in human interaction and for the legitimation of authority claimed by the administrators of meaning and sense (e.g., interpreters of all kinds of texts, legal, aesthetical, scientific, religious, etc.) for their exceptional and ingenious understanding abilities.

Understanding can only be assigned as an attribute by an interactor or communicator (e.g., instructor, speaker, writer, etc.). Only a communicator has access to the criteria for a decision about understanding (i.e., her/his own intentions, goals, expectations). There is no possible other origin or source of criteria of understanding than the communicator’s intentions, and no primacy of other criteria outside the communicator’s frame of action.

Whatever cognitive procedure may have driven a recipient to perform a certain behaviour which then led the communicator (observing the behaviour) to the attribution of understanding, it is not essential for this attribution. However, the problem is that this is just the other way around! The attribution of understanding qualifies a certain observed behaviour in the first place and only in this way become the underlying cognitive processes or operations prominent. This raises
the question of the primacy of internal (and introspective) and external (and extraspective) qualifications of cognitive processes or mental operations. Possibly, in the end, there is no relevant difference, because the concepts and description strategies used for introspection have been cognitively generated (i.e., constructed) under interactive and communicative pressure during socialization and language acquisition. Thus, the description of the inner world does not follow any other rules than the description of anything else, inside out. At the same time, the behavioral solutions generated by the subjects under social and communicative pressure are cognitively generated and, therefore, correspond to the rules, patterns, and principles of cognition and neurophysiological functioning. This rationality, however, is imposed upon the subjects' view of the external world, outside in.

Therefore, the common primacy of psychology in studying phenomena of understanding becomes questionable. Understanding, though, turns out to function as a means for a kind of social impregnation and control of cognition. The establishment of cognitive concepts and cognitive styles of operation reinforced by attributions of understanding represents a selection out of a subject's potential of cognitive performance. Only those cognitions are reinforced which allow for the synthesis of socially appropriate behaviour, the others are inhibited and — in the long run — erased.

One may thus conclude that there is no essential, operational, and psychologically relevant difference between understanding and not-understanding. And, furthermore, we may realize the irrelevance of the question whether those who understand have the same or something similar or equal in their minds or perform equal cognitive operations. As the attribution of understanding rests upon the observation of behaviour, a minimal supposition will do, that of functional equivalence. As long as internal structures and processes of any kind whatsoever generate recurrent and mutually qualifiable behaviour, the social interaction and communication will keep running.

From a subject's point of view and with regard to the "natural" functioning of cognitive systems, the generation of something like miscognitions, dysfunctional operations, nonsense, or incoherence is impossible. Only an ex-post view of performed actions and the respective consequences may realize the inefficiency, dysfunctionality, and nonsensicality of that action with respect to its circumstances and intentions. The cognitive routines and procedures underlying behaviour are performed within the frame of a subject's cognitive functioning and inventory, and — primarily — without regard to the question whether someone will ascribe understanding after having observed the respective action. The well-known, seemingly "internal" criteria for understanding (e.g., consonance, balance, coherence, consistency, etc.), therefore, seem to have part of their roots in interaction. They become processing and structural qualifiers after a subject has been driven to create cognitive concepts, schemata, frames, scripts, and the like
under interactive and communicative pressure. The cognitive building blocks
generated so far together with their processing features (e.g., the experience of
running certain cognitive routines, performing certain cognitive operations)
become the measures for sense, balance, coherence, and consistency.

The cognitive-social mechanism of understanding (i.e., the interplay of
cognitive and social processes in actor/patient or communicator/communicant
interaction) is a precondition of the development of natural languages, not vice
versa. The interplay of mutual observation and related action is the motor of the
behavioral and observational adjustments of the participating subjects. In this
sense, the mechanism of understanding may be taken as a fundamental cognitive-
social tool. This view seems to be quite close to Heidegger's existentialist
perspective.

Understanding requires asymmetrical relations in interaction and com-
munication. The minimal necessary asymmetry is always guaranteed by the
cognitive autonomy of the participating subjects and by the inaccessibility of the
intentions of the other. Therefore, Apel's and Habermas's idea of an ideal
communicative society is impossible because it is grounded on non-empirical
assumptions about the constraints of understanding.

As far as the ascription of understanding is necessarily bound to the evaluation
of observed overt behaviour, the analysis of understanding has to cope with data
from such observations. For the understanding of verbal utterances (spoken or
written), the responding behaviour has to be evaluated. Behaviour responding to
verbal impact can either be verbal or non-verbal (e.g., the act of doing what one
was asked to do). Verbal response generally has to be evaluable as a paraphrase,
a metatextual description, or a statement representing ideas of the
listener which fit into the speaker's thematic frame and the logical structure
of the discourse. This is the very nature of conversation as it is taught to children at school and
at home.

Because verbal response is the major database for the evaluation of understand-
ing of, for instance, abstract, aesthetical, and literary issues, all techniques
providing evaluators with verbal data must be regarded as useful for the study
of understanding. Taking into account the Piagetian concept of the interiorization
of overt motor activity, which then allows for a kind of inner talk, voiceless
language use in thinking instead of speaking aloud, we must consider the think-
a loud technique as the most important tool for the study of understanding (see
Trabasso in this volume). Thus, we must confront the idea that there is no
understanding at the level of cognitive processing as long as there is no self-
attribution of understanding. This makes things more complicated: The self-
attribution of understanding allows for a special action or conscious operation.
This operation includes the production of those kinds of responses which — from
the point of view of the respective subject — are valid indicators of understand-
ing. This means testing the understanding hypothesis against criteria learned
during the acquisition of natural language and other cultural techniques and
conventions. What we have here is a kind of mental or inner simulation of the interactive and communicative procedures usually employed in real interaction and communication. This again makes a strong argument for the think-aloud technique as a tool of research into the operations for understanding. At the same time, it is clear that this technique does not provide us with deep views into the brain but allows for eliciting the performance of conscious cognitive operations.

The concept of understanding presented here is very closely related to face-to-face communication which is regarded as the "natural" ontogenetic basis for the development of all interactive and communicative skills. This also holds for the most sophisticated and most recent developments in communication technology, e.g., the internet and cyberspace. Here we have the most advanced technological solutions for very basic communicative requirements: immediate feedback or response in written communication and the virtual presence of partners for quasi-face-to-face-interaction and communication beyond certain temporal and spatial limits.

There is no understanding of written or printed text unless there is attribution or confirmation of understanding by the author. This is to say that, for instance, literature cannot be understood at all, if no literary author is able or willing to feed back confirmation to her/his readers. That is the reason why other authorities (e.g., teachers, interpreters, commentators, scholars etc.) have entered the scene and taken over the role of the authors as authorities in understanding. Thus, not only important pieces of literature were canonized but also certain readings of literary texts as they were proposed by these authorities. Finally, these different ways of reading literature and the different approaches and "methods" of interpretation became methodological standards in literary studies.

Understanding literature is either a matter of negotiation and argument among readers about the plausibility, the transparency, the soundness, and attractiveness of readings (i.e., the production of sociable readings, also in scholarly discussions) or a matter of indoctrination (i.e., the teaching of the "right" readings).

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Introduction

Computers were once believed to be number-crunching machines; but for most of us it is their ability to create worlds and process words that have made them into a nearly indispensable part of life. If computers are everywhere, it is because they have grown into what Jacques Leslie has called "poetry machines." As their simulated worlds and their digitized texts took over our lives, new words have invaded our vocabulary. Foremost among them is the term "virtual," especially when appended to "reality." Interest in the term has been spurred by the widely publicized technology of Virtual Reality (VR): creating a three-dimensional, multi-media display that gives the illusion of being real. In the language of the media, everything associated with computers tends to be labelled virtual. We hear about virtual romances and friendships, virtual universities (with on-line courses), and even virtual campaigns (which simply means that the candidates have a home page on the Internet). Fanned by the rhetoric of the media, the popular imagination associates the Internet to a virtual reality, despite the fact that many of us use the Net to do the business of the real world, such as accessing information, communicating, etc.

While the concept of the virtual dates back to the Middle Ages and scholastic philosophy, it has acquired a narrow technical meaning in computer science. The concept of "virtual machine" refers to the fact that users do not interact with the computer on the level of machine language — that is, with instructions coded in zeroes and ones — but in a higher-level language which must be translated into instructions the actual machine can understand. Through a metonymic transfer, "virtual" has come to describe not just certain constructs used in computer science but the entire field of electronic technology and many or most of its uses.

The more we expand the scope of the term virtual, the more it loses its semantic substance, and the less interesting it becomes. There are dead metaphors, but virtual is well on its way to becoming a dead metonymy. In the present article, I hope to rescue the term from the automatism of current usage, by exploring its potential for a theory of text in general and a theory of electronic textuality in particular. In the course of this inquiry, I propose to extend the concept into that of virtual reality, and examine what text theory can
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learn from VR technology.

2. Defining the Virtual

I will begin with two definitions: one of VR, the other of the philosophical concept of virtuality. I borrow my definition of VR from Pimentel and Texeira: "In general, the term virtual reality refers to an immersive, interactive experience generated by a computer" (11). While "computer generated" accounts for the non-physical — that is, non-real — character of the data, "immersive" and "interactive" explain what makes the computer-assisted experience an experience of reality. To apprehend a world as real is to feel surrounded by it, to be able to interact physically with it, and to have the power to modify this environment.

As for the "virtual" in Virtual Reality, etymology tells us that the term comes from the Latin *virtus* (strength, manliness, virtue), which gave to scholastic Latin the philosophical concept of "virtus" as force or power, a sense which survives today in the expression "by virtue of." In medieval Latin, *virtualis* designates the potential, what is in the power (*virtus*) of the force. The classical example of virtuality is the presence of the oak in the acorn. As this example shows, in scholastic philosophy actual and virtual exist in a dialectical relation rather than in one of radical opposition: the virtual is not that which is deprived of existence, but that which possesses the potential, or force of developing into actual existence. Later uses of the term, beginning in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, turn this dialectical relation to actual into a binary opposition: the virtual becomes the fictive and the non-existent. This sense is activated in the optical use of the term. According to *Webster’s Dictionary*, a virtual image (such as a reflection in a mirror) is one made of virtual foci, that is, of points "from which divergent rays of light seem to emanate but do not actually do so." Modern uses of virtual exploit the idea of fake and illusion inherent to the mirror image. A virtual dictator is a ruler functioning as dictator, without being officially recognized as such. In this sense, the virtual is perceived as both the equal of the real and as its inferior. Even though it is "as good as" the real thing, it suffers from a lack of legitimacy that prevents it from completely displacing the real.

As we see from these lexical definitions, the term *virtual* encapsulates two distinct concepts: the largely negative idea of the fake, illusionary, non-existent — which reminds us of Jean Baudrillard’s notion of the hyperreal — and the overwhelmingly positive idea of the potential, which connotes productivity, openness, and diversity. This second idea has been developed by Pierre Lévy, an eminent French theorist of computer culture. Lévy writes: "Rigorously defined, the virtual has few affinities with the false, the illusory, the imaginary. The virtual is not at all the opposite of the real. It is, on the contrary, a powerful and productive mode of being, a mode that gives free rein to creative processes" (10;
my translation; see also Lévy 1987). Lévy’s concept of the virtual — which reflects the influence of Deleuze — does not enter into a static opposition to real but into a dynamic relation to actual. The pair virtual/actual is characterized by the following features:

1) The relation of the virtual to the actual is one-to-many. There is no limit on the number of possible actualizations of a virtual entity;

2) The passage from the virtual to the actual involves transformation, and is, therefore, irreversible: "Actualization is an event, in the strong sense of the term" (Lévy 1995, 135).

3) The virtual is not anchored in space and time. Actualization is the passage from a state of timelessness and deterritorialization to an existence rooted in a here and now. It is an event of contextualization.

4) The virtual is an inexhaustible resource. Using it does not lead to its depletion.

An example of virtual entity is the design of a tool. Its purpose is to be actualized through the building of concrete tools. Manufacturing the tool requires the solution of material problems, and the finished tool cannot be turned back into an idea. An infinite number of slightly different tools can be built from the design, and the design does not wear out from being implemented.

These properties underscore the essential role of the virtual in the creative process. The importance of Lévy’s treatment of virtuality does not merely reside in its insistence on the dynamic nature of actualization, but also in its conception of creativity as a two-way process involving both a phase of actualization and a phase of virtualization. While actualization is the invention of a concrete solution to answer a need, virtualization is a return from the solution to a nexus of problems that leads to a generalization or an improvement of the solution. This concept of virtualization is an extremely powerful one. It involves any mental operation leading from the here-and-now, the singular, the usable once-and-for-all, and the solidly embodied to the timeless, abstract, general, versatile, repeatable, ubiquitous, immaterial, and morphologically fluid. For Lévy, virtualization is at the same time a timeless operation responsible for all of human culture, and a trademark of the contemporary Zeitgeist. In our dealing with the virtual we are doing what mankind has always done, only more powerfully, consciously, and systematically. The stamp of late twentieth-century culture is its tendency to virtualize the nonvirtual, and to virtualize the already virtual.

The processes of virtualization and actualization are illustrated by the case of language. Words, or more specifically, nouns, are not names rigidly linked to singular objects, but versatile designators which can be used to refer to any of the members of a specific set. The creation of a system of reusable linguistic types — or langue — out of a particular experience of the world is a virtualizing process of generalization and conceptualization. Conversely, the use of the
system through individual acts of parole is an actualization that turns the types into concrete tokens of slightly variable phonic or graphic substance. Through this actualization, language is contextualized and bound to a spatially and temporally determined referent.

3. Textual Virtuality as Potentiality

As an object made of language, the text participates in the dialectics of virtuality and actuality inherent in its medium. Its creation is the result of an actualization of thought. The act of writing taps into a reservoir of ideas, memories, and linguistic material which contain potentially an infinite number of texts. These resources are textualized through operations of selection, association, and linearization which ought to result — according to traditional canons — into a structured whole. But if the text is the product of an act of actualization, it reverts to a virtual mode of existence as soon as the act of writing is over. It is made of a collection of linguistic signs, that is, of types, that exists outside time and space, independently of any particular support. *Pride and Prejudice* is the same text, whether we read it in a handwritten manuscript, a paperback edition, or a leather-bound volume.

The actualization of the text does not merely concern its embodiment as a physical object. It is, above all, the event of translating its signs into a mental representation. From the point of view of the reader, a text is like a musical score waiting to be performed; every act of reading constructs the text and actualizes its world in a different way.

If the text is a matrix of potential worlds, interpretations, uses, and experiences, it is always already a virtual object. The impact of electronic technology on the ontology of the text is not to have produced the virtual text itself, but to have elevated its inherent virtuality to a higher power. Virtuality, as Lévy defines it for instance, is the singular that gives rise to the many. The printed text produces many readings, but it is always the same words and the same reading protocol that are offered to the reader. An additional level of virtuality is created when the material display of the text presents a renewable quality. In a traditional text, we have two levels: 1) Text as collection of signs written by author and 2) Text as constructed (mentally) by reader. The object of level 1 contains potentially many objects of level 2. In a virtualized text, there are three levels: 1) Text as written or "engineered" by the author; 2) Text as presented and/or displayed to the reader; and 3) Text as constructed (mentally) by the reader.

One object of level 1 generates many objects of level 2, which in turn contain potentially many objects of level 3. The additional level is not exclusive to electronic texts. Classical print examples of second-order virtuality are, for example, Julio Cortázar's "Hopscotch" — which can be read according to several reading protocols or Raymond Queneau's *Cent mille milliards de poèmes*, which
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are generated by combining the lines of fourteen different sonnets. But as the case of hypertext demonstrates, the creation of the additional level of virtuality is greatly facilitated by the electronic medium. In a hypertextual system, the reader can determine the sequential order of his reading by clicking on certain words, and causing the system to display the textual fragments which are electronically linked to the selected elements. A standard comparison assimilates the reading of hypertext to choosing an itinerary in a garden of forking paths, usually without a map of the network. As a virtualization of the already virtual, hypertext is thus truly a hyper-text, a self-referential reflection of the virtual nature of textuality.

The self-modifying quality that results in an additional level of virtuality is not necessarily obtained through interactivity. In the visual arts, we have mechanized sculptures that move like machines, sculptures that chime in the wind, and structures that reflect the light of the sun at different times of the day. All of these artworks present the "many-in-one" quality of the virtualized work. In the textual domain, there are so-called "textual machines" that use aleatory procedures to produce an ever-changing display. In the electronic poetry of John Cayley, for instance, the "text" written by the author is actually a program that selects words from a database through random procedures, subjects them to transformations, and displays them on a screen or on the walls of a room that surrounds the reader. The text changes all the time, by itself, and no two runs produce the same display of signs.

Even when the renewal of the text is obtained through interactive mechanisms, as in hypertext, randomness plays an important role in the process. There is a significant difference between the interactivity of hypertext and of VR systems. In VR, the user can usually foresee the result of his/her actions. For instance, she/he can touch a can of yellow paint, then touch the carpet of a virtual living-room display, and the carpet turns yellow. But in most literary forms of hypertext the choices are largely blind. In Michael Joyce's Afternoon, we are told that there are "words that yield," words that have links and branches attached to them, and others that simply continue the main line of the text. The words that yield are not physically marked, and there is really no way for the reader to detect them. Even when one clicks on a word that yields, there is no way to predict what exactly the word will yield. Hypertext theorists claim that interactivity reduces the gap between reader and writer, but the reader's contribution to the production of the text of level 2 is mostly that of an agent of chance.

Empowerment and active participation in the creative process can only take place if the reader actually knows what she/he is doing. Norman Holland has argued that the postmodern ideal of reader participation is better fulfilled in the well known ELIZA program than in hypertext. ELIZA, it will be remembered, is an AI program dating back to the 1960s, in which the user pursues a
conversation with a psychiatrist simulated by the computer. The computer understood little of the user's input, but it was able to fake intelligence by recycling the phrases of the user, as we all do when we do not really understand an intellectual discussion. In the ELIZA program, the computer's replies were just coherent enough for the user to suspend disbelief and pretend to be talking to a competent psychotherapist. If we regard the exchange between the user and computer as a text, then the user came much closer to being a co-author than in hypertext fiction. What is not guaranteed, of course, is that the dialogue will present an aesthetic dimension. Holland's intent is not to promote ELIZA as artwork, but to make the point that there cannot be a significant empowerment of the reader without a freedom to use language.

There is research being currently done by Brenda Laurel in Silicon Valley and by Joseph Bates at Carnegie Mellon University toward a form of VR known as Interactive Drama in which the user will be placed in the middle of a computer-generated setting and participates verbally in a dramatic action with other characters simulated by Artificial Intelligence. In Interactive Drama, as Bates envisions it, "the interactor is choosing what to do, say, and think [!] at all times" (Kelso et al. 2). The somewhat utopian goal of the developers of Interactive Drama is to abolish the difference between author, spectator, actor, and character. As Brenda Laurel writes: "The users of such a system are like audience members who can march up onto the stage and become various characters, altering the action by what they say and do in their roles" (16).

Until Interactive Drama is perfected, the most meaningful form of interactivity will be realized in hypertextual systems in which the user can foresee the result of selecting a path in the network. These systems are usually nonfictional. In the World Wide Web, for instance, the highlighted, link-activating keywords capture the topic of the text to be retrieved and enable the reader to customize the output to her own needs. In Lévy's words, the screen becomes a new "reading machine, the site where a reserve of potential information is realized here and now for a singular reader through an act of selection" (1995, 39; my translation). As the user of the electronic reading machine retrieves, cuts, pastes, links, and saves, she/he regards text less as a unified work to be experienced in its a totality than as a resource that can be scooped up by the screenful. Electronic technology has not invented the concept of text-as-resource, but it has certainly contributed to the current expansion of this approach to reading. In a formula that loses a lot in translation, Lévy writes: "Il y a maintenant du texte, comme on dit de l'eau et du sable" ("There is now 'text,' as there is sand and water") (1995, 46). If text is a mass substance, rather than a discrete object, there is no need to read it in its totality. Readers of texts produced by the electronic reading machine will therefore be more inclined to graze at the surface of texts than to immerse themselves in a textual world or to probe the mind of an author. Speaking on behalf of such readers, Lévy writes: "I am not interested in what an elusive author put into the text. What I ask of the text is to make me think, here and
now. The virtuality of the text nourishes my acting intelligence" (1995, 47; my translation). The attitude promoted by the electronic reading machine is no longer "what should I do with texts" but "what can I do with them." While the text as work is actualized through the reader's act of imagination or conceptualization, the text-as-resource remains in a virtual state until the thought it nourishes is itself actualized in the reader's personal writing or practical projects. But if the text-as-resource is better suited than the text as work to turn readers into writers, it also promotes a utilitarian mode of reading that links fulfilment to the discovery of useful materials. The concern "what can I do with text" conflicts with the aesthetic ideal of the text as an end in itself. Moreover, if the interactive mechanisms enable readers to zoom in on the material they are looking for, the serendipitous aspect of reading will disappear, and this will inhibit the playful attitude and the openness to the unexpected that plays such a major role in the phenomenology of reading for pleasure. This is why non-random interactivity is primarily found in informational databases such as on-line help files or in navigation tools for the World Wide Web such as the program Netscape.

4. Textual Virtuality as Fake

Let us now return to the other meaning of "virtual" — the non-real, the fake, the optical illusion. It is in this sense of the word that the technology of simulating three-dimensional environments has been called "Virtual Reality." The worlds displayed by VR technology are virtual because they create the impression of the real, because they invite the user to suspend her/his disbelief in their material existence. Ever since it was coined in the early nineteenth century by Coleridge, this expression "suspension of disbelief" has been a cornerstone of literary theory, more particularly of the theory of fictionality. Developers of VR have often exploited the analogy with the literary domain: "As [users] enter the virtual world, their depth of engagement gradually meanders away from here until they cross the threshold of involvement. Now they are absorbed in the virtual world, similar to being in an engrossing book. (Pimentel and Texeira 151) and "The question is not whether the created world is as real as the physical world, but whether the created world is real enough for you to suspend your disbelief for a period of time. This is the same mental shift that happens when you get wrapped up in a good novel or become absorbed in playing a computer game" (Pimentel and Texeira 15).

If developers of VR compare their technology to being caught up in a story, literary theorists could profitably return the favor by regarding the text as a virtual reality. This would mean looking through the signs toward their imaginary referents, rather than focusing on the signifiers and treating language as an opaque object. Even before the term of virtual reality became fashionable, this approach has been taken by literary theorists inspired by the philosophical concepts of possible world, such as Umberto Eco, Thomas Pavel, or Lubomir
Doležel. The possible worlds approach to fiction relies on a semantic model including a plurality of worlds, and regarding one of these worlds as the one and only actual world. The opposition between the actual world and the merely possible worlds can be characterized in two ways: absolutely or relatively. In absolute terms, the actual world exists independently of the human mind, while the merely possible ones are the products of mental activities such as dreaming, wishing, forming hypotheses, imagining, writing and reading fictions, and now donning the goggles and helmets of VR technology. In a relative characterization, "actual" is an indexical predicate. The actual world is the world from which I speak and in which I am immersed, while the non-actual possible worlds are those I look at from the outside. These worlds are actual from the point of view of their inhabitants.

Among the modes of apprehension that enable us to contemplate non-actual possible worlds, some function as space-travel vehicles and others as telescopes. In the telescope mode — represented by expressing wishes or forming conjectures about what might have been — consciousness remains anchored in its native reality, and possible worlds are contemplated from the outside. In the space-travel mode — represented by fiction and VR technology — consciousness relocates itself to another world, and recenters the universe around this virtual reality. This gesture of recentering involves no illusion, no forgetting of what constitutes the reader’s native reality. The reader of a fiction knows that the world displayed by and in the text is virtual, a product of language, but she/he pretends that there is an independently existing reality serving as a referent to the narrator’s declarations.

Approaching fiction as a virtual reality, rather than as a system of signs, should lead to an emphasis on the immersive dimension of the reading experience. In VR, immersion is a function of the relation between the user’s body and the computer-generated environment. Maurice Merleau-Ponty writes that "to be a body, is to be tied to a certain world; our body is not primarily in space, it is of it" (148). VR technology highlights this mutual implication between the body and its environment by generating the virtual world in response to physical gestures. As the user turns her head and alters her perspective, a new scene will be computed as a function of the new position of the channels of perception. The sense of immersion is heightened by the possibility of altering the virtual world by grabbing and manipulating objects. As the story of Saint Thomas demonstrates, the sense of touch is second to none in providing a sense of reality. Touching enables us to experience objects in their materiality, and materiality offers a resistance which is commonly regarded as a proof of autonomous existence.

In the phenomenology of reading, immersion is the ability to produce what Kendall Walton has called a mental simulation of the fictional world (1990). This simulation presents two dimensions: the spatial sense of being on the scene, of witnessing the narrated events, and the temporal experience of being caught in
the suspense of the plot. Many authors have given thoughts to the phenomenon, either in their theoretical writings, or directly in their fiction. Joseph Conrad advocates the participation of an extended sensorium in the fictional world: "My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel — it is, before all, to make you see" ("Preface" to The Nigger of the "Narcissus" xxvi). This involvement of many senses is one of the primary goals of VR technology. Charlotte Brontë dramatizes immersion by inviting the reader to perform physical actions in the fictional world: "You shall see them, reader. Step into this neat garden-house on the skirts of Whinbury, walk forward in the little parlour — they are there at dinner... You and I will join the party, see what is to be seen, and hear what is to be heard" (Shirley 9). In this passage, Brontë anticipates the VR experience by describing immersion as the imaginative presence of a physical world to a physical body.

The immersive approach is represented, under various names, by a number of studies in the phenomenology of reading. For Kendall Walton, the reader of fiction engages in a game of make-believe, through which he/she becomes a member of the fictional world, and achieves an emotional involvement with the characters and their actions (forthcoming). This engagement can lead to physical reactions, such as crying, which would be inconceivable if the characters were not regarded as flesh-and-blood human beings. Victor Nell, a cognitive psychologist, titles his book on the phenomenology of reading for pleasure Lost in a Book. Richard Gerrig, another psychologist, proposes a phenomenology of reading based on two metaphors, both supported by concrete reader-text experiments: the metaphors of transportation and of performance. By transportation, Gerrig means an experience of moving away from the immediate physical environment and relocating oneself in the fictional world. Performance is the activity of participating in the fictional world "like an actor on a stage." In order to achieve participation, readers must "use their own experience of the world to bridge gaps in the text"; "bring both facts and emotions to bear on the construction of the world of the text"; and "give substance to the psychological life of characters" like "actors performing roles" (17).

5. Interactivity, Immersion, and the Phenomenology of Reading

If we go back to the definitions with which I have opened my discussion, we observe a parallelism between the virtual as fake and the experience of immersion, and between the virtual as potential and the feature of interactivity. As I have suggested above, the fake interpretation of virtual has generally produced negative connotations and the potential interpretation positive ones. These connotations are reflected in the way literary theory has approached immersion and interactivity. Contemporary literary theory — which, in contrast to the empirical approach, tends to be more prescriptive than descriptive —
praises hypertext and its interactivity as the fulfilment of the postmodern ideal. The subtitle of George Landow's book *Hypertext* is unequivocal about the relationship: *The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology*. Richard Lanham, another theorist of electronic textuality, writes about an "extraordinary convergence" between postmodern doctrine and what can be done with electronic textuality. As Lanham writes: "it is hard not to think that, at the end of the day, electronic text will seem the natural fulfilment of much current literary theory" (130).

The aspects of contemporary literary theory that find their fulfilment in the second-order virtuality of the electronic text hardly need explanation. Think of the open text; meaning as reconfigurable network and as relations between signifiers; reading as "exploding the text" and as endless activity (one never know if one has seen all the lexemes, and travelled all the links of hypertext); intertextuality (in its ambition to link together all the texts produced by mankind, the World Wide Web represents the ultimate hypertextual system); nonlinearity; the death of the author; the empowerment of the reader; and so on.

In the series of oppositions listed below — through which postmodernism distinguishes itself from earlier periods — traditional print texts have been overwhelmingly associated with the left and interactive electronic textuality with the "right" term (in both senses of the word).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linear organization</th>
<th>Spatial organization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authorial authority</td>
<td>Reader freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predetermined meaning</td>
<td>Emergent meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text experienced as depth (immersion)</td>
<td>Text experienced as surface (surfing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centered structure</td>
<td>Decentered structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree structure (hierarchical)</td>
<td>Rhizome (free growth)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top-down design</td>
<td>Bottom-up construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global coherence</td>
<td>Local coherence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal-oriented navigation</td>
<td>Aimless wandering (flâneur/se)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logical thinking</td>
<td>Analogical thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity</td>
<td>Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order</td>
<td>Chaos (self-organizing system)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monologism</td>
<td>Heteroglossia, dialogism, carnivalesque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous progression</td>
<td>Jumps, discontinuity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequellarity</td>
<td>Parallelism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solidity</td>
<td>Fluidity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Text as rhetoric for persuasion</td>
<td>Text as resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Static representation (of the world)</td>
<td>Dynamic simulation (the brain, memory)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The predominance in electronic texts of many of the features on the right
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derives to some extent from the inherent properties of the medium. As is the case with all media, electronic writing facilitates certain operations, favors certain structures, and creates a certain type of writer and reader. But the "extraordinary convergence" of postmodern theory and electronic textuality is mostly owing to the ideological assumptions through which the technology has been theorized. The form, content, and mode of action of currently available specimens of hypertext fiction are as much a reflection of general trends in the avant-garde literary production of our time as they are the product of the properties of the medium itself. Nothing could be more detrimental to the cause of electronic textuality than enrolling it in a war between the left side and the right side of the table. Hypertext theory has too often resorted to an "End of the Book" rhetoric that dooms to extinction the pleasures and modes of thinking associated with the print medium. The features on the left may have dominated literature when the book was the only support of texts, but it is also the texts of the late age of print that have familiarized us with the patterns of the other side. If the resources of the right are accessible to thought elaborated in the print medium, there is no reason why the resources of the left should be banned from the texts of the electronic age. It is only by remaining open to both sides — and perhaps by developing others — that electronic texts can remain faithful to the spirit of the virtual.

In contrast to the enthusiastic reception given to the idea of interactivity, immersion has either been ignored, or dismissed as "dangerous to the health of the mind" by postmodern theory. It shares the negative connotations encountered by the concept of fake. The theme of the danger of immersion has not awaited the advent of the electronic age to be thematized in Western literature. The most celebrated victim is probably Don Quixote. As Cervantes writes: "In short, he so immersed himself in those romances that he spent whole days and nights over his books; and thus with little sleeping and much reading, his brains dried up to such a degree that he lost the use of his reason" (58). More recently, in Julio Cortázar's short story "Continuity of Parks," a reader immersed in a thriller becomes the victim of the narrated murder and pays with his life for the disappearance of the boundary between fiction and reality.

Immersion in a virtual world is viewed by most theorists of postmodernism as a passive subjection to the authority of the world-designer, a subjection exemplified by the entrapment of tourists in the self-enclosed virtual realities of theme parks or vacation resorts. This hostility toward immersion is owing in large part to semiotic considerations. As I have noted above, immersion in a fictional world presupposes the transparency of signs. To experience the textual world as a reality, the reader must look through language toward its imaginary referent. Developers of VR insist on the disappearance of the computer in the VR experience, and VR technology itself has been labelled, with some exaggeration, a "post-symbolic mode of communication." The idea behind this formula is that users interact with the virtual world through physical gestures, rather than by
typing commands in a cumbersome code. In an age that worships signs and regards them as the substance of all realities, this attempt to make the medium invisible is nothing short of heretic. For postmodern theory, signs must be made visible, for their role in the construction of reality to be recognized. A mode of communication that strives toward transparency of the medium bereaves the user of her/his critical faculties. According to Jay Bolter, one of the most important theorists of hypertext, this loss of critical consciousness is the trademark of the VR experience: "But is it obvious that virtual reality cannot in itself sustain intellectual or cultural development. ... The problem is that virtual reality, at least as it is now envisioned, is a medium of percepts rather than signs. It is virtual television" (230) and "What is not appropriate is the absence of semiosis" (231). Bolter's hostility toward immersion is compounded by the fact that immersion is most frequently experienced in popular genres reputed to be nothing more than page turners. As Bolter writes: "Losing oneself in a fictional world is the goal of the naive reader or one who reads as entertainment. It is particularly a feature of genre fiction, such as romance or science fiction" (155). I agree with Bolter that the worlds of the stereotyped texts of popular culture are the most favorable to a "mental simulation" because the reader can bring in more knowledge and sees more expectations fulfilled than in a text cultivating a sense of estrangement. Immersion is much easier when the reader is familiar with the type of fictional world represented by the text. But ease of immersion does not mean that the experience will be worthwhile in the end. Some works are like taking a dip in a hot tub: it is easy to get in, but you cannot stay in very long, and you feel tired once you get out. Others are more like taking a swim in a cool ocean with powerful surf. The environment appears at first hostile, you enter it reluctantly, but once you get wet and trust your body to the waves, you never want to leave. And when you do, you feel refreshed and full of energy. This second type of immersion is what the reader can expect from a work that fulfils the Russian Formalist ideal of art as defamiliarization.

Another reason why contemporary criticism has been so sceptical of immersion may be the association of the experience with the realist novel. This association is regarded as suspect in an intellectual climate characterized by a strong scepticism concerning the possibility of knowing and representing the real. When contemporary literary criticism approaches the case of realism, it is usually to show that it is a period-style, a set of conventions among many others, and that the so-called "realist" novel is no closer to reality than the works of other periods. There is, in fact, nothing more artificial than the nineteenth-century convention of the omniscient, impersonal narrator: we never narrate like that in everyday life because we are human beings, and human beings do not enjoy the gift of omniscience. In a poetics based on the idea of immersion, the realist novel and its techniques would be evaluated not in terms of how close they are to a psychological or social reality, nor in terms of how closely they imitate the ways people actually speak, but in terms of how efficient they are in creating a sense
of the extra-textual existence and unmediated presence of the fictional world. While it is true that immersive techniques have been perfected in the age of literary realism, there is no reason why these techniques should be restricted to the representation of certain types of worlds. The case of surrealistic painting shows that we can as easily be immersed in fantastic worlds as in physically possible ones, given the appropriate techniques of representation.

In defense of immersion, I would like to add that it is by no means the result of a passive attitude on the part of the reader. In contrast to visual modes of representation, language is not an inherently immersive medium. It takes only a few seconds to feel part of the world of a movie or painting, but in a text it takes time and discipline to produce the mental simulation that opens the door to immersion. In contrast to other media, language does not offer data to the senses; this data must be reconstructed by the imagination. For example, the discipline necessary to immersion has been emphasized already by Ignatius de Loyola. In his *Spiritual Exercises*, he urges the reader to experience the scenes depicted in the Bible with all of the senses: first vision, then hearing, touch and smell.

At the simplest level, those practicing the exercise would call to mind the physical setting in which a given event took place, or what Ignatius called "an imaginary representation" of the place: for instance, the road from Bethany to Jerusalem on which Christ travelled toward his passion, the room in which he held his last supper, the garden in which he was betrayed, the house in which Mary his mother waited after the Crucifixion. Within these contexts, said Ignatius, one could move to a sharper picture by adding a sense of hearing: "listen to what is being said by the people on the earth's surface, talking to each other, swearing and blaspheming." Contrast with the words of the three divine persons of the Trinity, and listen to them as they say: "Let us bring about the redemption of mankind." After seeing and listening, one can proceed to involve the rest of the five senses in the act of memory: "Smell the indescribable fragrance and taste the boundless sweetness of the divinity. Touch by kissing and clinging to the places where these persons walk and sit, always trying to profit thereby. (15)

Once the full sensorium is involved in the mental simulation, the believer will be transported to the scene of the sacred events — transported to mythical time, as it were — and experience the presence of the divine. Being caught up in a story may not be an experience of such mystical magnitude, but the techniques are the same, and the difference is mostly a matter of intensity.

If immersion requires reader activity, one may think that intensifying this activity into interactivity would lead to a deepened sense of immersion. This seems to be the case in VR technology. The greater the user's freedom of movements and choice of actions in the virtual environment, the more real this world will appear, and the more immersive the experience. One reason for this mutually enhancing character of immersion and interactivity is that VR is a multi-media experience. The sense of immersion is given by image, sound, and
tactile sensations. Interactivity is added to the experience by coordinating the display with the movements of the user’s body. The physical presence of the body in the virtual environment reinforces the sense of the physical presence of the virtual world. But in the purely textual environment of literature, immersion is not given by the medium. It must be conquered through mental activity. Any attempt to increase this activity into deliberate interactivity leads to a self-consciousness which breaks the delicate balance between constructing the textual world and experiencing it as autonomous reality.

Immersion is further inhibited by the fact that moving through an electronic text involves much more frequent, more extensive, and much less automatic interventions of the reader’s body than turning the pages of a book. In contrast to the VR situation, the body is not internal but external to the fictional world. The distraction is compounded by the perplexity created by the branching system of the interactive text. The constant need to make decisions prevents the concentration necessary to immersive reading. When decisions are made, the reader may be haunted by the possibilities she missed: as Gareth Rees writes in a text posted on the Internet, "I know that when I read [an interactive] story, I want to find out all the consequences of every decision, to read everything that the author wrote, fearing that all the interesting developments is going on in another branch of the story that I didn’t investigate."

Yet, another obstacle to immersion is the fragmented character and apparent discontinuity of most currently available forms of hypertext fiction. The link is a jump, and each act of clicking sends the reader to a new, relatively isolated textual island. It always take time to make oneself at home in a text and to grow roots in the fictional world. In his novel If On a Winter’s Night a Traveller, Italo Calvino allegorizes the difficulty of immersion by embedding in the narrative the beginning of a dozen other novels which are brutally interrupted after a few pages — just as the reader begins to develop a sense of place in the fictional world. While the reader of Calvino’s novel is left stranded at the end of every chapter, the reader of hypertext faces the threat of being uprooted with every clicking action.

By suggesting that interactivity and immersion are inherently more compatible in VR than in literature, I do not wish to promote VR as a superior form of art. For one thing, immersion is not the only source of textual pleasure — and it is not necessarily a guarantee of superior quality, as the case of popular literature suggests. Many readers are willing to trade immersion for a self-reflective stance that exposes the textual nature of the fictional world. The future of hypertext as a viable art form depends on one of two possibilities: either hypertext will become more immersive, or immersion is not necessary to aesthetic satisfaction. The fact that interactivity conflicts with immersion in purely textual communication reminds us that art is an exploitation of the properties of its medium and a compromise between conflicting goals. In VR, immersion is provided by
the sensorial display. In literature, it must be conquered by an active effort of the mind. Literature has to make a choice between immersion and interactivity, or work out a compromise. The challenge is greater than in VR, but the solutions are more varied. In other words, literature owes its richness and diversity to the strictures of its medium.

Bellvue, Colorado

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The presence of so many distinguished scholars at this Vth Biennial Conference of the International Society for the Empirical Study of Literature seems to give a clear answer to the first question of the title of my presentation: Why Empirical Study of Literature? But the contrary equally holds true: Why are we so few, in comparison with other national or international meetings of literary scholars? And how come that so many among us work in disciplines other than literary studies, e.g., psychology, cognitive science, philosophy, education, or sociology?

Perhaps minorities are especially inclined to reflect upon why they are minorities since they are more often than others confronted with demands to defend or legitimize their positions. From the very beginning of the Empirical Study of Literature in the late 1970s, its approach has met with overwhelming opposition. Even today, after it has become an international enterprise, the situation is not very different. In what follows I shall therefore try to describe and analyze the forces behind such opposition by elucidating the pros and cons of the Empirical Study of Literature (ESL) — and I shall do this for the (irrevocably?) last time.

In the first part of my paper I shall classify and describe the types of arguments advanced against the Empirical Studies of Literature as well as the counter-arguments from myself and other members of our association, IGEL. In the second part I shall present the results of an empirical project devoted to finding out which types of arguments can be found in favourable and unfavourable reviews of works in the Empirical Study of Literature.

Let me start with a type of opposition that one might classify as "discourse saturation." The most prominent example is terminology. The quarrel about terms and categories proves to be not at all superficial but rather consequential, because key terms, as we all know, drag along with them the basic conceptual — and I
suppose also emotional — substance of a theory.

As usual, it is a difference which makes a difference. Hence, let us observe what kind of difference management is performed in the battles between proponents of and opponents to, the Empirical Study of Literature.

When in the late 1970s the first papers appeared propagating a new approach to studying literature, this approach was labelled as "empirical" (Empirische Literaturwissenschaft). Thus, a differentia specifica to all the other scholarly approaches was proclaimed: ESL was not like any of them which, hopefully only for the sake of easier argumentation, were simply subsumed under the heading "hermeneutic." The outcome of this rather arbitrary baptism is well known: both sides attacked one another on the basis of precarious definitions or ascribed implications or presuppositions which the respective opponent fiercely rejected. Let us consider the typical ESL opponent's procedure, and let us start with the German speaking academia.

Both the existence and the identity of literary scholarship as part of the humanities since Dilthey have been, and still are, based on certain crucial distinctions which are thought to be self-evident: "Naturwissenschaft" vs. "Geisteswissenschaft," nomothetical vs. idiographical procedures, positivistic vs. hermeneutic approaches. Consequently, for scholars of literature and the humanities, the notions "empirical" and "positivistic" served the purpose of self-identification via negation. Since most literary scholars have had no personal experience of what the "scientists" actually do, the negative semantic connotations of "empirical" and "positivistic" still prevail despite all the revolutionary theoretical and conceptual developments within the sciences. The negative attitude derives also from a rather poor and selective knowledge of the history of philosophy, since "empirical" is confused with "empiricist," "positivistic," or "scientistic" in a rather unsophisticated way and without the necessary historical differentiations (from Hume to Feyerabend). So all these concepts were banned because of their negative emotional connotations.

Steven Tótösy describes a similar situation with reference to the humanities and the study of literature in North America: "In North American literary studies the notion of the empirical is met with more than the usual resistance" (1995, 134). Tótösy then explains that the reason for this can be found in a negative evaluation and current rejection of historical British Empiricism and North American Pragmatism, as it is expressed, for example, by David and Judith Willer in their book with the telling title, Systematic Empiricism: Critique of a Pseudoscience. I quote from this book:

Empiricism (or an empirist system of knowledge) ... when it works, works only with observations of what is and what was. It concludes (since observation is the criterion of knowledge) that what is, is and must be. In the social realm this means that empiricism is inherently conservative. Since its procedures of generating new combinations are through the power of control, its necessary outcome is totalitarian. (16-37)
This evaluation, although of ridiculous stupidity even if we consider the time of its publication (1973), is still — or increasingly? — popular among literary scholars who simply refuse to take any notice of modern ideas of "empirical" research and which strictly distinguish between levels of observation, search for the blind spots of observational procedures, propose a processual interpretation of "facts" and "data," and cultivate a deep-rooted consciousness of contingency, etc. (see in more detail Schmidt 1998).

3.

The bricolage of disciplinary, as well as personal, identity-through-difference-management is of course bound to continue from the level of conceptual semantics to the level of object theory and metatheory. Let me scrutinize but two highly interrelated aspects. ESL — at least in my own version — favours a monistic conception of "theory," thus rejecting the distinction between the humanities and the natural sciences. Instead, to count as theory, an intellectual item must meet the requirement to be an explicit and systematic conceptual framework exclusively designed to serve the purpose of problem solving in academic discourses. This purpose is operationally served by explicit methods whose correct application yields results which — in principle — can be obtained and checked by anyone applying the same procedure. A crucial presupposition of this kind of controlled problem solving through theories and methods is the availability and the correct application of a disciplinary terminology where at least the key terms are explicitly defined.1 This claim by ESL has been widely rejected as excluded by "the very nature" of the subject proper of literary studies: the literary work of art, whose intrinsic irrationality and self-reflexivity allegedly prohibits the application of explicit theories and methods and calls for intuition, creativity, and sensibility instead of rigorous instruments of observation and description.2 In my opinion, this difference is part of the very core of the controversy between empirical and non-empirical approaches. Non-empirical approaches implicitly or explicitly advocate an identity-philosophical conception of literature, i.e., they try to define the true nature of the literary work of art. In

1 G. Pasternack has raised the objection that ESL has failed in developing a specific methodology compatible with its epistemological basis. Since this objection is directed at the constructivist version of ESL, and since an answer to Pasternack is rather complicated, I shall restrict my answer to the argument that what is needed first of all is a convincing constructivistic concept of "empirical" and not a completely new methodology. A first detailed elaboration of such a concept is forthcoming in Schmidt (1998).

2 Together with the reproach of rigidity (or rationality), people often criticize "the language of the ESL," which is considered formalistic, mathematical, boring, uninspired, etc., compared with the stylistic polish of hermeneutic approaches. So here again we encounter an additional instrument in the difference management of both parties: boring vs. entertaining and charming.
other words: they ontologize literature and ascribe to it allegedly intrinsic properties. In the German tradition, for example, this procedure is ultimately rooted in the fact that literary study is the spiritual heir of theology and has, therefore, transformed the biblical concept of the holy text into the concept of the literary (or philosophical, etc.) text. Literary hermeneutics in Germany since the late eighteenth century has been the heir to theological hermeneutics in all respects. From a professional as well as from a psychological point of view I can understand how difficult it must be for a literary scholar brought up in, and practising within, a hermeneutic tradition (in the broadest sense) to appreciate or even to adopt an approach which abandons these core assumptions. There is a gulf between this tradition and its present mainstream practice, and ESL with its principal propositions

— that notions such as "literature" or "literary text" cannot be defined via "identity" but only via "difference,"
— that autonomous literary texts (or works of art) are no longer the unquestionable centre of literary study, but that all texts have to be related to the complex machinery of the social system "literature,"
— that literary scholars should not deal with texts "as such" but with problems they experience with regard to what they observe as "literary" phenomena in social contexts, and
— that "interpretation" is but one of these problems, not the one and only problem

must be a profoundly disquieting and uncomfortable perspective to most scholars of literature everywhere.

In my view, interpretation is still the crucial subject of all controversy. Let me just mention two examples. Against all textual evidence in my own writings, ESL opponents go on claiming that ESL forbids interpretation or is unable to provide new and "better" ones (for a recent example see Gehrke). In contrast, systems theory à la Luhmann is increasingly accepted by literary scholars in Germany, but for the wrong reasons and results because it has proved to handsomely serve the purposes of interpretation and it thus helps to stabilize the interpretation paradigm in literary studies providing it, in addition, with a new and trendy terminology.

4.

Let me continue with my aetiology. Behind all these controversies about ESL is, I think, a highly emotional clash of views of the concept of culture. Whereas, traditionally culture is regarded to be an ensemble of highbrow values accessible only to some happy few, ESL conceives of culture as a complex program for the comprehensive semantic interpretation of the basic distinctions constituting the world model of a society (for an elaboration see Schmidt 1994). Contrary to the
traditional concept of culture which is primarily related to art, science, and religion, the ESL version of culture comprises all those phenomena which are — usually in a disdainful manner — called "popular culture," "subculture," or "media culture."

5.

As I have already mentioned, ESL’s interest in the social system "literature," i.e., the social and psychological contexts in which literary texts are inevitably embedded, has earned the reproach to be "mere" sociology (or psychology) of literature, i.e., a "bloße Hilfswissenschaft der Geisteswissenschaft" (an ancillary discipline to interpretation). Even in the 1991 Lexicon van literaire termen, one of the few literary terminological dictionaries and that contains an entry on "Empirische literatuurwetenschap" (Gorp 116-17) in a rather favourable way, this misunderstanding is perpetuated:

Some objections that are often raised to the empirical study of literature are the triviality of many of its research results (confirmation of what was already known or suspected) and its reductionism (artificiality of the framework and set-up, and limitation to reader response instead of the study of the text). It is clear, however, that the empirical study of literature by its specific approach of the object and its methodology is an outstanding way to explore the socio-cultural aspects of the literary system. It makes an irreplaceable contribution to the development of a more scientific and socially relevant study of literature" (qtd. in English translation in Tökösy 1992, 29-30).

6.

A similar objection is raised against the ESL’s claim to transform literary studies into Media Cultural Studies. Literature today, as the ESL approach implies, can only be recognized, processed, and evaluated in distinction from and in constant competition with, other media offerings, which might very well be preferred (see Schmidt 1992). In contrast, the traditional mainstream approaches to literature disregard the electronic audiovisual media (e.g., TV, video, CD-ROM, satellite broadcasting, computers, cyberspace and the world wide web, etc.) and defend the old cultural hierarchy with print media at the top and "media culture" (as a "so-called phenomenon") at the bottom and as a result of cultural debasement or decline. ESL is even blamed to have become the slave of the media industry and to support media-economic interests by depraving the study of literature by adapting it to the questionable tastes of a mass public (see Gehrke).

7.

Finally, the ESL proposal for the production of socially relevant and applicable
knowledge also sounds strange to hermeneutic ears. For traditional hermeneuticians "literature" is an indisputable (cultural) value-in-itself — and so, consequently, is literary scholarship. The clumsy attempts to legitimize socially the value of literary studies, when confronted with political demands in the 1970s and economic problems in the 80s and 90s have evidenced how tenaciously most literary scholars still cling to the traditional bourgeois value-system with its sacrosanct (over-)estimation of literature as well as its interpretation. Connected with the goal of applicable knowledge two objections to ESL seem to me to be particularly characteristic of the mentality of our opponents. First, the ESL proposal for applicable knowledge is interpreted as an ambition for power. Second, the terminology used by ESL as an instrument of rational argumentation is denounced as an indicator of the technocratic spirit of ESL scholars, and thus again as another piece of evidence for ESL's claim for power. (Unfortunately, what kind of power this may be is nowhere specified in the opponents' papers but I assume they mean power in the sense of primary position in the current landscape of literary theory and the humanities in whole).

8.

I think that even such a sketchy tour d'horizon of the arguments advanced against ESL shows that the antagonism of the approaches is nothing less than a clash of what Ludwik Fleck called "Denkstile" (styles of thinking). This clash provides further evidence for Thomas S. Kuhn's insight that the theories and research practices of scientific disciplines are much more than just pure intellectual or rational operations. Instead, they are inseparably connected with, or embedded in, emotions, beliefs, hopes, fears, and desires, that is, with and in all (too) human life. Of course this holds true for both sides: ESL, too, is not sitting on the high fence; it is neither innocent nor superior. The blind spots in the argumentations of both sides are necessarily part of what is accepted as evident or as undisputed point of departure or closure of debate; e.g., the literary work of art in the hermeneutic realm or the dominance of the literary system in ESL. Should there be more rational discussion of both approaches on both sides in the future, my advice would be to concentrate first on an examination of these blind spots (or "self-evident" truths), i.e., to start with the beliefs before turning to the arguments.

9.

Up to now I have concentrated my observations on the hermeneutic opposition to ESL. I would like to add that in particular the constructivist version of ESL has engendered fierce hostility on the hermeneutic side (see, for example, reactions by K. Eibl or R. Gehrke). These critics are upset by ESL's alleged
biologism, materialism, or even fascism (in Gehrke's case), and they strongly oppose constructivist attempts at "naturalizing" epistemology. I guess the reason for this extreme reaction is the rejection by constructivist reinterpretation, of the traditional body and soul or mind and body dichotomy with its emotional emphasis on soul and mind. But the hermeneutics' opposition is only half the story. There is a frontier within the complex domain of the Empirical Study of Literature itself. For example, we find ourselves dealing with the opposition between constructivist and non-constructivist (e.g., cognitive psychological) versions of ESL. Many critics of the constructivist variant of ESL — mostly advocated by LUMIS members at Siegen University — have emphasized that ESL does not need a constructivist epistemology at all, that tying ESL to constructivism provokes more criticism of the whole enterprise ESL and thus damages its chances of succeeding (Norbert Groeben, Colin Martindale, or Ferenc Odorics are important representatives of this view [see, for example, Odorics]).

As it is much more difficult to deal with the critique of ESL from within than with opposition from "beyond the pole" I feel compelled to repeat once more why I think that ESL is well advised to operate from a constructivist epistemological platform. Those who can listen carefully will undoubtedly notice my blind spots — or beliefs — in the following argument which I have condensed into the following 15 theses, as follows (for my most recent postulates in this context, see also Schmidt 1996c):

1) Today, most literary scholars agree that it is inadequate to study literary texts in isolation from actors and socio-cultural contexts. This insight is based upon the convictions that meaning can no longer be regarded as an ontological property of literary texts because meaning is quite obviously generated through some kind of interaction between texts and readers in socio-cultural contexts; that concepts of literature emerge from highly complicated socio-cultural processes of canonization, socialisation, and ideological orientation; that literary scholarship, like any other academic discipline, is practised by human actors in a social system according to rules and norms, goals and interests — all created and applied by these actors. That is to say: whatever is said about a literary phenomenon is said by an observer to an observer in a specific socio-cultural context. Accordingly, the observer problem has to be explicitly and consequentially taken into consideration.

2) Observers are living systems endowed with a cognitive apparatus. Like any other system, living systems, too, can only be defined in relation to an environment. The respective environments of cognitive systems are the result of their sense-constructive activities because cognitive systems are operationally closed. Consequently, symmetry-breaking happens exclusively in the cognitive domains of the systems.

3) As active participants in the social construction of reality, observers are
conditioned by biological, psychological, socio-cultural, and media factors. The basic cognitive operations of observers are the drawing and naming of distinctions. These distinctions are observer-relative, they are not given in the environment. Thus, cognition does not provide us with a picture of reality, but with a picture of our activities in environments. Operating (in) system-specific environments, we never encounter objects ("as such") but only the results of our highly conditioned activities (= experience, knowledge). According to Von Foerster, objects and events are not primary experiences but representations of relations (see 1993).

4) It follows from these assumptions that literature is what observers deem "literary" according to the concepts and values by which they establish and handle the difference between the literary and the non literary. These concepts are acquired by experiencing prototypical cases of both sides of the difference in the course of literary socialization. Normally, these concepts remain implicit, as blind spots of the cultural domain of first-order observers. 5) First-order observers, i.e., actors operating in their "socio-natural" environments, automatically interpret their experiences of pragmatic, logical, or social stabilities in terms of an evident intrinsic order of reality. If the intuitive faith in experiencing reality is disturbed or disappointed, questions emerge concerning reality, empiricity, objectivity, or truth. These questions are typical of second-order observers observing other observers' observations, including their blind spots. Of course, the observations of second-order observers, too, are dominated by blind spots of the cultural distinctions they apply in their observations. Since these kinds of observations can, in turn, be observed by a third-order observer — with his/her blind spots — we know for sure that we live in a contingent world of experiences. Cultures serve as (more or less unquestioned) programs for the semantic interpretation, the normative evaluation, and the emotional loading of the building-blocks of worlds of experience. As long as a society, based on culture and reproducing itself via culture, survives, constructor and construct form an inseparable unity. It is irrational, i.e., a contradiction in terms, to assume that the observer is categorically separated from the world she/he observes. If we forget or neglect this intrinsic relation, we are tempted to perceive our environments and other observers therein as trivial machines (senseu Von Foerster) whose function we are to uncover.

6) In the past, the concept "empirical" was always related to "experience." In order to avoid an empiristic or positivistic reading of this relation we have to extend the concept of experience beyond sensory perception. Experience integrates sensory/perceptual, motoric, and conceptual elements; it interweaves operational as well as "ontological knowledge" (senseu Rusch). Experiencing and knowing are effective action in cultural traditions. Knowledge is action which, as a social event, happens in communication. Signs, too, do not refer to objects in reality, but to consensually interpreted activities in culture, i.e., to com-
munication. This is the reason why observers succeed to communicate, although their cognitive systems are operationally closed. What is often called the "mental representation of reality" must be regarded as a co-ordinating relation, not as a sort of image. We do not mirror things but our handling of things.

7) If — by regarding system and environment as mutually defining instances — we define "reality" as the domain determined by the actions and interactions of observing systems, or if we follow Van Fraassen's argument that what counts as an observable phenomenon is a function of a/the epistemic community, then the objectivity of experiences has to be determined in terms of making, communicating, and evaluating experiences.

8) Most philosophers of science agree today that scientific activity can be modelled as the theoretically guided production of knowledge and experience through the application of explicit methods. This happens primarily on the level of communication within the framework and under the conditions of the social system "science." From a communicative point of view, scholars do not handle stable realities but communicatively stabilized distinctions and descriptions in the experiential world of a community of investigators.

9) Empirical research generally means the production of logical, pragmatic, and social stabilities, i.e., of facts. Stability, i.e., a system-dependent aspect, may be regarded to be a central criterion of/or "reality" on all levels of observation. Knowledge is evaluated as adequate to reality if it allows relevant predictions and thus provides a stable basis for action. Whatever successfully supports the construction of stability (according to ceteris-paribus-conditions) in scientific communication serves as a datum or a fact.

10) It follows from these assumptions that the intuitive and traditional reference of "empirical" to "reality" in an ontological sense and to the experience of a first-order observer has to be re-oriented toward cognitive and communicative activities embedded in socio-cultural contexts; the construction and evaluation of knowledge according to socio-cultural criteria developed by observers; and to the level of second-order observation. If these observations are explicitly directed by theories and methods toward the solution of explicitly formulated problems, I speak of scientific empirical research because the results can be stabilized in (inter)disciplinary communication, and because concepts, criteria, and results of systematic experiencing are consensual — in a scientific community.

11) Von Foerster has described the methodically controlled production of data as trivialization, i.e., as a procedure to construe stable distinctions under conditions which — in many cases — drastically reduce ecological complexities (e.g., in laboratory research). Trivialization is further specified by procedures of isolation and reduction — procedures which turn out to be highly inadequate when applied to complex, non-linear cognitive or social systems, whose essential feature consists in the interaction between their components. They are, in Von
Foerster's terminology, non-trivial machines, i.e., they are synthetically deterministic, history-dependent, analytically indeterminable and unpredictable.

12) Although, in empirical research, we cannot, for practical reasons, avoid reducing complexity via a standardization of procedures, we should regard human beings as self-organizing, creative, and autonomous world-constructing "machines" who are responsible for their constructions of realities; i.e., we should always try to de-trivialize them. De-trivialization characterizes a research strategy that tries to reach two goals: to incorporate the observer into the observed and to operate in a manner oriented towards systems, i.e., to avoid the methodological and methodical shortcomings of isolation and reduction (for further detail, see Schmidt 1996b).

13) Literary scholars do not talk about objects in the traditional sense. They talk about phenomena which emerge from the application and interpretation of distinctions deemed relevant by a community of investigators in the social system "literary studies." As scholars, they talk about literary phenomena in order to solve problems they deem relevant together with other members of the academic community and according to commonly shared cultural convictions, norms, and goals. The solution of problems requires procedures, e.g., the standardization of procedures. In a scientific context, where problems have to be explicitly formulated and where problem-solving has to follow theoretically defined strategies in order to obtain results which can be systematically checked, the Empirical Studies of Literature may be modelled in terms of a reflexive experience of literary phenomena. It consists of reflexive second-order observations of the social system literature as well as of the symbolic system literature, i.e., the set of literary phenomena.

14) If the notion "empirical" is related to specific procedures of observers making experiences with literature, then we may draw the following two final conclusions: A) "Hence, I submit in all modesty, the claim for objectivity is nonsense!" (Von Foerster 1979, 7) and B) "Empirical Studies of Literature — What Else?" (Schmidt).

15) If we acknowledge the increasing role of mass media in all processes of reality-construction (see Schmidt 1994), the medium of print has become one medium among others, which has to compete with the other media for its cultural position. In order to discern the specificity of literature, we consequently have to observe the difference between literary works and other aesthetic phenomena. This shift in perspective automatically transforms literary studies into a special branch of Empirical Media Studies (see Schmidt 1992) in interaction with Cultural Studies. This proposal implies that ESL — designed as Media Culture Studies — has to be an inter- and trans-disciplinary endeavour which requires teamwork and explicit theories and methods, in order to allow for the inter- and trans-disciplinary production of empirical knowledge which, in turn, may be applied to solve problems in scientific as well as in non-scientific contexts (see also Schmidt 1998).
In order to follow my theoretical discussion by application, here I will present selected results of an empirical project devoted to the reception of ESL in reviews and articles in Germany. The research project has been carried out by Karsten Gries, Claudius R. Köster, Lutz Kramaschki, and Heike Schreiber at the LUMIS Institute, Siegen University (1996). The study concentrates on the NIKOL-version of ESL — thus excluding Norbert Groeben’s approach — and tries to find out which types of evaluations can be found in favourable and unfavourable reviews of ESL. The reason for selecting book reviews and literary handbooks and dictionaries (i.e., articles in introductions to the study of literature, in encyclopaedias, dictionaries, and handbooks) has been that reviews reflect the first reaction of the scholarly public to a new publication, whereas the presentation of a new theory or approach in handbooks etc., may be interpreted as a confirmation of the relevance, the acceptance, or at least the attribution of interesting novelty to a theory or an approach. That is to say, the two types of reactions characterize the beginning and the success of scientific areas of a theory.

The data basis of the project consisted of 36 reviews from 1975 on published in academic journals and of 13 handbook articles; in total 49 items (for the list, see the Appendix). (Only those articles have been selected which substantially characterize and evaluate ESL, not just describe or mention it.) The method applied has been content analysis, concentrating on explicit arguments concerning methods/methodology, metatheory, epistemology, object theory, systems and action theory, historiography of literature, formal/stylistic presentation of ESL, action roles, and presuppositions (theories, concepts etc.).

The analysis of the reviews yielded the following results. 36 reviews have been analyzed, 197 arguments were coded and scrutinised. Of these 197 arguments, 56 in number, that is, 28.4% have been evaluated by the four coders as "highly important," 125/63.5% as "less important," 16/8.1% as "marginal." 60/30.5% of all arguments have been evaluated as positive, 25/12.7% as neutral, and 112/56.9% as negative. Related to the estimated importance of arguments, 7.1% of the important arguments have been positive compared to 19.8% negative ones, whereas 21.3% of the less important arguments have been positive and 33.5% negative. The distribution of arguments was as follows: methods/methodology (23/11.7%), epistemology (11/5.6%), metatheory (62/31.5%), systems and action theory (21/10.7%), formal presentation (15/7.6%), action roles (10/5.1%), historiography of literature (12/6.1%), and presuppositions (43/21.8%).

The above tabulation means that 48.8% of all arguments concentrated on methodological, epistemological, and metatheoretical questions. Among those, 23

3 NIKOL = Nicht-Konservative-Literaturwissenschaft (Non-Conservative-Study-of-Literature).
arguments have been positive, 62 negative. Quite evidently, the systematic construction of the ESL — from the epistemological basis onto the details of the object theory — has compelled reviewers to start their argumentation on rather fundamental levels, especially since the criticism of ESL from hermeneutic approaches happens primarily on the epistemological and metatheoretical level.

Among the 51.3% of arguments concerning object theoretical issues, the category "presuppositions" leads with 21.8%. To the astonishment of the authors of the study — although expected — this top position is not the result of a concentration on problems of interpretation. According to the authors the relatively low percentage of arguments concerning methodical issues (11.7%) is not surprising since until today relatively few literary scholars are familiar with methods applied in empirical research in sociology and psychology. Whereas the low rate of arguments treating the formal presentation (7.6%) is interpreted by help of the experience that critique in formalities is not very popular in German academic reviews (but very much practised in informal talks), the low figures in the categories "action roles" (5.1%) and "historiography" (6.1%) are not easy to interpret. The authors assume that the predominance of positive arguments in the category "action role" (7:3) represents a gradually raising acceptance of the ESL proposal to enlarge the subject domain of literary studies from texts to literary systems. Regarding literary historiography the reviewers' evaluations are clearly negative (7:2) because most of the viewers characterize the ESL-type of systems theory owing to the negative view that ESL systems theory is not Luhmann-canonical.

With regard to handbooks etc., 13 articles, including 85 arguments, have been analyzed. The coders regarded 43/50.6% of the arguments as "highly important," 9/10.6% as "marginal." Again, the negative arguments are on top: 58/68% compared to 11 or 13% positive and 16/18.8% neutral ones. 5/5.9% of the highly important arguments have been positive, 33/38.8% of the same category negative. Among the less important arguments 5/5.9% have been positive and 19/22.3% negative. The arguments are distributed on the topical domains as follows: methods/methodology (11/12.9%), epistemology (2/2.3%), metatheory (25/29.4%), systems and action theory (2/1.2%), formal presentation (3/3.5%), action roles (5/5.9%), historiography of literature (4/4.7%), and presuppositions (34/40%).

Compared to the book reviews, handbook articles present much more negative than positive arguments (68.2% vs. 13%). These articles, too, primarily concentrate on theoretical and methodological issues — neglecting epistemological problems and the debate on systems and action theory — which seem to contain the highest potential of provocation.

If we look at the details of the respective argument in the above mentioned categories, we do neither discover a homogeneous set nor a rational development of critical arguments. Instead, critique is raised according to the reviewers
personal competencies, expectations, predilections, or prejudices. In a way, every reviewer seems to represent one approach in its own but not a disciplinary consensus or an oppinio communis. This observation brings me to the last question: How much of a disciplinary consensus or an oppinio scientiae communis do we IGELs have in common? Are we more than a biannually meeting flock of scholars? This issue would be worthwhile to explore at our next biannual "flocking."

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Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis and Its Uses in the Empirical Study of Literature

1. Overview

Within the past decade, an increasing number of computer programs for so-called computer-aided qualitative data analysis (CAQD) have been developed, i.e., programs for the analysis of large amounts of textual material (for an overview see Weitzman and Miles). So far, the application of these programs has largely been restricted to the social sciences and to linguistics; they do, however, also hold promise for the Empirical Study of Literature. In the following, I will describe the principles behind CAQD, present an example of each of the major types of programs, and briefly touch upon both the advantages and disadvantages of CAQD especially with regard to the Empirical Study of Literature.

2. The Principles of CAQD

The idea behind CAQD is anything but new: Even as early as the 1960s there have been attempts to mechanise the coding process involved in content analysis and to thus make content analysis applicable to large text samples; and computerised versions of content analysis have in fact been among the earliest forms of CAQD (see Lissmann). In this context, programmers have been pursuing the following objectives: to apply the computer to the analysis of texts, to mechanise certain recurring tasks, and allow for the analysis of large textual samples. Within the past decade, a fourth objective has been gaining in importance: the integration of so-called qualitative and quantitative procedures of data analysis. This latter objective has been of concern especially in the social sciences, and it is there that a large number of programs for CAQD have been developed during the past years (for an overview see Kelle; Weitzman and

1 I would like to thank Norbert Groeben for his comments on an earlier version of this paper. A German version of this article is forthcoming (see Schreier).

2 The terms "coding" and "categorisation" will be used interchangeably.
In order to illustrate the principles of CAQD, I would like to draw upon a hypothetical interview study on the reception of Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* (adapted from Rustemeyer). In this study, the main research question concerns the themes which recipients spontaneously mention in talking about the book (such as the relationship between the two main women protagonists Celie and Shug, the family reunion at the end, etc.); in addition, relations between the themes mentioned, their evaluation by the recipients and the recipients’ gender are also included in the study. For the purpose of data collection, semi-structured interviews are conducted; gender is measured by employing one of the current questionnaires (such as Bern's Sex Role Inventory [BSRI], see Bem). In order to determine which themes are mentioned and their frequency of occurrence, the interviews are subjected to content analysis, i.e., a category system has to be designed, and each theme mentioned in the interviews is assigned to one of the categories. While in ordinary content analysis this process of coding is carried out by hand, in CAQD the coding is done employing one of the relevant programs (as for the types of programs available, see below). Later, all units of analysis to which the same code has been assigned can easily be retrieved (for instance: retrieving all units that have been assigned to the category "family reunion"); in CAQD, retrieving usually also implies determining the frequency of use for that particular category across the entire body of data.

To start with, CAQD is thus simply a form of computerised coding and retrieval. Even in this basic form it does, however, have certain advantages over manual coding and retrieval. In the first place, contextualisation can be preserved, i.e., the units of analysis remain embedded in their original textual context. Second, the consistency of coding can be checked at any time. This is particularly important while a category system is being developed: during this phase, shifts of meaning and thus changes in the use of the various categories can occur which — if they remain unnoticed — can significantly distort the results. A third aspect is closely related to the second: modification of codes is possible at any time. Such modification may, for instance, be required in case of shifts of meaning, leading to a splitting of one category into two or more. Conversely, two or more categories may be combined into one. In all of these cases, manual recoding would be time consuming while CAQ programs allow for easy and quick recoding via command syntax. Finally, CAQD programs comprise procedures for determining the frequencies of the various categories (and sometimes additional procedures for statistical analysis). Again, counting the frequencies by hand and then creating a data file to be read into a statistics program would be much more laborious.
3. Types of CAQ Programs

Recent programs do, however, go far beyond such basic coding and retrieval functions. Two types of developments can be distinguished (for an overview see Prein, Kelle, and Bird): First, programs which have elaborated upon the coding facilities; these are most frequently used for heuristic purposes. Second, programs which have elaborated upon the retrieval facilities; these have mostly been employed in data analysis and evaluation. Both types of programs will now be described in greater detail (see Figure 1 in the Appendix).

Programs elaborating upon coding facilities have done so in particular by distinguishing between different types of codes and different types of links emerging from these codes. The basic type of program allows for linking text segments and codes. In addition, however, one might also want to define links between text segments (for instance between text segments assigned to the same category), between codes (for instance between codes which are in some way related, such as themes pointing to the relationship between one of the women protagonists in The Color Purple and a male person), or between codes and so-called "memos," brief notes of thoughts occurring to the researcher during coding (for instance a sudden idea that a category contains a dimension which has so far not been included in the category system). Programs elaborating upon coding facilities usually comprise the possibility of defining all of these different types of links. In addition, most of them also include facilities for the graphical display of the resulting interrelations between text segments, memos, and codes. The resulting networks can then in turn be used as the basis for specifying models or hypotheses to be tested in future studies.

In order to illustrate the above, I would like to turn back to the study of themes in the reception of The Color Purple. Thus, when looking at the interviews, it may occur to the researcher that the subjects seem to regard some themes as causally related: Because all the men in her life have been hurting Celie so much, she now turns to the relationship with Shug, a woman. Thus, the theme "relationship with the husband" and "lesbian relationship with Shug" may be causally linked, as may be the themes "relationship with the father" and "lesbian relationship with Shug." Ordinary coding, i.e., assigning each text segment to a category, cannot take into account this causal relationship. To solve this problem, one might attempt to introduce additional coding categories such as "causal relation between relationship with husband and lesbian relationship with Shug" — but the larger the number of relevant causal relationships mentioned (for instance Shug's relationship with her father etc.), the more awkward this procedure proves to be. Here, qualified links between the relevant text segments (or even the categories themselves) provide a more elegant solution: in this case, the category system would contain not only categories referring to content, but also structural categories referring to relations between
content-type categories (such as "causal categories" for coding the occurrence of a causal link between two text segments or between two content-type categories). After completing the process of categorisation, one might go on to graphically displaying content categories and the relations between them. In such a display, the content categories would be represented by nodes, the relations between content categories by paths between those nodes. Additional information can be provided by suitting the strength of the path to the frequency of occurrence of a specific relation between specific categories (such as the frequency of a causal relation between the "relationship between Celie and her husband" and "lesbian relationship between Celie and Shug"). The type of network that might result from such a display is illustrated in Figure 2 (see Appendix).

In this case, the network would provide a basis for the hypothesis that it is the relationship between Celie and her father as well as Celie and her husband, but not the relationship between Celie and her stepson or Shug and her father who are mentioned in causal relation to the theme of a lesbian relationship between Celie and Shug. Dey calls these links "hyperlinks," as they resemble the kinds of links used in hypertext. Of course, such links are not restricted to causality. Equally, they might denote a specific quality, they might refer to sequence, to narration, etc. A program able to accommodate such relations would be Hypersoft.

The basic type of CAQ program allows for the retrieval of all text segments which have been assigned to the same category. Programs elaborating upon this retrieval function have done so in two ways (see Figure 1). The first type of program focuses on the retrieval of specific information. These tools employ so-called logic programming (as in the computer language PROLOG) in order to determine whether certain statements are true with respect to the textbase under study. In the above hypothetical study, one might for instance wish to determine whether a subject who has mentioned the themes of Celie's relationship with her father, Celie's relationship with her husband, and a lesbian relationship between Celie and Shug will evaluate the family reunion at the end of the book negatively. To test this hypothesis, a statement of the following type would have to be submitted:

IF Celie's relationship with her father
AND Celie's relationship with husband
AND lesbian relationship between Celie and Shug
AND negative evaluation of family reunion
THEN add code "hypothesis one true"

Running a query like this with a suitable program such as HYPERresearch might for instance yield a value of "true" in 17 and a value of "false" in 3 out of 20 cases. Conducting a chi-square analysis would then allow one to accept the hypothesis on inferential-statistical grounds (see Hesse-Biber and Dupuis).
The second type of program elaborating upon retrieval does so by extending retrieval procedures to code combinations. Whereas basic retrieval is concerned with determining the frequencies of various individual codes, programs like AQUAD allow one to determine the frequencies of so-called co-occurrences of codes, i.e., the frequency with which two or more codes occur together. "Together" does not, however, necessarily mean "assigned to the same text segment." Instead, four kinds of co-occurrences are usually distinguished: proximity, sequence, overlap, and nesting (see Figure 3).

Thus, one might for instance have formed the hypothesis that for women subjects who score as androgynous in the BSRI (see above), there is an overlap between the theme of Celie's relationship with her husband and feelings of anger, whereas there is no such overlap for women who score as feminine or undifferentiated. Again, a query (with a suitable program such as AQUAD, see Huber 1989, 1995) would give the numbers of overlaps for the two groups of women subjects; and, of course, the numbers of times the relationship is mentioned without any such overlap with feelings of anger. Again, data transformation and subsequent statistical analysis would permit the testing of this hypothesis on the basis of the query results.

4. Advantages and Disadvantages of the Use of CAQD

The advantages of CAQD programs may be summarised as follows: They allow for the testing of rather elaborate hypotheses relating to textual material; without computerisation, testing of these hypotheses would either be very awkward and time consuming or downright impossible. As such, CAQD programs are as important to researchers working with texts as packages for statistical analysis are to researchers working with quantitative data. In addition, they actually permit combination with such statistical packages and thus allow for the integration of "qualitative" methods in the sense of methods dealing with meaningful material and "quantitative" methods in the sense of statistical analysis. On this basis, the uses of CAQ programs for the Empirical Study of Literature (ESL) are obvious: First, ESL is frequently concerned with textual material, be it a text base such as a text by a particular writer, think-aloud protocols, interviews or responses to open questions in questionnaires relating to subjects' receptions of various text bases. Second, having developed both out of traditional hermeneutical studies of literature and empirically oriented psychology, ESL in itself constitutes an integration of qualitative and quantitative approaches and thus ought to be able to make good use of such an integrated method.

But there are disadvantages and possibly dangers, too. For researchers coming from the "qualitative" paradigm, the largest danger might be that of forgetting that it is still the researcher who imputes meaning to text, codes, and numbers. CAQ analysis adds to textual analysis the nimbus of the exactness of quantitative
procedures — and thus makes it all too easy to forget that nonsense is quantifiable, too. Quantification is not a quality to be sought in and of itself. It can be an advantage when applied to meaningful, reliable, and valid material, and it still remains the researcher’s obligation to ensure that her/his material is of that kind. For the researcher coming from the "quantitative" paradigm, the largest danger lies in the "qualitative" use of "quantitative" terms within CAQD. Frequently, one reads of coding, of hypothesis testing, etc., only to find that the use of those terms has nothing to do with the way they have been introduced in the empirical sciences. Here, the danger is that of turning away in frustration. This, however, would be to neglect the potential of CAQD: inferential-statistical testing of hypotheses might not always be part of CAQD yet, but it can easily be added. And finally, CAQD programs bring with them a danger to qualitative analysis which has long been familiar from quantitative methods: the danger of trying out this or that method on the data, because it is, after all, so very easy to do so. But the methods realised in CAQD programs each carry their own assumptions about the data, and not all methods are equally suitable to all data. What these assumptions are and what their consequences is largely still an open question.

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Appendix

CAQD-programs

programs elaborating upon coding (network-building)

programs elaborating upon retrieval

logic programming

co-occurrences of codes

**fig. 1:** Types of CAQD-programs

- relationship Celie / stepson
- relationship Celie / father
- relationship Celie / husband
- relationship Shug / father

causal relation

causal relation

causal relation

lesbian relationship Celie / Shug

**fig. 2:** Hypothetical causal hyperlinks between potential themes in the reception of 'The Color Purple'
fig. 3: Types of co-occurrences between codes (adapted from Prein, Kelle, and Bird 1995: 193)
Let us start from a factual and non-controversial point view, namely that the study and the teaching of literature is a general social activity, including its educational practice. While this point of view may be accepted by most, we may also realize the progressive weakening of this activity observable at academic institutions and, most of all, we may deplore the vanishing function of written literature in everyday life owing to the impact of other types of cultural expression such as film and television. Consequently, in the Western hemisphere, we may think that this situation threatens the model of education where the humanities and the study of literature is a basic factor. In my opinion, we are right in all these assumptions. Notwithstanding, the study of literature is still very much alive. For instance, those few who are with positions at universities still have many opportunities to meet and discuss all these matters at many conferences, while the "business" of literary study continues in teaching, criticism, publishing, and theorizing. And at the same time, the primary activity behind the study of literature, literature itself, is being produced to an extent never before experienced. Thus, I ask, may it not be that all the complaining is in reality a construct of our over-sensitivity as scholars or simply metaphors of our desires with regard to our general aims and objectives embedded in the discipline? These two observations for the possible reasons of the current malaise about both literature and the study and the teaching of literature have concrete presuppositions.

In my article, I would like to deal with the hypothesis that the status of the study and teaching of literature may be a result of indecisions embedded in their nature and in the faulty consideration of their own possibilities, thus allowing for the negative perception of both activities among those who are outside these activities. The implicit or explicit dismissal and marginalization of literature and the study of literature by politicians or the business world and the consequent perception that literature and its study is only for an elite is a serious matter and it needs our equally serious consideration.

My view of the situation thus represents two main factors but which are not necessarily opposed. On the one hand, we have the observation of a change in the perception of culture in general, including the resulting change in perception affecting the teaching and the study of literature as well as the funding and
public support of these activities. On the other hand, we have the obvious proposition that the study and teaching of literature should (or must?) renovate and re-group itself as a consequence. In other words, it may be that if effective change is not performed, this may result in the self-destruction of the study and teaching of literature and we will be able to blame only ourselves; those who participate in the various activities of the larger educational process.

Curiously enough and showing a lack of awareness in the academe, surveys of students concerning their expectations with regard to university education are rare and surveys of general and outside-the-academe decision making powers or social strata about their expectations from future graduates and potential employees are virtually non-existent — at least as far as Europe is concerned. We all have vague ideas and impressions, but it appears that no group is paying attention at any level to this crucial and basic question. With regard to the teaching and the study of literature, these activities are viewed as "soft" areas of activity where questions of market and matters of business are seen irrelevant at best. Or, they are perceived as activities belonging to the sphere of the elites with little relevance to society as a whole. And, with regard to the primary activity of the creation of literature, the writer is considered to be on the one end of the pole, while society as the recipient of the writing produced by the writer is considered the other end of the pole. What lies inbetween the two, namely the study and the teaching of literature, that is, the inter-relationship between writer, his/her product, and society, appears to be irrelevant.

Is this situation serious? Yes, it is. And perhaps what does matter most is that research and the academe must face this challenging situation and act on it. In general, scholars do care about the disadvantageous situation of their task by theorizing or interpretation. However, theorizing may not be sufficient and, indeed, more pragmatism is required. Let us consider an example. We are trying at Portuguese universities, to develop a method for the modalities, choices, methodologies, interests, subjects, etc., in and for the teaching of literature as well as about the relationship students may entertain between literature and their private spheres of activity. Our preliminary framework resulted in two main findings. First, students gave answers suggesting that they themselves would be the best judge of what is good for them and that their teachers should accept this notion without much reserve and second, teachers appear to ask questions reflecting the notion that they themselves know what students are about.

These two preliminary conclusions were important for the rewriting of our project and they concerned especially experimental psychological methodologies. One problem is that we may assume that most of the questions we ask students are the result of some previous interpretations we have made about reality and that we cannot obtain a neutral group of questions which could stimulate new information. In other words, what is different does not come from what is "neutral," and since formulating an inquiry always depends on some knowledge we have about a specific situation, we cannot completely escape the relation of
a given data producing similar data (or at least expected data). Sociological methods and frameworks may be more appropriate in this area than psychological ones. However, an analysis of communication has to take into consideration the difference between information that is supposed to confirm a certain type of knowledge and information that is supposed to enrich and eventually change that knowledge.

Another difficulty arises concerning the problematics of and inter-relationship between the social system, the literary system, and the secondary and post-secondary education system. In multiple relations, each system may support determinations in others and the prevalence of one system does not mean that it is independent with respect to another. For our project, in order to best formulate questions for our inquiry, we decided that our theoretical background could be much enhanced by drawing on the history of education in a context of cultural history. However, it is an unfortunate fact that in Portugal the history of education or cultural history or the inter-relationship between the two has not been extensively studied as of yet. At the same time, we all recognize the historical and cultural changes affecting the processes of education. In particular, I am referring to modalities of discourse attributed to the master (teacher) or to the student. These modalities are in fact both more complicated and specific than those studies with regard to other and in my view more simple power relationships, such as in politics, public places, family, and in similar hierarchical milieus. Nevertheless, a history of culture exposing the interrelations between diverse social systems, can assist us to study the protocols of learning. In our finding, these protocols are characterized by an attitude of imitation until late modernity (the nineteenth century). This imitative parameter was then replaced by a certain level of originality, starting with the early twentieth century. This differentiation does not oppose the aesthetics of imitation versus the aesthetics of originality. Rather, they were developed in thought parallel by Classicism and Romanticism, respectively. However, originality during the nineteenth century was manifested in opposition to universal values and focusing on the individual. Only during the twentieth century have educational systems begun to consider the role of the student as an independent entity and began to develop forms of autonomy and creation in the framework of a given group's global work considered as the major and all-embracing entity. In contemporary times a double position of determination and emergency defines the profile of the student and this position is not easily defined, not even well understood, by means of an inquiry.

What is more, this attitude has been changing in the last decades. With the strong action of the mass media and computers, students no longer develop an attitude of imitation, in relation to the discourse of the teacher, or even in relation to the models of family, politics and other forms of authority and education. Moreover, on the other hand, they do not particularly care particularly
about forms of originality, which they even ignore, given the lack of a global classic cultural formation; in a different way, they practice, in the whole of distinctions assumed by the group, a kind of dissolution of the individual manner that leads to imitation or originality being replaced by what may be called an attitude of simulacrum. This notion of simulacrum may be understood here as a simulation of originality that implies the knowledge (conscious or unconscious) of similar attitudes regularly adopted before. It is in a way the result of the regular integration of the student in the computer system and his frequent position as a member of the media environment.

Consequently, the activity of teaching literature consists of an object called "literature," another object the "study" of literature, and a third object, the "act" of teaching. This last object is nevertheless differently shaped, because of regularities and possibilities of generalization that can be observed in its configurations. The act of teaching involves two intersubjective and social entities: the student and the teacher and both of these entities have different relations — at least assumed ones — within cultural parameters. In contemporary Western society, these cultural parameters have particular relevance with regard to the impact of the media as information and as a transmitter of cultural artifacts. In this context, we can problematize the question of the act of teaching and culture on three levels: First, there is the historical level — in what sense does historical evolution maintain cultural artifacts with canon formations, simultaneously changing perspectives, and replacing methodologies; what kind of relation can be established between the state of a given period and the very nature of its process in time? Second, we have an ideological level — historical processes sometimes do not mean an evolution only but also the state of a question as if it were fixed like a concrete object, or a body of concepts, which also means that it can be manipulated. And third, there is a scientific level — is the transmission of knowledge dealing with science with respect to the object of the discipline or is it with respect to the status of subjective positions teachers and students may assume in their work?

The notion of "science" is most problematic when we discuss the study of literature. However, at the least important methodological choices must be made concerning the perspectives of the inquiry we want to develop. Let us consider here only two of such choices but which are an integral part of our project and are with reference to the scientific "socialization" of the study of literature. Our proposition is that the "socialization" of the study of literature should take place outside of the educational setting as well. Theoretically, this should occur in a sort of cultural reversibility, that is, in the spirit of likeness created through the attitude we describe as simulacrum. This means that, instead of literature being taught in the educational system after its actualization in the usual cultural practices, one may think of the practicing literature by a realization — by writers as well as by amateurs and students — because of the development of the literary
taste in and through the educational system and owing to the pleasure of creation resulting from teaching. This cultural and social configuration would allow that both the teaching and the study of literature could be enacted within both the scientific domain of research and the artistic domain of creation. Thus, the study of literature can have a scientific perspective that validates the transmission of knowledge about the art of communication through literary texts. Without this perspective and approach, the teaching of literature remains encircled within its own domain where primary texts of literature and texts about literature remain essentially self-referential and in reality no analysis is possible.

As I mentioned above, two scientific choices are decisive in this approach: 1) The conceptualization and 2) The establishment of systems of relations in the description of the literary object and the description of the fields that converge in it. By conceptualization we understand a metalanguage that may not eradicate meaning but deals precisely with the ways of working with meaning as an object and by the establishment of systems of relations in the description we understand an operation that surpasses the structuralist and static view of literary objects — implying notions such as like subject and time. In my view, the most advanced framework for such an approach can be found in the textually concentrated semiotics of Lotman, where the interrelations of multiple systems are inter-faced. Lotman's framework is especially valid for systems with regard to high culture and low culture which in fact merge in different and composite objects. This approach is able to consider our variegated contemporary cultural world, and to speak — in the teaching act — to our highly differentiated students who are coming from all over the world while ourselves are traversing cultures and countries constantly and while students belong to a differentiated and most varied mix of social, religious, gender, cultural, etc., strata. In contemporary Western societies, the mass media and computers are the most successful and globally accepted means of the production of meaning, in a world where image and visual effects have become integral parts of meaning production and where even high culture — if that still exists today — cannot be part of general and specialized information without an empire of similes and the experience of simulacrum.

In the canonical parameters that resulted from the act of teaching, students follow either the attitude of imitation or a more creative role following the attitude of originality. The first attitude may imply alienation and even manipulation, by heavily influencing the student through the act of learning. The attitude of simulacrum — where A becomes A+, that is, the subject and the image that it creates or that is created for it by advertising, by manipulating computers, by watching TV, etc.) — implies the same element of copy or identification that defines A and the element of differentiation or change that characterizes B, but keeps this time the individual mark of the subject in the sense of multiplication and differentiation (even though multiplication and differentiation are similes and are not really objects). Thus, learning by imitation
is static and conservative while learning by originality is dynamic and creative. Learning by *simulacrum* is a kind of statism seen as if it were dynamic and implies a particular position of the student in relation to time, since he/she becomes simultaneously the positive and the negative of a unique image, the image of knowledge that abolishes time and mythicizes space.

In 1989, during a conference in Lisbon, Colin Martindale said, analyzing the difference between scientists and humanists: "For whatever reason, scientists seem to be a happier lot than humanists." On my part, I am not sure whether it is really a question of being happy or not as happiness is an objective of humankind *in toto* and students or scholars of literature are no different with regard to this objective. In any case, perhaps there is a way in which science and the humanities may be approximated in a meaningful way: perhaps the approach of "scientific humanism" could meaningfully complement the study and the teaching of literature. And this should not be performed in the sense of a simplistic concentration of two opposite domains, but rather in the sense that not every scientific approach may be applied in the humanities and, in particular, in the study of literature. Thus, the study of literature would be enacted by means of the second scientific choice I mentioned above, that is, by the determination of systematic and systemic inter-relations in descriptions. This approach is supported by that most humanistic view, namely that the world is present *in* literature and, consequently, *in* the study and the teaching of literature. In other words, if literature is constituted by language and if language is the main abstraction that determines behaviour and understanding of everyday life, literature *and* the study and the teaching of literature may represent the most basic and therefore also significant human and social activity. This is why it is so difficult to understand arguments against the study of literature, an activity underlining the possibility of being part of one of the most prominent need we have in the contemporary world. If language is not the centre of human communication, if literature is not the ideological and aesthetic composition of human language, if the study and the teaching of literature are not the most useful fields to manifest techniques and devices of employing language as a logical and affective artifact, then, indeed, we should resign to our fate. But I do hope that this will not and must not be the case.

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Cognition and the Use of Figurative Language in Poetry: The Case of Poetic Synaesthesia

1. Introduction

A commonly held view regarding poetic language maintains that poetic language represents "an organized violence against cognitive principles and processes," to paraphrase a statement attributed to the Russian Formalist Victor Shklovsky. This "violent" nature of poetic language in general, and figurative language in particular, is presumed being responsible for the creativity and novelty exhibited by poetic discourse, and as such has always attracted literary theorists. Various attempts have been made to provide a systematic analysis of the cognitive principles against which this violence is directed (see, for example, Tsur).

While there is an obvious appeal, as well as explanatory power to such a view, it definitely does not exhaust the intricate relations between poetic language and cognition. The main proposal of the present paper is to highlight a perspective on that relation and complementary to the aforementioned. Thus, while I fully agree that aspects of poetic language and particularly figurative language used in poetic discourse do, indeed, "violate" and/or manipulate cognitive principles and processes, I would like to suggest that major aspects of this violation are themselves regulated and constrained by cognitive principles. That is, despite the creativity and novelty exhibited by poetic language, some of its components conform to general cognitive principles and constraints. I will illustrate this general argument by focusing on a particular figure — synaesthesia.

2. Directionality in Poetic Synaesthesia

A synaesthesia is a metaphorical expression in which a concept from one sensory domain is described in terms of another (see Ullmann; Osgood; Tsur). For

1 I would like to mention here that this general proposal has been developed in some detail elsewhere with respect to the use of various figures of speech in poetic discourse, such as the simile and the zeugma (see Shen 1995, 1997a,b).

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example, in "sweet silence" we talk about silence, which belongs to the auditory
domain, in terms of sweetness which in turn belongs to the gustatory. When we
say "a cold light," we refer to light, which belongs to the visual domain, in terms
of coldness which in turn belong to the tactile. In more technical terms we may
describe the synaesthesia "sweet silence" as consisting of the mapping from the
source domain of taste onto the target domain of sound. For the sake of
simplicity, in the following examples the mapping source will be represented by
the adjective, while the target by the noun.

The five sensory domains have been traditionally described as constituting a
scale, starting from the lowest sense, the tactile, followed by the gustatory,
olfactory, auditory and the visual, the highest sensory domain. This can be
described as an immediacy scale: the lower sensory domains such as touch and
taste, require the most proximate contact of the perceiver and the perceived
object, smell less so, and sound and sight require the least direct contact. (Others,
such as Ullmann, have described this scale as a distinctiveness scale, a point
which will not be elaborated upon here). Given this scale, any given synaesthesia
can either consist of a mapping from a lower modality onto a higher modality
or vice versa. For example, in "sweet silence" the mapping represents the
direction of low to high: the source term, the adjective "sweet," belongs to a
lower modality than the target "silence," namely, "SOUND" and "TASTE,"
respectively. In contrast, in "silent sweetness" the mapping goes from a higher
to a lower modality.

Given these two basic structural options the first question I would like to
address is: which of these two options is more frequently used in poetry? The
answer is straightforward, namely that low to high mapping is significantly more
frequently used in poetry than high to low. The evidence for this generalization
was initially introduced in Ullmann's 1945 seminal study. Ullmann sampled over
2000 synaesthetic metaphors extracted from the poetry of 12 nineteenth-century
poets from three different European literary sources: English, French, and
Hungarian poetry. His analysis revealed a clear-cut tendency — with a relatively
small number of exceptions — towards the preference of low to high mapping.
Thus, more than 1,660 cases conformed to this pattern, while only about 330
cases did not. The only exception to this generalization relates to the two highest
modalities, sight and sound. In the sight-sound mapping, each sense is equally
likely to be either target or source.

A similar pattern was found in a study I conducted on modern Hebrew poetry
(see Shen 1997a; Shen and Cohen). In this case, 200 synaesthesias were
randomly extracted from the writings of 21 modern Hebrew poets, active during
the first eighty years of this century. This Hebrew sample represents a totally
different cultural and literary environment, as well as a different historical period
than that of the European corpus analyzed by Ullmann. Nevertheless, the same pattern of results appeared. Of the 200 cases, 154 (77%) represented low to high mapping, while only 16 (15%) represented the opposite structure (the remaining cases consisted of the "sound-sight" combination). Statistical analysis revealed this difference to be significant (for details see Shen 1997b).

The fact that both Ullmann’s European poetry as well as modern Hebrew poetry share the same pattern, suggests that this pattern is general enough to be found across contexts such as the particular poem from which the synaesthesias are extracted, the individual poet who composed them, the particular "generation" or "school of poets" with which a given poet is affiliated, or even the national literature to which these poets belong.

The account I would like to propose is a cognitive one. It suggests that the reason for the higher frequency of low to high mapping, across contexts, is that this structure is more natural, from a cognitive point of view, than its inverse. In this respect a synaesthesia is but a special case of a cognitive principle which applies to metaphors in general. The principle states that: Mapping from a more accessible concept onto a less accessible one is more natural than its inverse. This principle characterizes the direction of metaphorical mapping in general, as many studies have shown (for a synopsis, see, Shen 1997b). For example, Lakoff and Johnson, as well as Johnson, have shown that the knowledge we have about concrete domains with which we have immediate contact via bodily experience, such as up down orientation, physical objects, containers and the like, is projected onto less concrete — hence less accessible — domains, rather than vice versa. This unidirectional tendency is reflected in verbal expressions we use in ordinary language. For example, we conceive of emotions by using the source domain of orientation or containers, as revealed by our use of expressions such as "I feel great/low" or "he is full of anger/fear." This mapping is clearly unidirectional, since we do not usually conceptualize orientations or containers in terms of emotions, and therefore, there are no conventionalized expressions in language which reflect such a counter directionality.²

² Elsewhere (1997) I have developed the idea that this principle can be derived from a more basic cognitive principle which relates to the notion of "cognitive reference points." This basic principle states that: A more accessible concept is more likely to be used as a cognitive reference point for its less accessible counterpart, than vice versa. The notion of cognitive reference points was initially introduced by Rosch, and applies both to perceptual and conceptual domains. The idea is that for various stimuli, perceptual as well as conceptual, a distinction can be drawn between the "reference stimulus" (assumed to be "more accessible") and "stimuli which deviate from the reference stimuli" (assumed to be "less accessible"). The hypothesis underlying Rosch’s study is that "stimuli slightly deviant from reference stimuli are more easily assimilated to, and thus judged metaphorically 'closer to,' the reference stimuli than vice versa." For example, a carelessly drawn square with imprecise lopsided lines will be perceived as a variation of a square, whereas a right-angled square will never be considered a variation of a lopsided imprecise square. Another example cited by Rosch is that subjects will perceive the figure 97 (representing a concept of low
Applying this general cognitive principle to synaesthesia may suggest that the concepts belonging to the lower senses of touch and taste are more accessible than those belonging to higher senses like sound and sight. What makes lower concepts such as "coldness" or "sweetness" more accessible than higher sensory concepts such as "light," is that they involve a more direct, less mediated experience of perception. In other words, the lower the modality, the more direct and immediate is the relation between perceiver and object perceived. As in the case of metaphors in general, concepts which are highly associated with immediate bodily experience are more accessible than concepts which are less so. The same logic that makes concrete concepts more accessible than abstract ones, also determines that lower sensory concepts are more "concrete," that is, more accessible than higher ones (for an elaboration see Tsur; Ullmann. The present account develops and refines a proposal made in Shen 1997a).

My proposal, then, is that the highly selective pattern of synaesthetic expression in poetry, beyond a specific context, is accounted for by assuming that the use of synaesthesia in poetry is highly constrained by the above general cognitive principle. In what follows, I will introduce some linguistic and psychological evidence supporting this account.

3. Linguistic Evidence for the Naturalness of Canonical Structure over Its Inverse

The linguistic evidence I refer to relates to the phenomenon of meaning extension of lexical items. Ordinary language is replete with polysemous words, namely words with multiple meaning. This applies to synaesthetic terms as well. For example, the adjective "sharp" represents such a polysemy, in that it may relate to both the TACTILE domain (as in "a sharp knife") and to the VISUAL domain (as in "sharp vision"). The question of interest is what the diachronic direction of meaning extension of synaesthetic terms may be. In general, I assume that if lower sensory domains are, indeed, more accessible than higher ones, one can expect that they will be more readily used as sources of word-meaning extensions, than will be higher sensory domains. An example which concurs with such directionality is the adjective "sharp," which has undergone meaning extension from the earlier meaning, relating to the lowest sense (TOUCH), to the highest sense (SIGHT).

The assumption that more accessible terms are more likely to extend their meaning to cover less accessible ones, than vice versa, derives from a pattern conceptual accessibility, that is of "lesser form") as 100, but will never perceive the figure 100 as 97. Subjects describe an 87 degree angle as "in effect" a 90 degree right angle, but not vice versa. Thus, stimuli that are "more accessible" are more likely to serve as cognitive reference points for stimuli which are "less accessible."
found in cases of metaphor in general (of which the synaesthesia is a special case). Thus, the literature on metaphorical meaning extension is replete with case studies in many languages, suggesting that terms representing concrete (i.e., relatively accessible) domains are more likely to undergo meaning extension to cover more abstract domains terms, than vice versa (see Lakoff and Johnson; Lakoff; Sweetser). A case in point is Sweetser’s study, in which semantic change of perception terms in Indo-European languages was analyzed. Sweetser concludes that these terms were initially restricted to physical-sensory strata while their meanings were extended to more abstract planes at a much later stage. For example, the initial meaning of the verb "to see" was restricted to the physical sense of sight; later, the verb acquired a multiplicity of meanings in a variety of Indo-European languages, today including the abstract notion "to understand" (reflected in expressions such as "I see where this concept leads").

Another example is the noun "taste" whose original meaning was as in "the taste of the cake was delicious"; this noun has undergone metaphorical extension covering other meanings, as in: "the whole affair left a bad taste in my mouth." No evidence was found in this study for the opposite direction of meaning extension.

In sum, the fact that terms representing concrete (i.e., relatively accessible) domains are more likely to undergo meaning extension to cover more abstract domains terms, rather than vice versa, indicates that this direction is more basic or natural from a cognitive point of view, hence more likely to be conventionalized in language, as argued in the studies by Sweetser and Lakoff and Johnson.

Turning back to the case of synaesthesia, I would assume that if lower sensory domains are, indeed, more accessible than higher ones, one would expect that they will be more readily used as sources of word-meaning extensions, than will be higher sensory domains. Some support in this direction comes from a study conducted by Williams, who examined the direction of diachronic meaning extension of synaesthetic adjectives, such as "sharp," "bitter," "warm," etc. and suggested the following rule: If a lexeme metaphorically transfers from its earliest sensory meaning to another sensory modality, it will transfer from a lower to a higher modality rather than vice versa. For example, if a touch-word transfers, it may transfer to taste (sharp, bitter, and hard tastes), to color (warm and light colors), or to sound (soft and heavy sounds). Taste words do not transfer back to tactile experience, but rather to higher modalities, such as smell (sweet or sour smells), or to sound (sweet sounds).

This unidirectionality of meaning extension represents, in fact, a robust law of semantic change, with a relatively small number of exceptions. Furthermore, Williams suggests that this is a universal tendency which applies to diverse languages such as English and Japanese. I see this linguistic finding as supporting the claim that lower sensory domains are more accessible, and therefore more readily used as sources of meaning extensions, than are higher sensory domains.
We can see, then, that mapping in synaesthesia is a special case of a general cognitive principle regarding metaphorical mapping resulting in the understanding that metaphorical mapping from a more accessible concept onto a less accessible one is more natural than the inverse.\(^3\)

4. Psychological Evidence Supporting the Cognitive Constraint on Directionality in Poetic Synaesthesia

Having introduced empirical evidence for the above cognitive account, I shall now introduce some psychological evidence supporting this account as well. Note, however, that this account suggests that low to high mapping represents, from a cognitive perspective, a more "natural" or "basic" structure than its inverse. In other words, it suggests that using our knowledge about accessible concepts in order to understand less accessible ones, seems a more natural way to understand concepts than the other way around.

Three predictions regarding comprehension and recall follow from this account: 1) The "low to high" mapping represents a structure that will be judged as more natural than its inverse; 2) The "low to high" structure will be better recalled than its inverse; and 3) The "low to high" structure will be easier to comprehend than its inverse. Let me briefly describe some initial empirical evidence supporting these predictions.

**Prediction 1.** "The 'low to high' structure will be judged as more natural than its inverse." In order to gain some initial indication as to the psychological reality of the distinction between the synaesthesia's two structure types, I conducted an informal experiment aimed at examining the prediction that the "low to high" structure is judged as more natural than its inverse. Twenty informants — undergraduate student Hebrew native speakers — were presented with a set of 31 pairs of synaesthesias taken from poetry; each pair consisting of a synaesthesia extracted from a Hebrew poem (e.g., "a cold light") and a counterpart consisting of the same modalities but reflecting the opposite directionality ("a light coldness"). The order in which the two synaesthesias in each pair were presented was randomized across pairs (i.e., in half of the cases the original synaesthesia was presented first and its artificially constructed counterpart second, while in the other half the order was reversed).

After ensuring that neither of the structures seemed familiar to the informants, they were asked to indicate for each pair which of the two expressions seemed "more natural" and "more sensible." They were also given the option of "unable to decide." The hypothesis was that subjects would prefer "low to high" mapping

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\(^3\) In fact, this principle is itself a special case of an even more general cognitive principle proposed by Rosch, namely, the principle of "cognitive reference points." However, I will not elaborate upon this here, see Shen 1997.
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as "more natural" than its inverted counterpart. The results confirmed the hypothesis. Out of 620 judgments made by our subjects — 31 synaesthetic metaphors multiplied by 20 subjects — 453 judgments (73%) conformed to our hypothesis, while only 102 judgments (16.4%) conflicted with it, and 65 judgments (10.4%) were neutral (i.e., reflected an inability to decide).

Although no parametric analysis was conducted, it was quite clear that these results were consistent across subjects and across various modality mappings. Thus, for each subject the number of judgments compatible with the hypothesis ranged from 13 to 28 (22.6 on average), while those which conflicted with the hypothesis ranged from 1 to 10 (5 on average).

A closer inspection of the results reveals that most of the judgments which conflicted with the hypothesis consisted of the SIGHT to SOUND in accordance with Ullmann's findings.

**Prediction 2.** "The 'low to high' structure is better recalled than its inverse."

The second prediction was that low to high mapping would be better recalled than its inverse. The rationale underlying this prediction is that if the subjects' task is to recall as many items as they can, items that consist of a more natural structure will be better recalled. Previously, I tested this (1997a) with respect to Synaesthesia, and revealed some initial support for this prediction. Following is a brief description of the recall experiment, the 95 subjects who participated in this experiment read 20 synaesthesias, 10 of which represented standard structures (namely, "low to high" mapping) and 10 non-standard structures. In general, the synaesthesias were distributed among subjects in such a way that half the subjects read the low to high version while the other, read the high to low version of each synaesthesia. They were then asked to write down as many synaesthesias as they could recall.

The results were straightforward. As predicted, the recall for "standard synaesthesia" was significantly higher than for non-standard and the subjects demonstrated significant enhanced recall for those synaesthesias in which the source represented a sense lower in the hierarchy than the target.

**Prediction 3.** "The 'low to high' structure is easier to comprehend than its inverse."

The third prediction that follows from the account I have proposed is that the "canonical structure" should be easier to comprehend than its inverse. The rationale underlying this prediction is that a lesser cognitive effort is required to interpret a "natural" than a "less natural" structure. In a recent study, we provide some support for that prediction. Let me briefly summarize: The 16 subjects who participated in this experiment were asked to generate interpretations of synaesthesias they have read. The stimuli items were similar to those used in the recall experiment. Once again, each subject read a list of 20 synaesthesias, half of which represented high to low mapping while the other half the opposite directionality. The subjects were asked to write down an interpretation for each synaesthesia and to explain its meaning. In order to test our
prediction we performed three types of analyses on the subjects' responses. Each analysis was designed to provide some indication as to which of the two constructions — the "standard" or "non standard" structure — more readily provides interpretation for the reader. Put differently, each analysis was designed to provide some indication as to which of the structures is easier to assign meaning to.

Several of the subjects failed to come up with any response to some of the synaesthesias, which may serve as a measure of the difficulty in comprehension of the synaesthetic expression. The first analysis simply tested the prediction that among the uninterpreted expressions the number of "non standard" structures will outrank those of the "standard" ones. This prediction was fully confirmed. Among the 23 cases in which subjects failed to come up with an interpretation, 19 (82.6%) were "non standard" synaesthesia while only 4 (17.39%) were "standard synaesthesia." A statistical analysis revealed that this difference is significant.

The second analysis involved an interesting phenomenon that occurred in some of the subjects' responses. Ordinarily, one would expect the subject's response to preserve the original topic; for example, in response to the synaesthesia "hot music," one subject wrote: "music which expresses passion," in which the original topic ("music") has preserved its original position as the topic. However, we observed that in some responses the original modifier of the synaesthesia had entered the topic slot of the response. For example, in responding to the expression "voiced sweetness," one subject wrote: "a sweet and pleasant voice." Clearly, this response represents both a shift of the (stimulus) original topic ("sweetness") into the modifier position in the response, and the shift of the (stimulus) original modifier's ("voiced") into the topic position of the response. Such instances indicate "inverting responses"; in contrast, cases in which the response topic preserves the original topic can be labelled "preserving response." We expected that since non standard structure is less natural and more difficult to assign meaning to than standard structure, subjects would tend to invert the former more frequently than they would the latter, in order to come up with a reasonable interpretation.

Note that in general we assumed subjects would choose as a default strategy to preserve the original topic rather than invert it. Given this default bias, however, our prediction was that among the inverting responses, those generated by "non standard" structures will outrank those generated by standard ones. Indeed 24 of the 25 responses classified as inverting responses (96%) were responses to non standard structures, while only one (4%) was generated by a standard structure.

The third analysis deals with the degree of homogeneity and heterogeneity of responses across subjects. We assumed that if the meaning of a given synaesthesia is more readily available to the subjects, it will generate more similar responses across subjects than would a synaesthesia whose interpretation is less
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readily available. The reason for that is that if there is a relatively straightforward way to interpret a given expression, this expression will be shared by more subjects than in cases no such straightforward interpretation is available. We predicted, therefore, that "standard synaesthesias" will generate more similar responses than "non standard" ones. To test this prediction, we divided the responses given to each synaesthesia into groups, according to the similarity between the responses. Our rationale was that the more groups of responses to a given synaesthesia the greater the heterogeneity between the responses; and the fewer groups, the greater the homogeneity. The results supported the aforementioned prediction.

In other words, the mean number of groups among the "standard synaesthesia" responses was significantly smaller than among the "non standard" synaesthesia responses; that is, the degree of homogeneity within the former is higher than in the latter.

The findings of the second experiment, then, suggest that non standard structures generate more failures of interpretation, more inverting responses, and more heterogeneous responses than do standard ones. I take these findings to be converging evidence for the claim that the interpretations of "standard" structures are more readily available and are more easily assigned than those of non standard structures. Further support for the prediction regarding the ease/difficulty of comprehension of synaesthetic structure, was obtained in a developmental pilot study (in preparation). The subjects in this pilot were two groups of children, fourth graders and seventh graders. The design and procedure of this study, as well as the analyses performed on the subjects' responses were identical to the interpretation generation study we have just described. The results showed the same pattern as the previous experiment, namely, that the "canonically ordered" synaesthesias were more readily interpreted than their non-canonical counterparts.

5. Conclusion

Poetic discourse exhibits a highly selective pattern in using synaesthesia in that it favors "low to high" mapping over the "high to low" structure, across poetic contexts, historical periods, and national boundaries. I suggested that this pattern conforms to a basic cognitive principle which favors the use of low to high mapping over its inverse. Both linguistic and psychological evidence were introduced, lending initial support for this account. Such a proposal may contribute both to the study of a theory of poetic discourse, and to the study of metaphor in the cognitive sciences.

As far as the study of poetic discourse is concerned, the present paper suggests a radically different account of the regularities characterizing aspects of poetic discourse, which traditional contextual theories fail to account for. As stated in the outset of the paper, despite the creativity and novelty manifested in poetic
language — which results in its characteristic intricacies and complexities, as theorists of literature would argue — certain semantic aspects of poetic language are rather systematic and constrained. The main proposal made here is that these constraints are, in part, cognitive in nature. That is, even if we adopt the Russian Formalists’ position that language of poetry violently breaks and violates cognitive principles and processes, it must be recognized that this breaking and violation of rules is itself governed by cognitive principles and constraints. It may very well be the case that it is this adherence to (cognitive) constraints which guarantees the interpretability of even complex poetic expression. In other words, the cognitive constraints, while allowing a certain amount of "freedom" for poetic language, guarantee its interpretability by blocking various options. A beautiful illustration for this claim is the following complex synaesthesia, excerpted from Keats’ poetry (and cited in Ullmann) — "Taste the music of that vision pale." This is a complex synaesthesia, involving the sensory domains of taste, sound, and sight. Note, however, that even this highly creative and novel expression strictly follows the constraint we introduced: the mapping goes from sound ("the music") to sight ("that vision pale") to a sound-sight combination ("the music of that vision pale"), and from taste ("taste") to the previous sound-sight combination ("the music of that vision pale"). This adherence to the aforementioned constraint may be responsible for the fact that this piece seems more readily available to interpretation than a similar synaesthesia with opposite directionality.

From the broader perspective of the study of metaphor in the cognitive sciences, the present proposal provides a complementary perspective on the relation between cognition and poetic figuration to currently received views. Studies of human cognition during the last fifteen years have convincingly argued that figurative modes of thinking such as metaphor, analogy, and personification are not restricted to poetry, but, rather, play a central role in ordinary human cognition in general. For example, Lakoff and Johnson and many of his followers — notably Gibbs — have convincingly argued that various "poetic" modes of language and thought, and notably the metaphor, constrain and shape many major aspects of common, non-poetic use of language and thought. The very title of Gibbs’ recent book, The Poetics of Mind, beautifully illustrates this view. Thus, we think metaphorically of abstract concepts such as "love" in concrete terms such as “travel,” as revealed by expressions like "we have reached a crossroad in our relations" or "let’s change direction." In this view, then, figurative modes of thinking, traditionally attributed to poetry, constrain ordinary human cognition. The present proposal suggests that the relation between poetry and cognition is bi-directional. In other words, the use of synaesthesia and other figures in poetic discourse reveals that not only is human cognition constrained and structured by poetic modes of language, but aspects of poetic language themselves are constrained by general cognitive constraints.

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1. Introduction

In the following, I will postulate some preliminary observations with regards to the theoretical foundations of my topic. Further, my discussion will involve deliberations on issues of the discipline of literature in its wider context of Cultural Studies. These considerations and reflections are motivated by recent, but seemingly unrelated developments in social theory, literature, and society. First, there is the emergence of a wide-spread "identity politics" and a concomitant scholarly focus on the "social construction of identity" (see, for example, Segers). Second, we have the longstanding, but recently renewed contribution of literature to notions of cultural identity in and of a society (see, for example, Williams and Parkes), and third, we should consider the reconfigured approach to the concept of narrative that scholars in many disciplines have been formulating in the last few decades, among other aspects reaffirming that the notion of narration has its roots in classical social science and in literature (see, for example, Halász).

Although all of these aspects are important developments, all of them have problems and limitations as they now stand. I argue that the limitations of each may be overcome by bridging their disparities based on their common or overlapping thematics.

2. The Study of Identity: Habermas

Studies of identity formation have provided major contributions to our understanding of social agency.¹ A recurring problem, however, has been a perhaps inadvertent tendency to conflate identities with what can often slide into fixed "essentialist" and singular categories such as race, sex, or gender, that is,
the "Other." This "ontological" thinking has characterized a number of theories and studies in their efforts to restore the previously marginalized "Other." In other words, the "King's way" would be to avoid the hazards of rigidifying aspects of identity into a misleading categorical entity is to incorporate the categorically destabilizing dimension of time into the core conception of identity. The "Queen's way" would be to give the attempt a more constructive dimension by adopting the epistemological, ontological, and methodological challenges of a social constructivist approach to the study of identity formation (for a representative work of this approach see, for example, White; Alexander and Smith). Historicizing people's constitution of identity as well as its reconstruction by social research is a key of the constructivist approach that aims at the study of the role and the function of cultural identity.

In 1967 Richard Rorty congratulated scientists for having made it around the "linguistic turn"; fifteen years later he urges us to get on with "the literary-historical-anthropological-political merry-go-around" subsequently set in motion (see Rorty 1967, 1982). Rorty's pronouncements illustrate the ups and downs of attempts to rejuvenate new ideas of science in its most general context. The more or less Neo-Kantian aspirations of analytic philosophy have been challenged by the invasion of ideas of historical variability of structures of thought and action and their embeddedness in lifeworlds and traditions, of the conventionality of criteria of rationality and their entanglement with power and interest, and of rational subjects as embodied and practically engaged with the world of ideas. Briefly put, we are confronted by the impurity of "pure reason." In the last two decades all of this has served to produce a scholarly turmoil in which the leading parties have called for everything from "anything goes" or the "end of philosophy and science" by deconstruction or its radical transformation to less radical holistic and constructive alternations of the analytic program. In the case of the history and the parameters of identity construction and formation, for instance, the situation seriously compromised ontological reasoning. However, I postulate that a social constructivist approach allows for a more pragmatic view of how cultural identities are formed in a given society. The approach also permits a modification of and the knowledge about the locus of the observer. In this social constructivist model, the standpoint of the observer of cultural practices such as cultural identity formation is not the viewpoint of omnipotence but of, for instance, the historian of ideas or the anthropologist or the social scientist. Interpreters of culture inevitably bring with themselves the perspectives and concerns of their own cultures; they cannot avoid relying upon the taken-for-granted assumptions built into the languages and practices that comprise their own cultural identities. It follows that we should attempt to distance ourselves from certain — although not all as this would be impossible — aspects of our cultural practices. In our own culture we can never be observers without being participants. The interpreter of culture inhabits an a priori position that is located
his/her acts of observation.

The above notion is a major point in Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative action. Here it will neither be possible to go into all the details of his framework nor to assess its general strengths and weaknesses. Rather, I would like to highlight a specific feature that has been more or less ignored in the conformity models of social systems inspired by the work of Niklas Luhmann and I am thinking of Habermas's concept of lifeworld (Lebenswelt). Briefly put, Habermas relocates the opposition between the ideal and the real within the domain of social practice itself. He argues that communicative (inter)action is permeated at all times by idealized pragmatic presuppositions concerning reason, truth, and reality. Further, these presuppositions are neither applicable to the notion of the construction of reality in the Platonic sense, nor are they merely regulative in the Kantian sense. As we cannot avoid making presuppositions while engaged in processes of mutual understanding, these assumptions are actually effective in structuring communication and at the same time typically counterfactual in ways which point beyond the limits of actual (real) situations. As a result, our ideas of reason, truth, objectivity and the like are both immanent and transcendent of the practices, norms, and standards of our culture.

In his framework, Habermas inveighs against models of the social actant in which they are treated as epiphenomenal to what the actant knows of the social structure, and how he/she reflects on and makes use of the available resources to make sense of a given culture. On the contrary, Habermas, relying on the work of W. Schlütz, George H. Mead, Herbert Garfinkel, and others, claims that we use our common-sense knowledge of social structure in order to make situations of interaction both intelligible and accountable. This kind of shared knowledge informs the normative expectations we bring along to social situations, and thus it serves simultaneously as a (subjective) cognitive and a (social) normative background to any interaction. Thus, if we want to make sense of social situations, we cannot but relate by reflection to background schemes of interpretation and expectation, and draw actively on our capacities for practical reasoning and acting in concrete situations. It is a matter of our social experience that narratives help us to figure out those schemes of interpretation and expectation. In normal social interaction, we reciprocally impute practical rationality to our partners in interaction, credit them with knowing what they are doing and why they are doing it, view their conduct as under their control and done for some purpose or reason known to them, and thus hold them responsible for it. Although this pervasive assumption of rational accountability is frequently — perhaps even always — counterfactual, it is of fundamental significance for the structure of human relations. Narratives, especially those which are embedded in discourses of constituting the normative structure of our social practice and our every-day life, i.e., Habermas's lifeworld, primarily use the "as if" formula to create a virtual world of experiencing in order to balance unavoidable...
simplification of social complexity. Narratives — from a sociological point of view — allow us to obtain a picture of shared lifeworlds, and train people to employ alternatives, because we should, for the sake of stabilizing our lifeworld, always be aware that there is more going on in placid scenes of "community agreement" and "general rules" than what appears to the naked eye (see Habermas 1974; 1985).

In the following, I will argue that Habermas's postulates may be further explicated when combined with his argument in his 1987 article, "Können komplexe Gesellschaften eine vernünftige Identität ausbilden?" Habermas's reply to this fundamental question is "No, modern societies cannot." He argues that modern societies are organized in the form of national states. The collective identity ascribed to the citizens of a state is a more or less territorially or ethnically limited and defined identity. Thus, by definition and history, national identity today excludes foreigners, and it privileges the specific interests of the indigenous population. As membership to a nation is normally determined by birth — and my point of reference excludes the North American continent — and not by choice, we are faced with two elements alien to the principles of European enlightenment and universal reason: although the national identity of individuals and communities is an ubiquitous, universal feature of life in the modern world, its foundations are inevitably particularistic and ascriptive. Thus, Habermas argues, it is not possible to derive a rational individual or collective identity from identification with a national or ethnic group. Instead, he advocates the acceptance of the universalistic principles of freedom, equality, and justice which may lead to a rationally founded "constitutional patriotism" (Verfassungspatriotismus) as a basis of macro-social identification and solidarization. In other words, Habermas projects a model in which he links issues of ontology and epistemology, of identity, and of social action and agency.2

The basis upon which my critique of ontological reasoning in the study of identity formation turned was the idea that identity formation is structured by needs, goals, normative rules, etc., including such as Habermas's Verfassungspatriotismus. I postulate that individuals use and have to use cultural identity in order to live their every-day life in a given society. Here, I would like to return to the point of the process of the constitution of social and cultural identity and examine it more closely, focussing on the function of narrative.

3. Narrative

Looking back at the long history of narrative and its study, it is striking how after the first insightful, sometimes brilliant observations made by the Classics

2 For arguments opposing Habermas's framework and a critique of Habermas' "ethnocentrism" see, for example, Li.
it has been very slow indeed in bypassing explications of the individual and society and progressing to more representative examples. However, when looking at present-day disciplines using the concept, we find a situation characterized by a radical reconceptualizing of the narrative. While older scholarly uses and interpretations of narrative were limited to that of a representational form, new approaches define narrative and narrativity as concepts of social epistemology and social ontology (e.g., Genette; Mitchell; Baynes et al.). These concepts prescribe that it is through narrativity that we come to know, understand, and make sense of the social world, and it is through narratives and narrativity that we constitute our individual and social identities. They argue that individuals come to be who they are — however ephemeral, multiple, and changing in a changing world — by being located or locating ourselves in social narratives rarely of our own making.

The arguments of this concept of narrativity are broad and diverse. The shift in focus from a representational to an ontological narrativity is, however, the most important one. Before this shift, philosophers of history had argued that narrative modes of representing knowledge (e.g., telling historical stories) were representational forms imposed by historians on the chaos of lived experience. Recently, however, scholars have postulated something much more substantive about narrative: namely, that social life is itself storied and that narrative is an ontological condition of social life (e.g., Sewell; Kreiswirth and Carmichael). Their research is showing us, to underline this again, that stories guide action — an outcome which reminds especially literary scholars of the results of story-grammar research (see, e.g., Beaugrande).

In sum: people construct identities — however multiple and changing — by furnishing their world with stories. Within such a story-embedded world experience is constituted through narratives. People make sense of what has happened and is happening to them by attempting to assemble or in some way to integrate these happenings within one or more narratives. People are guided to act in certain ways, and not others, on the basis of the projections, expectations, and memories derived from a multiple but ultimately limited repertoire of available social, public, and cultural narratives.

Notwithstanding that these efforts of recent scholarship of the narrative have impressive consequences even in disciplines such as medicine, psychology, anthropology, law, biology, and physics, mainstream sociology often neglects to get into a deeper contact with these consequences. This occurs, I contend, because of the problematics of self-identity of the social sciences. During the last two decades mainstream social science has tried to recast social analysis along the central axes of the interaction between agency and structure, that is, to develop a social theory that allows for human action that is nevertheless bound and constrained by structural restraints (see, e.g., Alexander and Smith). This omission results in the distancing from those ontological implications which
strictly belong to the study of identity formation. Obviously, the study of identity formation hinges on ontology and this is altogether different from general social science approaches to agency and action.

Relying on Habermas's concept, however, the joining of the concepts of social action, ontology, and identity formation becomes possible. More, such an approach is the core of his concept. In order to benefit from this linking, however, in empirical research we must reject the separate view of action, identity and ontology in mainstream social research. Instead, we must accept that some notions of social being and social identity are incorporated into each and every knowledge statement about action, agency, behaviour, etc. Thus, we will be able to enlarge our analytical focus on social ontology and the social constitution of identity.

Narrative is not the world but the world cannot be experienced without narration. After all, everything we know, from making love, coping with illness to political action, and so on, is at least partly a result of numerous cross-cutting relational story-lines in which social actants locate and find themselves. I hold that an energetic engagement with this new concept of narrativity provides an opportunity to infuse the study of identity formation with an approach that avoids categorical rigidities by emphasizing the embeddedness of identity in overlapping networks of communicative relations and social construction. Finally, this approach assumes that social action can only be intelligible if we recognize that people's acts are guided by structural and cultural relationships in which they are embedded and by the stories through which they constitute their identities — and less because of, for example, the interests we impute to them.

4. Literature

The theoretical and methodological argument to join the Empirical Study of Literature with the study of identity formation and narrative analysis is implicit in the above discussion. Consequently, the question of the study of literature becomes evident. Literature's role in humanizing the world is thus to be seen in the light that many literary texts promote thought by exposing the social fabric to probing, questioning, criticism, satire, to the projection of certain tendencies, as in Dystopian writing, or the juxtaposition with alternatives, as in Utopian writing, etc. It has been a common belief since Enlightenment that no institution or form of society ever invented is so perfect that it could not in some ways benefit from literature. Most importantly, literary texts offer us the ability to live more than our own one life.

And a final note: it would not be appropriate here to explain how the social and psychological functions of literature and the system of literature became important in culture — and how a culture imports literary texts into the social network of communication and acting (see, e.g., Schmidt; Viehoff). But with the
framework I outlined in this paper it would surely be rewarding and it would result in meaningful insights to observe and to describe, for instance, the details and contexts that lead from Homer's *Ulysses* to Werner Nekes's film "Uli isses" in 1967 and how these enlighten the path of identity formation in the social world of Europe and Germany.

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The Empirical Study of Literature and Literary Actions: A New Perspective on Literary Evaluation

1. Objectives

The field of literary evaluation is constituted of phenomena which can be divided into three groups: 1) Phenomena which are part of the reading process (whether readers like or dislike the texts they are reading, whether they regard them as good or bad, interesting or boring, whether they experience the emotional states during the reading process as pleasant or unpleasant); 2) Phenomena of choice and selection (i.e., decisions of individual readers for or against buying or reading a text, decisions of publishing houses to accept or refuse a text for publication, decisions of institutions such as schools and universities to include a text into their curricula, decisions of literary scholars to write articles and of literary critics to write newspaper reviews about a certain text); 3) Verbal statements — be they spoken or written, given by "ordinary" readers, critics, or scholars — that attribute value to literary texts, oeuvres, genres, authors, readers, publishers, scholars, teachers, and critics of literary texts (e.g., statements like "I find science fiction boring," "Shakespeare is the greatest playwright," "psychologically, the novel remains superficial and unconvincing," "the publisher's policy is not politically correct," "school curricula should be rebuilt so as to adequately represent the literature of ethnic minorities").

These remarks should suffice to show that phenomena which I propose to classify as "literary evaluations" represent important elements of literary actions. They are part and parcel of various aspects of literature: of text-thematizing activities of producers, mediators, recipients, and post-processors of literary phenomena in their respective social context" (Schmidt 1989, 2), i.e., with the whole range of literary phenomena empirical scholars are interested in. However, literary evaluations do not play an important role as research objects in the field of the Empirical Study of Literature. One of the reasons for this could well be that there is no theoretical concept of literary evaluation "available" which could serve as a suitable instrument for describing these phenomena.

For two reasons, traditional theories of literary evaluation are of little help as
descriptive instruments — they are normative and they focus on literary texts. Thus, the aim of my study is to present some elements of a non-normative theory of literary evaluation, one which has a scope wide enough to serve as a theoretical basis for studies of literary evaluations within the four action roles, i.e., for studies that describe different types of literary evaluation, their historical and/or institutional status, and its changes.

I begin by sketching the general concept of "value" and "evaluation." Towards this background I present an outline of the concept of literary evaluation and its applicability for empirical studies. Finally, I give an example for the application of a specific part of the concept, i.e., an example for its application as an instrument for the description of what I call "literary evaluative statements."

2. A General Concept of Evaluation

2.1 Values and Evaluations

Underlying every — conscious or subconscious — evaluation, there is a relation between two states: an "is"-state and an "ought-to-be"-state of whatever the mental object of evaluation happens to be (objects can be, for instance, things, states, actions, processes, verbal utterances including evaluative statements). The "ought-to-be"-state serves as an evaluative criterion, i.e., as a device for measuring the "quality" or the "goodness" or "badness" of the "is"-state. On the basis of this evaluative criterion, the object is perceived as being more or less positive or negative. Thus, to evaluate an object means to assess it in its "is"-state by comparing it with its "ought-to-be"-state.

An evaluation, therefore, can basically be characterised as the attribution of a positive or negative quality to an object according to a given criterion. There are three aspects of an evaluation which are to be distinguished: the criterion, the object, and the quality ascribed to it. It is not uncommon to use the term "value" both with reference to its role as an evaluative criterion and with reference to an object's quality resulting from an evaluation. While the meaning "evaluative criterion" is involved when we speak of values such as "tolerance," "courage," "originality" (or "political correctness" to take a more topical example), the meaning "object quality" is involved when we speak of an object (e.g., a literary text) as having or not having "value," being or not being "valuable." This is implied when we say that a literary text is "good" (i.e., is "valuable" or has "value") because it is "original" (or, as the case may be, "politically correct"). This common "double meaning" of the term "value" concurs with the traditional distinction between "value as measure" versus "value as good" and the more recent distinction between "axiological value" and "attributive value."

1 See Najder; his concept has been further developed for the application to problems of literary evaluation von Heydebrand and Winko.
theless, I do not use the term "value" in the sense of "value as good" or "attributive value." Instead, I will speak of an object's quality and I only use it in the sense of "value as measure" or "axiological value."

Something should be said about the characteristics of values — apart from their serving as evaluative criteria: values can be regarded as conceptions of "ideal states of things" (Von Wright 1994, 32) or as "conceptions of the desirable" (Kluckhohn 395). Values can be expressed in phrases such as "X is good (desirable)" with "X" standing for a general concept like "tolerance," "courage," "originality," or "political correctness." It is important to bear in mind that values do not describe a person's factual desires, needs, or wishes. Rather, they describe what a person believes to be generally "desirable" or "good" — regardless of or even contrary to his/her own personal desires, wishes, or needs. This means that values have a categorical character.

Unfortunately, our every-day language suggests an extremely close — even exclusive — relationship between values and evaluations and this poses problems from a theoretical point of view. To avoid misunderstandings, it should be stressed that values are by no means the only concepts which can serve as evaluative criteria. On the contrary, "goodness," i.e., object qualities, can also be ascribed on the grounds of other concepts which imply certain "ought-to-be"-states and can, therefore, serve as evaluative criteria. Presumably, the most important ones are: norms, goals, and needs. As the kinds of evaluative criteria are different, the corresponding qualities are different, too. Thus, there

2 Although values and norms are closely related, they should be distinguished. While values describe an ideal world, norms prescribe something and do not describe anything (Von Wright 1994, 40). Norms are imperative. They express that something is obligatory, prohibited, or allowed. If someone says that literature has to be politically correct, this is an evaluation — but it is an evaluation which is norm oriented, not value oriented.

3 Basically, goals are anticipated states which a person (consciously or unconsciously) intends to realize through his/her (internal or external) activities. With respect to goals serving as evaluative criteria see, for example, Von Wright (1994, 127f). Needs can be regarded as a specific class of goals: here, the states which the person intends to realize are states of his/her own physical-psychological well-being. Needs serve as evaluative criteria whenever things, actions, persons, etc., are evaluated with regard to their suitability to improve (or impair) the subject's well-being. This implies that needs as evaluative criteria assess the "utility" resp. "usefulness" of an object which is regarded as a means or an instrument to realize a certain state. "Good" with respect to a given need, therefore, means "useful" for one's own well-being. More exactly, it means that it is "suitable" to realize — or move toward — an anticipated and intended optimal state of subjective well-being. A need-oriented evaluation of literature is given whenever a reader regards a literary text as a means to realize reading experiences which he/she deems to be pleasant, agreeable, enjoyable, amusing, etc. This kind of evaluation could, for instance, result in a reader considering a literary text as "bad" (i.e., passing a negative judgement on it) because he/she felt bored during the reading process. An example for a value-oriented evaluation is the judgement of a novel as "good" ("valuable"), because it realises the ideal of "originality," or its judgement as "bad" (devoid of value), because it does not realize it.
is a "variety of evaluative criteria" which corresponds to what Von Wright has called a "variety of goodness" (1963; with regard to the difference between "value" and "desire," see Watson). This means that the "goodness" or "quality" of an object can be ascribed on the grounds of norms, goals, needs, etc., as well as on the grounds of values — which is the reason why I avoid the usage of "value" as "good."

Unfortunately, this short article does not allow to present definitions of various concepts which can serve as evaluative criteria, let alone to distinguish and characterize their corresponding qualities. Therefore, I will concentrate on giving an outline of value-oriented evaluations — bearing in mind that what is said about the role of values basically holds true for the role of norms, goals, needs, etc., as well.

2.2 Levels of Evaluation

I suggest to distinguish between three levels on which values become operative and evaluations take place: 1) Values orient our interpretation of the world; 2) They motivate actions; and 3) They justify our evaluative statements. Terminologically, these three levels can be distinguished as cognitive, motivational, and theoretical values and evaluations.

On the cognitive level, values are "interpretative constructs" (Lenk 1994, 161-90) of the subject, i.e., they serve as a means of interpreting and describing the self and the world and are thus tied to processes which — depending on the epistemological opinion of the scholar and the kind of academic discourse he/she subscribes to — are called "interpretation of reality" (Lenk 1995, 11), "construction of reality" (Schmidt 1994), or "processing of information" (e.g., Scheele). Values serve as a means of processing our mental models of the world. As internal phenomena, cognitive values and evaluations are beyond the reach of an external observer. External observers — including scholars of literature — can grasp them only on the level of "open," i.e., "observable," action and on the level of verbal representation, i.e., when they become manifest as "motivational" and/or "theoretical" values and evaluations (I use the terms "motivational" and "theoretical value" according to Najder). This manifestation of values either on the level of action or on the level of evaluative statements is what has been called their "Janus-headed" character (Rescher 3).

On the second, the "motivational level," evaluations are tied to observable human activities which can be interpreted as actions (i.e., intentional, goal-directed activities), and that include communicative actions. I call values which serve as a basis for the evaluation and subsequent decision for or against

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4 As constructs of the cognitive-emotional interpretation of the self and its environment, cognitive values are phenomena of an individual's internal experiences, actions, and "covered behaviour." Obviously, evaluations on this level are internal processes, too.
performing a certain action "motivational values" and the corresponding processes "motivational evaluations."

Every action is necessarily (per definitionem) preceded by the choice of a goal. Obviously, the notion of "choice" implies that there has been at least one alternative goal. The given goal has been chosen from among at least two possible goals. Therefore, the choice of a goal involves an act of preference and is the result of a process during which the quality of potential/possible goals is being assessed according to certain evaluative criteria, which — apart from values — can be needs, norms, etc.

Evaluative statements ("the soccer game is good/bad, boring/exciting," "I like/don't like chocolate") constitute the theoretical level of evaluation. From a pragmatic point of view, "evaluative statements" are communicative actions, whereas from a semantic point of view — which is of interest here — they are a specific case of predication. Accordingly, an evaluative statement can be characterised as a statement which ascribes not (or not solely) a descriptive, but rather an evaluative predicate to an object. Descriptive predicates on the one hand and evaluative predicates on the other can best be distinguished with respect to the argumentations which are employed to support them. Descriptive statements ("this is a soccer game") are supported by referring to factual information, e.g., by pointing out characteristics and rules of the game and their being acted out on the field. Evaluative statements, however, are supported by referring to an evaluative criterion such as a value, a norm, a goal, or a need (either instead of referring to factual information, or in addition to it).

3. A Concept of Literary Evaluation

From the introductory remarks in my article, it will have become obvious that in my usage the term "literary evaluation" refers to phenomena on all three levels of evaluation: Phenomena which I classify as "literary evaluations" can be found on the cognitive, the motivational, and the theoretical levels of evaluation. Since cognitive values and evaluations serve as a means of processing our mental models of the world, they also serve as a means of processing our mental models of the literary texts we read. This implies that cognitive evaluations are important components of the reading process, i.e., of our comprehension, understanding, and interpretation of the text and the emotional experiences going along with it. In other words, there are the evaluations offered when readers like or dislike the texts they are reading, regard them as good, bad, interesting, boring, etc., or experience the emotional states during the reading process as pleasant or unpleasant.

Motivational values and evaluations play an important role for literary actions like the choice of reading material, i.e., decisions of individual readers to buy or read a text, of literary scholars to write articles, and of literary critics to write
newspaper reviews about a certain text, decisions of publishing houses for or against the publication of a text, or of schools and universities for or against the acceptance of a text into their curricula. In my article, however, I shall not pay any further attention to those phenomena which are classified as cognitive and motivational. Instead, I will focus exclusively on the theoretical level, i.e., on what can be called "evaluative statements on literature" or "literary evaluative statements."

3.1 Literary Evaluative Statements

Traditionally, evaluative statements which are to be classified as "literary evaluative statements" have been understood as evaluative statements which refer to literary texts as their objects of evaluation (e.g., "I find science fiction boring," "Shakespeare is the greatest playwright"). Adopting, respectively maintaining this somewhat narrow perspective would, however, be rather unproductive, because we would then blindfold ourselves toward a wide range of phenomena which are highly relevant for questions of literary evaluation. Therefore, I suggest to broaden the perspective and argue that evaluative statements which are to be classified as "literary evaluative statements" are not only those which evaluate literary texts (i.e., texts which the speakers regard as literary), but include those which evaluate literary actions. Literary actions include communicative actions and can internally be distinguished into actions and meta-actions (sensu Barsch). Therefore, statements such as "the publisher's policy is not politically correct" or "school curricula should be rebuilt so as to adequately represent the literature of ethnic minorities" are classified as literary evaluative statements, since they evaluate literary meta-actions.

In other words, the category "literary evaluative statement" in the sense I propose consists of evaluative statements which ascribe a quality to the following objects:

1) Literary texts and text groups (oeuvres, genres, periods);
2) The production and reception of texts which the actors regard as literary, i.e., literary actions and actors, their orienting attitudes, goals, motivations, values, social conventions, and norms (e.g., author's political beliefs as orienting attitudes for the text production, the reader's wish for entertainment, information, intense emotional experiences as conventional and/or normative reading motivations);
3) Actions which refer to literary actions, i.e., to literary production and reception, and can therefore be regarded as literary meta-actions. Again, this includes the actors ("meta-actors"), their orienting attitudes, goals, motivations, values, social conventions, and norms (e.g., actions of publishers, critics, and scholars who make decisions for or against the publication of a text, statements in newspaper reviews, scholarly articles, etc., i.e., statements referring to the
production and reception of literary texts).  

3.2 Purposes of the Proposed Concept of Evaluation

Theoretical concepts should not be ends in themselves. Rather, they are a means for a purpose. Therefore, let me point out the kind of problems for whose study this concept of literary evaluation might be heuristically useful. First of all, the concept can serve as a theoretical basis to describe which objects are evaluated, which qualities they are ascribed, and on the grounds of which criteria. Such objects may include, for instance, Shakespeare's sonnets, readers of pornography, literary critics and/or scholars after 1945; possible qualities are, for instance, good/bad, exciting, boring, original, politically correct; possible criteria are, for instance, formal consistency, emotional arousal, novelty, familiarity, political correctness. Based on such descriptions, distinctions between certain types of literary evaluation can be introduced either with respect to the objects (e.g., literary critics), their qualities (e.g., political correctness), or the criteria (e.g., emotional arousal).

On this basis, we can study the "object domain" and the "social and/or historical realm" of certain types of evaluation. In the first case ("object domain"), we study whether certain criteria (e.g., novelty, emotional arousal, political correctness) are regarded as relevant for a particular class of texts, for instance for a particular literary genre (e.g., science fiction, sonnets, pornography), and/or for a literary period (e.g., postmodern literature, German literature after 1945, Elizabethan comedy). Here, we are dealing with the question whether there is a specific "object domain" of certain types of literary evaluation.

In the second case ("social and/or historical realm"), we start out from a synchronic perspective and investigate the social realm of certain types of literary evaluation by studying whether they can be related to specific groups and/or institutions (e.g., political correctness as an evaluative criterion used by publishers, critics, scholars in Germany and/or in the USA); or we start out from a diachronic perspective and study which types of literary evaluation are prevalent at which time (e.g., the role of political correctness as an evaluative criterion for literary criticism in Germany before and after Reunification and/or for literary criticism in the USA before and after the beginning of the so-called canon debate). From this, we can move on to studying the social status of certain types of literary evaluation.

However, we must bear in mind the following. It may happen that a literary meta-action (e.g., an evaluative statement) becomes itself the object of an action (e.g., the object of an evaluative statement), which would then — strictly speaking — have to be classified as a meta-meta-action. In this study, however, it is sufficient to point out that various meta-levels of literary action are possible and that both the actions and their objects may be evaluative statements.
literary evaluation, i.e., to studying questions such as which evaluative criteria are prevalent, which are controversial or consensual (in which social realm and to what degree)? Which evaluative criteria are conventional, i.e., which criteria do members of a social group or institution expect that they are expected to apply? Which evaluative criteria are normative, i.e., which are regarded as being obligatory? And to which extent do people comply with these norms?

4. An Example: The Debate on Christa Wolf’s *Was bleibt*

Here, I will apply the above outlined postulates to the heated debate between authors of various German newspapers and magazines in order to offer some topical examples of these questions and an illustration of the kind of phenomena within the scope of the concept I have put forward.

The debate was initiated in June 1990 by two highly controversial reviews of Christa Wolf’s novel *Was bleibt* (What Remains or What is Left) and continued until November of the same year. The articles contributing to the debate were almost exclusively published in West German newspapers, but were authored by West Germans as well as East Germans, mainly journalists (not necessarily literary critics) and writers such as Wolf Biermann, Günter Grass, Lew Kopelew, etc. There was no national newspaper which did not contribute to the debate and some articles could even be found in international newspapers (e.g., the New York Times, The New York Book Review, the Observer, the Times Literary Supplement, Le Monde, etc.). It received more attention than any other literary debate in Germany after World War II. It may be a little exaggerated to regard it as one of the two "turning points in the history of contemporary German literature" (Anz 22). However, exaggerated or not, it shows the extraordinary significance the dispute has frequently been ascribed to.

Wolf’s novel, which deals with the experiences of a woman author under surveillance by the “Stasi” (Staatssicherheitsdienst), the East German secret police, was written in 1979 and revised and published in 1990. Although it was the novel that sparked the debate, neither the book nor its author turned out to be the the core topics of the debate. Rather, the debate concerned a number of more general problems. In fact, there was such a variety of controversial topics that confusion arose among participants as to "the" actual topic discussed. Retrospectively, however, I think that, basically, two groups of topics and two

6 Christa Wolf was perhaps the most well known East German author in West Germany as well as elsewhere. It seems likely that her being a person of outstanding publicity among a wide audience was a condition for the discussion’s gaining considerable attention.

7 The title of the novel gave rise to the expectation that Christa Wolf would come up with what would be something like a poetic balancing of the accounts of the former East German state. It proved to disappoint these expectations.
corresponding debates can be distinguished: a political and a literary one.

While for the argumentation in this paper, only the literary debate is of interest, a few remarks on the political debate will be useful. The political debate was a kind of moral reckoning with social groups Christa Wolf was regarded as a representative of. Above all, this debate was concerned with the share of the blame falling on German intellectuals for the political situation during and after World War II, in East as well as in West Germany. In the course of the debate, Wolf was regarded as the representative for various groups: for writers who had stayed in East Germany instead of emigrating to the West or for left-wing (East and West) German poets; for intellectuals in East Germany; intellectuals after World War II (East and West); and left-wing intellectuals of the presence and the past. In the political debate moral and/or political judgements were passed on Wolf's behaviour before the opening of the wall, on her political convictions, on her moral attitudes, and on her character. However, because Wolf is not seen and judged as an individual but as the representative of various groups, the debate was basically a kind of moral reckoning with social groups for which Christa Wolf is regarded as being representative. Above all, it was concerned with the share of the blame falling on German intellectuals for the political situation during and after World War II, in East as well as in West Germany.

While the political debate is primarily a national German "affair," in that it was closely connected with the political present and past in Germany, the literary debate deals with questions which clearly go beyond national particularities. In my opinion, it is chiefly a discussion concerned with general questions about literary evaluation. Importantly, Was bleibt as an individual text is least often the object of literary evaluation. Rather, the debate itself was a literary evaluation in the context that the text played a role as an object of evaluation and representing whole text groups with Was bleibt sometimes, but not always, taken as a typical example. The most important text group here is a kind of literature (be it German or not), which is referred to as "Gesinnungsliteratur" (see Greiner; it is somewhat similar to the nation of the "literature of ideas"). From the German,

8 "In der Tat ging es mir bei dem Streit nicht um Christa Wolf ... [Erwartet habe ich] eine aufrichtige Auseinandersetzung mit der Frage intellektueller Mitverantwortung. Das hat Christa Wolf verschluckt" (Greiner 245). Greiner points out that "der Streit nicht um sie [Wolf] geht, sondern um ein zentrales Kapitel intellektuelle deutscher Geschichte, an der die Westdeutschen ebenso teilhatten wie die Ostdeutschen" (247). See also Schirrmacher, who stresses that the debate was "von Anfang an exemplarisch gemeint: Christa Wolf ist die repräsentative Figur des deutschen Intellektuellen in der Nachkriegszeit" (256). Similarly, Chaim Noll stated that "Was ich Christa Wolf vorzuwerfen hatte, betraf intellektuelle Mitschuld an einem verwerflichen Regime, ein epochales deutsches Thema .... Mein Widerspruch galt einem deutschen Komment, der mich eidetisch an etwas erinnerte, weniger der Schriftstellerin Christa Wolf als Person. ... Sie war, wie alle Streitparteien betonten, nur eine Chiffre für ein allgemeines Symptom, summarisch 'Mitläufertum' genannt" (252).
the term can best be translated as "literature of attitude." It may be understood as a type of literature that may be understood as morally and politically correct. Usually, however, it is not this group of literary texts that is being is evaluated, but rather literary actions which are connected with it. For instance, it was debated whether or not it was appropriate for moral and political attitudes to guide the production and reception of literary texts. Similar questions, only on a more general level, are concerned when it is discussed how literature should be read and which evaluative criteria of readers can be judged as positive and which as negative.

Literary meta-actions — within a specific historical and institutional realm — become the objects of evaluation when the question comes up whether the prevalent and conventional type of literary criticism in post-war Germany has been based on the assumption that good literature is morally and politically correct literature. What was discussed was the consensual and conventional status of a type of literary evaluation. When the question was put forward whether it was a mistake of West German literary critics to have judged East German literature chiefly with respect to the courage their authors showed in writing their texts, it is the legitimacy of an evaluative convention and of the respective evaluative criterion used to exist within the institution of literary criticism for a specific object realm. From the discussion of these questions the debate moves to evaluative criteria: Which are or should be normative for literary criticism, does literary criticism have a right to pass moral judgements involving the application of "moral and political correctness" as an evaluative criterion and what, after all, is the generally desirable form of literary criticism, i.e., which objects should be judged on the grounds of which criteria? In the hierarchy of these meta-levels of literary action as objects of literary evaluation, a climax is reached when it is debated whether literary criticism as an institution has a right to act as the sender of obligatory evaluative criteria by proclaiming demands on literary producers or whether this displays a normative tendency which is to be condemned.

My above brief example should suffice to show that participants in the debate about Wolf's novel deal with a wide range of topics from the whole realm of literary actions. It is obvious that what participants do least of all is the actual evaluation of the literary text. Evaluative statements are being delivered continuously, but, instead of being aimed at literary texts, they are chiefly aimed at literary actions and meta-actions on several levels — including evaluations by literary and meta-literary actors. Of major importance is the legitimacy of

9 Connected with this is the question whether or not it is appropriate for the "average reader" and the literary critic to judge literary texts as "good" or "bad" on the grounds of their moral and political correctness. Here, "moral and political correctness" as an evaluative criterion is clearly highly controversial.
"political correctness" and other evaluative criteria which are or should be employed by literary writers, readers, and — most of all — by literary critics.

5. Conclusion

The above outlined are questions which are neither new, nor specifically German. Scholars and the general public have argued about them at other times and at other places. In the United States and Canada, for instance, similar questions have been raised in the context of the so-called canon debate. Of course, this debate, too, has to be seen in the context of its specific cultural and historical background.

Nevertheless it is obvious that — despite the different cultural contexts and national particularities — the debate which was initiated by Wolf’s novel and the ongoing canon debate share considerable common ground: they are, among other things, discussions of the significance of moral and political correctness in the field of literature, that is, discussions about the value of literature. Thus, the study of literary evaluation in the context of literary and communicative action based on empirical data proves to be an important area of study. By studying this phenomenon we would gain further knowledge about given concepts of literary texts and literary actions, particularly about their evaluative aspects — an area little explored to date.

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Works Cited


APPLICATION

1. Literature, Culture, and Media
Effects of Focalization in Film Narration

Introduction

The theory and analysis of narration is of interest to both the study of literature and the study of film. In both fields, concepts and instruments have been developed to analyze and describe modes of narrating, different kinds of narrators, point of view, focalization and narrative distance. Most theoretical approaches imply that the analytical concepts have effects on the way readers and viewers process, represent and remember the narratives they read, hear and see. An example is a recent study by Matthias Hurst (1996) who tried to apply basic modes of literary narration to film adaptations. Comparing the way kinds of narrators and external or internal point of view were transposed, he points out similarities and differences between literary fiction and film. In his book, Hurst links analytical distinctions to effects which he supposes as having on readers and viewers; effects such as experience of directness, readiness to identify, feel involvement and detachment, etc. This linkage of text features and effects is most characteristic of traditional narratology. However, the few studies that have tried to verify effects of narrative devices, so far, have failed to find consistent proof. In addition, experiments with film narrative are extremely rare; research experimenting with different modes of narrating and point of view have, as far as we know, not been done at all. The reason is, of course, that it is extremely difficult to manipulate a given narrative device, while keeping other things unchanged. This is exactly what we have attempted to do. More precisely, we have studied the effects of external and internal focalization in film on the way viewers perceive and empathize with the protagonist.

In film theory, the question of focalization is closely connected with the concepts of subjectivity and objectivity. Subjectivity refers to filmic devices that attribute perceptions and emotions to a character (see Branigan 1992). In most

1 The authors are greatly indebted to Peter Delpcut for his cooperation. The experiment could be realized technically thanks to grants by the Utrecht University Research Institute for History and Culture and the Netherlands Graduate School for Literary Studies.

2 Hurst's point of departure is Franz Stanzel's Theorie des Erzählens.
cases, the character is the focalizer, the camera revealing to the audience what
this character sees, feels, thinks, or remembers. Subjectivity and focalizing
techniques determine the degree of access the viewers have to a character's mind.
One of the possible although non-filmic devices to inform the viewers of a
character's state of mind is the use of an extra-diegetic voice-over. By means of
voice-over, one can create modes of narration usually employed in linguistic
narrative such as a monologue intérieure in either the third or first person or the
creation of a counter-point between what a character is doing or saying and what
she/he is thinking or experiencing. Intuitively, we assume, as many narratologists
do, that subjective techniques enhance processes of identification, empathy, and
involvement.

In our study, we have tried to establish such effects. In an experimental
setting, we systematically varied focalization from highly external to clearly
internal by means of voice-over (VO), while in all other respects the film was
kept unchanged.

The Film

The film was an adaptation of Borges's famous story "Emma Zunz" (1949). It
is a short black and white feature in the length of 30 minutes, directed by Peter
Delpeut. Here is a brief synopsis of the film: Emma Zunz is a reserved young
woman. She lives alone in a small apartment and works in a factory. One day
she receives a letter from abroad which contains the message that her father has
died; he has apparently committed suicide. That night Emma re-reads her father's
letters she has collected over the years. She also re-reads some newspaper
cuttings. These show that Emma’s father had once been charged with misap­
propriation of funds belonging to the factory where Emma now works. Her
father fled to South-America; he wrote to her that he was not guilty. Emma has
reason to believe that the factory's present owner, a man named Loewenthal, was
the cause of her father's misfortune. Arriving at the factory next morning, Emma
learns that the employees are planning a strike. Emma makes up her mind; she
says she feels ill and goes home. There she calls Loewenthal. She says she can
give him information about the strike and promises to visit him at his office at
night. First, she burns her father's letters. Then she goes to a pub by the docks
and offers herself to a sailor. After the man has gone she goes to Loewenthal's
office at the factory. She starts telling him names of people organizing the strike,
then pretends to collapse. Loewenthal leaves the room to get her a glass of water.
Emma quickly searches his desk and finds a gun. When Loewenthal returns she
shoots him while saying she is revenging her father. Next she calls the police and
tells them that she has killed Loewenthal because he tried to abuse her.

Although the local and temporal setting in the film, as compared to the
original short story, was changed and also many details were added or omitted,
the main action and plot of the original text were maintained. Unlike the Borges story, however, no overt narrator — *sensu* Chatman — is present in the film. On the contrary, the film is consequently reduced to the principle of telling by showing. The camera registers the main character's actions in a highly "objective," almost behaviouristic way. Dialogue does not provide any explanation of what happens and the film offers very little information. The viewer is forced to observe Emma's actions meticulously, but can merely guess at her plans, feelings, and motives during most of the film. "Restricted narration" — *sensu* Bordwell — is enhanced by the lack of "subjective techniques" (see Branigan 1984, 1992): There is no internal focalization; point-of-view shots are explicitly avoided; when we expect to see an expression of emotion, Emma's face is obscured by heavy shadows, or she just turns away from the camera; in some shots we only see her back. Light-shadow effects and the narrow framing of space intensify the sense of self-contained closedness. Most important to the method of restricted narration is that witnessed actions can only be interpreted retrospectively after the viewer has seen the whole film.

In the first half of the film, action sequences develop extremely slowly. Emma's activities after she has read the letter are depicted in almost teasingly drawn out, static and narrowly framed shots, showing her just sitting still and doing trivial things like drinking a glass of milk. From the moment that Emma calls Loewenthal, some prospect is created, and suspense sets in. The action speeds up considerably, sequences are shorter, there is more movement in mise-en-scène and framing. The film clearly works towards the climax at the end. When Emma enters the plant, suspense is intensified. Nevertheless, the denouement, her shooting Loewenthal, comes as a surprise.

**Independent Variables**

In order to test the effects of focalization on how viewers perceive the main character and how they develop empathetic feelings, we decided to supply information about Emma that could be presented from an external, but also from an internal point of view. As the film itself was strongly restricted and incommunicative, there were many shots which offered space for the supplement of sound. We constructed voice-over texts that contained some background information about Emma and revealed some of her emotional reactions. The following principles underlay the constructions: 1) The texts should be as natural as possible and fit in with the film as a whole; several ideas were derived from the original Borges story and 2) It should be possible to present the information from the outside and from the inside with slightly different emotional tones, however, without differing in substantial information. In some cases, the natural quality of the text prevailed over the exactness of equivalent formulations, as can be seen in the example in Table 1 (see Appendix).
One of the constructed versions was written in the third person and spoken by a male narrator's voice-over; the other one was written in the first person and spoken by Emma herself in the form of a *monologue intérieure*. Table 1 provides an example. The described film shots are also highly representative for the film style.

In the manipulated versions some "inside information" was added to the original. The quality of the male versus the female voice turned the focalization gradually towards Emma. In the middle version, some of the sentences could be interpreted as "free indirect discourse," thus shifting the focalization to Emma. In the most internal version, all discourse was clearly related to Emma's mind, even if a certain distance between narrating and narrated "I" is maintained by the narrative past tense.  

### Hypotheses

Hypotheses we tested concerned, among others, the viewers' perception of Emma and differences in empathy. Here we will restrict ourselves to the question of empathy. We expected that with increasing access to Emma's inner life, empathy (E) would increase, measured as feelings of understanding, pity, and distance. As we added the voice-overs from the beginning to almost the end of the film, we also expected a development of empathy during the film to be different for the manipulated versions. We expected a more dramatical shift for the original version and a more gradual shift for the manipulated versions. This resulted in two related hypotheses: 1) E (Internal Voice-over) > E (External Voice-over) > E (Original: no Voice-over) and 2) Increase of E (Original) > E (External) > E (Internal). To test the second part of the hypotheses, a second point of measurement was added after roughly the first half of the film (see next section). Figure 1 depicts the differences and direction of change we expected (see Appendix).

### Method

To measure empathy and empathic emotions, the following dependent measures were taken on five-point rating scales. Scales were composed by adding the appropriate item scores: Empathy ("I empathized with Emma, I felt a distance to

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3 A voice-over in the present tense is highly unusual in film. Constructing such a version would have been a striking deviation from the convention. Consequently, such a deviation would have been an additional variable in our experiment.

4 We conceive empathy as an understanding of what situation a protagonist is in with regard to that protagonist (see Tan). For a more detailed description of the experiment and additional results, see Andringa, Tan, van Horssen, and Jacobs (forthcoming).
what happened, I imagined how it would feel to be in Emma’s position"), Pity ("I felt pity for Emma"), Sympathy ("I liked Emma, I felt sympathy for Emma"), Admiration ("I admired Emma, Emma seemed to me a remarkable character"). The subjects completed two questionnaires which contained mainly identical questions. After they had seen the first half of the film, it was interrupted at the moment when Emma decides to go home to call Loewenthal. Answering the first questionnaire took about five minutes. The second questionnaire was answered after the film’s end. The control variable was empathic ability, a stable disposition to imagine how other people feel. It was measured by a standardized test taken after the questionnaire about the film was finished (see Stotland et al.). Subjects were divided with the median score as split criterion in Low and High Empathizers.

169 Psychology undergraduates participated in the experiment as part of introductory course obligations. For each of the dependent variables we had a 3 (Versions) x 2 (Points of Measurement) factorial design, with Versions as a between-subjects and Point of Measurement as a within-subjects factor. The subjects were randomly assigned to conditions and tested in groups. The film was interrupted for about five minutes at the moment when Emma returns home to call Loewenthal. There, the subjects completed the first questionnaire. After the film was finished they completed the second questionnaire.

Results and Discussion

ANOVA's of the Empathy scales with Empathic capability as co-variable showed the following significant results as see in Table 2 (see Appendix).

Several observations can be derived from the Table: Our first observation is that our manipulation had no significant effect at all, neither in the main effects, nor in the interactions. Our second observation is that Empathic Ability showed a clear effect on Pity and Empathy. Figures 2a and 2b (see Appendix) show the effects: subjects scoring higher in Empathic Ability indeed did appear to have stronger feelings of empathy indeed. The third observation is that Point of Measurement had a constant, highly significant impact. For the second part of our hypothesis, we show the relevant means for the dependent measures in Figure 3 (see Appendix).

Surprisingly, we see that the empathic emotions decreased at the end of the film — except for Admiration (which was to be expected). Apparently, the final outcome of the film and the revelation of what has been on Emma’s mind all the time alienated the viewers from her rather than contributing to better understanding or warmer feelings. The significant shift towards the end must be a consequence of the film’s content and structure. Because the manipulations in
themselves were effective — as an independent comprehension check we performed revealed — we assume first that the film’s plot outperforms the added voice-over narration; second, that viewers’ personal dispositions towards empathy prevail over the effects of our added subjective information as well.

Altogether, we have to reject our hypotheses about the effects of manipulation on empathetic involvement and must acknowledge that the variables of Empathetic Ability and Point of Measurement have a much stronger impact. It was particularly striking to establish how little effect our manipulations had. From other measurements we concluded, however, that the manipulations were not ineffective in every respect. In the domains of comprehension and appreciation, for example, significant differences were found. Thus, the results cannot be explained by assuming that the viewers had completely disregarded the voice-overs. Apparently, the filmic devices and the basic story line were so powerful that the change of focalization was not strong enough to affect the viewers’ empathic involvement. However, three other arguments have to be considered. The first is that the film does not belong to the kind of films modern film-viewers are used to. It is an "art film" in black and white, without a music score, and, as we have pointed out earlier, with a very specific style. References to established filmic genres (film noir, melodrama, action, etc.) can probably only be recognized by an experienced audience. As a result, the film was not appreciated very much. Perhaps our subjects felt that they were too distant from the story and that the main character was amenable to different emotional experiences. In consequence, the experiment should be duplicated with a more conventional and popular film; this would, however, be technically difficult, because most conventional films do not offer the silence and tranquillity in order to be able to supply a voice-over. The second consideration concerns an aspect of our method: it is possible that the interval in which the subjects completed the first questionnaire, although it took only five minutes, disturbed their concentration and perhaps their feelings of empathy. The only alternative to and control of our method could be a measurement of physical reactions. However, such a method would hardly be able to discriminate between reactions related to different kinds of empathy and other emotions. The third consideration is that our method, although carefully constructed — it was tested before in several small pilot studies — was developed for quantitative measurement and perhaps was not sensitive enough to register subtle differences in reactions. It could be, for example, that interview questions would evoke a richer response revealing whether viewers notice the voice-over and showing what they think of the "inner voice."

However, although this experiment is the first one manipulating point of view in film, the results point in the same direction as the few experiments performed with narrative texts (for an overview and for new results with literary texts, see Andringa). In sum, our results warn us not to take for granted the power of
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techniques of point of view and focalization to influence readers' feelings of involvement, attachment, and detachment.

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**Table 1**

**Appendix**

**Shot description**

**Shot 29** (33 sec.): Emma comes home, sees the letter in the letterbox near the entrance of the apartment building, picks it up and walks on. Then she stands still and looks at the letter. The camera zooms in on Emma’s hands holding the letter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Version external</th>
<th>Version internal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narrator</td>
<td>Covert</td>
<td>Overt:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>male VO, third</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focaliz.</td>
<td>External</td>
<td>Shifting between</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>external and internal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoken words</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>&quot;Coming home, she saw the letter. The stamp and the envelope looked familiar to her, but the strange handwriting alarmed her. She hesitated to open the letter.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Shot 30**: Emma goes upstairs, stands still, opens the letter, walks on quickly.

**Shot 31**: Emma enters her apartment, takes the letter out of the cover and starts reading. Through the small window in her front door we see the light going out. Emma sits down. Somebody enters the building, passes her door, the light switches on and then off again. Emma stands up and locks the door.

**Spoken words** | No |
| "Gradually, Emma recognized the meaning of the words. She seemed to realize that her father’s suicide had made the past irrevocable. She had kept her secret for years, not even telling it to her best friend. The trouble she had taken to hide it seemed to form a barrier against the truth. She felt empty and cold." | "Gradually, I recognized the meaning of the words. Suicide! First, I felt empty and cold. Then I was taken by a kind of quietness, as if father’s death had brought life to a halt. Nothing seemed to be important any more. I wanted to cut myself off from the world outside, I didn’t want to see any more."
Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPEND.</th>
<th>Sympathy</th>
<th>Pity</th>
<th>Empathy</th>
<th>Admiration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDEPEND.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film Version</td>
<td>$F(156,2) = 1.72, \text{n.s.}$</td>
<td>$F(157,2) = 1.14, \text{n.s.}$</td>
<td>$F(158,2) = 1.37, \text{n.s.}$</td>
<td>$F(156,2) = 2.76, \text{n.s.}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empath. Ability</td>
<td>$F(156,1) = .01, \text{n.s.}$</td>
<td>$F(157,1) = 11.80, p = .001$</td>
<td>$F(158,1) = 10.43, 1.70, p &lt; .01$</td>
<td>$F(156,1) = \text{n.s.}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point of Meas.</td>
<td>$F(156,1) = 8.44, p &lt; .01$</td>
<td>$F(157,1) = 10.56, p &lt; .001$</td>
<td>$F(158,1) = 10.04, p &lt; .01$</td>
<td>$F(156,1) = 25.48, p &lt; .000$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vers. x Emp. Ab.</td>
<td>$F(156,2) = 1.41, \text{n.s.}$</td>
<td>$F(157,2) = 1.45, \text{n.s.}$</td>
<td>$F(158,2) = .39, \text{n.s.}$</td>
<td>$F(156,2) = .72, \text{n.s.}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vers. x P. of M.</td>
<td>$F(156,2) = 1.10, \text{n.s.}$</td>
<td>$F(157,2) = 2.07, \text{n.s.}$</td>
<td>$F(158,2) = .97, \text{n.s.}$</td>
<td>$F(156,2) = .97, \text{n.s.}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emp. Ab. x P. of M.</td>
<td>$F(156,1) = .24, \text{n.s.}$</td>
<td>$F(157,1) = .54, \text{n.s.}$</td>
<td>$F(158,1) = .15, \text{n.s.}$</td>
<td>$F(156,1) = .20, \text{n.s.}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emp. Ab. x Vers. x P. of M.</td>
<td>$F(156,2) = 1.15, \text{n.s.}$</td>
<td>$F(157,2) = 3.50, p &lt; .05$</td>
<td>$F(158,2) = 1.15, \text{n.s.}$</td>
<td>$F(156,2) = .49, \text{n.s.}$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fig. 1: Expected shifts in Empathy
Figure 2a: Pity for Low/High Empathizers

Low: $n = 85$, High: $n = 79$
Fig. 2b: Empathy for Low/High Empathizers

Low: n = 86, High: n = 79
Fig. 3: Points of Measurement

- Sympathy
- Admir.
- Empathy
- Pity

n = 169
BONGHI CHA

Problems in the Reception of German Literature in Korea and Prospects for Intercultural Communication

1. Introduction

This article aims at summarizing the general problems associated with Korea's reception history of German literature. It also aims at the clarification of prospects for Intercultural Communication. The scope of this paper is limited to the primary notion of literary reception in the context of an introduction of foreign literature mainly through the medium of translation. Translation is understood here as the primary stage of literary reception involving various activities such as production, distribution, reception, and post-production processing in the literary system. The category of reception should be understood as centring on the selection of the works for translation. As the texts of foreign literature must first be translated into Korean in order to be received by the public, the three selectors (translators, publishers, and specialists in German literature) must simultaneously be the primary receiving subjects. Hence my study will deal with such issues as "what interests these three selectors most?," "how are the German texts chosen?," and "what are the similarities and differences in the interests of the selectors?," etc. In my analysis, I will focus on the genre of the German novel.

2. A Brief History of the Reception of German Literature in Korea

It can be said that the introduction of German literature in Korea began with translated works. German novels were first translated in Korea in 1907-08 — for example, Hermann Sudermann's Der Katzensteg (1888). In this initial stage, translated German novels were introduced by means of newspapers or journals. For example, Goethe's Hermann und Dorothea was first published in the newspaper Chosun in 1922. However, these first novels were translated into Korean from Japanese translations or adapted versions and it was not until the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 60s that more reliable translation from original source texts appeared. Thus, the period from the late 1950s to the early 1960s can be called the first stage of modern reception. It should also be noted...
that translations were halted by Japanese occupation and only after the departure
of the colonial power and post-liberation disorder did the activity of translation
resume. Although scholars of this stage still belonged to the generation of Korean
scholars and translators who used Japanese, they differed from preceding scholars
of an indirect reception when Japanese translations or adapted versions were used
as source texts.

With regard to the reception of German literature in Korea of the last few
decades, a list of German literature of the 1970s and 80s contains 200 authors
and 243 works. The list is divided into poetry, drama and the novel, although
the genre of the novel, designated as erzählende Texte was focused on in the
selection. Also, the selection of the novels was not limited to the period of the
1970s and 80s, but included works also from the 1990s. For my present analysis,
this factor must be taken into account because the works selected for my study
from the 1970-80 were works which were instantly translated into Korean. That
is, the German authors and their works of the 1990s, except for some works
which were translated immediately similarly to works in the preceding period,
could not be gauged in the same manner. The main Korean source I used for my
study is Choong-Sup Yi's "A Bibliography of German Literary Works Translated

According to Choong-Sup Yi, the works of six writers, including Goethe,
Rilke, Heine, Thomas Mann, Böll, and Rinser take up more than half of the total
works of 400 German writers who were translated into Korean. For example,
Goethe's Die Leiden des jungen Werther was translated into 104 different
versions, Hesse's Demian 68 Versions, Rinser's 27 works into 111 versions. This
repetition of translation is also seen in the reception of German Literature in the
more specific period of the 1970s and 80s. According to the selected list of the
1970-80 German writers and based on the survey conducted by the German team
of our project and Choong-Sup Yi's above cited bibliography, I have classified
the translated novels of the period into four groups. The results of my clas-
sification are as follows:

1) 16 works — by 13 authors — from authors on the German list were
translated into Korean, which fall into a category A list. These correspond to
8.6% of 187 novels included in the German list (see the attached category A list
in the Appendix).

2) 52 authors were translated who were not included in the German list.

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1 The list mentioned above was compiled by a research team in Germany, part of a project
"Rezeption der deutschen Gegenwartsliteratur der 70-80er Jahre in Korea — mit einer Liste der
Textauswahl," supported by the Korea Research Foundation and the Deutsche Forschungs-
gemeinschaft International Academic Co-operation Research Project, 1995-96. Among other
objectives, our research team was concerned with compiling a selected list of German literary
works (poetry, drama, and the novel) which we would recommend for translation into Korean.
Among them were 37 authors whose works, in comparison with other German authors, became somewhat familiar in Korea through translation. However, half of them — 20 authors — are almost never mentioned in German literary history or contemporary German literary encyclopedias. These authors and their works I designated as a category B list.

3) Translated works which do not appear on the German list but whose works are known in Korea owing to translations, are designated as a category C list. These authors together with the 13 authors from the category A list, therefore, should be familiar to Korean readers. For example, they include such authors as Thomas Bernhard, Handke, Ende, Uwe Johnson, Hildesheimer, Kaschnitz, Rinser, Lenz, Nossack, Peter Schneider, Rolf Schneider, Arno Schmidt, Johannes Mario Simmel, Walser, Peter Weiss, Gabriele Wohmann, Gerhard Zwerenz, etc.

4) The number of authors whose works are not translated into Korean but who were included in the German list is 148. This is a number obtained after subtraction of the authors from the category A and C lists. From the selected total of 200 authors from the German list, 74% did not come in touch with Korean readers at all. These authors and works are designated as a category D list.

3. The Study of German Literature in Korea

In the area of scholarly studies in the academe, the number of M.A. theses and PhD dissertations submitted to Seoul National University during the years 1970-95 amounted to 324, to Yonsei University (1976-92) 89, and the number of M.A. theses submitted to Songshin Women’s University (1980-94) amounted to 19, totalling 432. Excluding the dissertations in the field of German linguistics, the number of M.A. theses PhD dissertations that dealt with German literature totalled 384. Among them 69 focused on German literature of the 1970s and 80s (18% of the total). From this, we can analyze the present interests and tendencies of study and research. In brief, the numbers and topics show a sluggish reception and spread of German literature of the 1970s and 80s in Korea. That is, more studies are concerned with traditional, or classical literature than with contemporary German literature. Among 69 dissertations dealing with authors of the 1970s and 80s with regard to the category A 8 dissertations (Seoul 5, Yonsei 3) are about works in the fields of poetry, drama, and the novel. Among the total number of 384 dissertations that deal with German literature, these 8 dissertations are 2.1% and 11.6%, respectively, from the total of 69 dissertations that deal with German authors of the 1970s and 80s.

This ration shows again that, similar to the situation of reception through translated novels, the reception of German literature of the 1970s and 80s has been limited.
4. Criteria in the Selection of Works for Translation by Korean Translators, Publishers, and Scholars of German Literature

Here, I will briefly describe the processes by which a particular work is selected for translation either by the translator or the publisher. My discussion is based on my own and my colleagues’ personal experiences.

It goes without saying that prize-winning works — including but not limited to the Nobel Prize — are, in the first instance, the main factor of selection by Korean translators and publishers. For example on the category A list, the 1981 Nobel Prize winner Elias Canetti’s 12 works were translated by different publishers in 15 versions. Furthermore, particularly bestsellers are favorites among Korean publishers and translators for the reason that such works are believed to generate a lucrative market and income. For example, just after my graduation in Germany in 1977 I was asked by a publisher in Korea to choose and translate one of the current bestsellers in Germany and in more recent years this interest remained as the case of repeated translations of Brigitte Schwaiger’s *Wie kommt das Salz ins Meer* (1980, 1981) shows.

The intention to translate and to introduce foreign literary works in the category of bestsellers is not equal between translators and publishers. The publisher’s intention is to publish works which can be sold well while the translator’s is to select a bestseller which is a work of relatively good aesthetic quality and at the same time sells well. This situation is to blame for the fact that Korean publishing companies sometimes request a change in title, or an abridgement of a text that is considered to be “boring.” In contrast, some of the non-bestsellers sometimes become bestsellers in translation. Ende’s *Momo* is a typical example. Although it was not a bestseller at first in Germany at its publication in 1973, it became one in Germany after it became a bestseller in Japanese translation. A further problem of this aspect of reception is that in Korea there are no data available about the number of bestsellers sold.

4.1 The Quality of Translation

The commercial motivation of Korean publishers may result in a hasty and thus inadequate translation of the original work. This obviously impedes the desirable reception of foreign literature. However, this situation is complicated by the sales promotion conducted by the publishers, such as advertisements in newspapers, magazines, and television. Korean publishers are known to spend a lot of money advertising their books, thus creating a bestseller simply through a successful advertising campaign.

4.2 The Selection of German Texts for the Korean Readership

Sometimes, particular German texts are chosen for translation which are expected to appeal to Korean readers apart from their literary reputation in
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Germany. For example, 52 writers from the category B list were selected for translation because the translator or the publisher believed they would suit Korean readers' taste, irrespective of their literary status in the source country. This phenomenon seems to represent the existence of what may be called a Korean system of reception and that apparently reflects either the translator's personal preference or a particular literary taste of Korean readers or both.

The works of authors on the category B list and who are rarely or not at all mentioned in German literary history or encyclopedias of German authors, were translated in the 1960s and 70s and as late as now they are still being introduced in Korea. A typical case is Otti Pfeiffer's *Zwischen Himmel und Hölle* which was chosen by a Korean translator exclusively for the taste of young Korean readers. It is a truism among scholars of German literature in Korea that the style of German literary texts in general tends to be overly "heavy" and idealistic to Korean readers who generally prefer a rather "light" and easy-going style and thematics.

5. Further Aspects of the Selection of German Texts for Translation into Korean

5.1 Repeated Translation

There are some problems in the reception of German Literature in Korea caused by an unfair and biased selection of writers for translation, which tends to reflect the personal preference of a specific translator. This situation at times results in unnecessary translations of the same work by several translators.

5.2 Possibilities of Plagiarism Owing to the Translation of the Same Work by Several Translators and Publishers

There are two categories involved in the translation of the same work by various translators and publishers: 1) Sometimes the same translator produces different versions of the same work over a period of time and 2) Various translators or publishers translate the same work which invites plagiarism. Thus, the tendency toward repeated translation resulting in plagiarism has become a specific aspect of Korean publishing. It is hoped that the development of reception studies in Korea will assist in the lowering or even eradication of plagiarism.

5.3 The Lack of Communication between Translators

By chance, I came to know that one of my colleagues had translated Brigitte Schwaiger's *Wie kommt das Salz ins Meer* one year after I had published a translation myself in 1980. This particular example shows that a systematic cooperation and communication between translators is lacking, thus resulting in what may be viewed as a further effect of unnecessary duplication in the
reception of German literature in Korea.

5.4 Philological Problems in Repeated Translation

Philological information about the original work are often suppressed or mistakenly given by many Korean translators. For example, the original title of Ilse Aichinger's *Der Gefesselte* cannot be found in the Korean translations — except for one version which gives a wrong title as in *Der gebundene Mann*.

6. Intercultural Communication: Prospects and Suggestions toward the Reception of German Literature in Korea

Here, I would like to propose some suggestions to both publishers and translators in a context of Intercultural Communication and based on the problems and aspects of the reception of German literature as described above. First, it should be noted that the translator of a specific work should be a specialist of the writer whose work he/she intends to translate. This is not at all the case as often as it should be. However, we can observe a differentiation in the preparedness of translators of canonical works as opposed to works in categories B or lower. For instance, in the case of the category A list, the works were mostly chosen by translators who were German literature majors and, except for 6 of them, professors of German literature. Clearly, my study suggests that the academic competence of the translator is indispensable for a more desirable reception of German literature in Korea beyond its present status. A more appropriate and advantageous selection of works to be translated and thus facilitating a meaningful intercultural communication would be effected, in the first instance, by a rigorous study of the literary system in Korea. Another factor for a better selection of works to be translated would be a drastic improvement of the financial conditions of translation, that is, the pay translators receive for their work. In the same vein, the products of translation should be counted more as scholarly achievement.

*Hanshin University*
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Appendix
Category A List

On the Making of a Book: An Author's Perspective of the Literary System

1. Introduction

Commenting on the compatibility between the various systemic and institutional approaches to the study of literature which have emerged in the 1980s and 1990s, Steven Tótosy has suggested that what these have in common is "the theoretical and methodological proposition ... that the study of literature should focus on the 'how' of literature; not only the 'what,'" an approach which entails "a strong preference for observation and verification instead of intuition, speculation, and metaphorical description" (47). That such a systemic and empirical outlook will be the hallmark of literary research produced in the next century is my conviction. Increasingly so, the study of literature will tend to concentrate on factors pertaining to the production, distribution, reception, and post-production of literary texts — in North American English theoretical parlance, a "contextual" approach — rather than on the sole study of those texts (for the basic tenets of this approach, see, e.g., Schmidt 1982). Increasingly so, the empirical will tend to supplant the "vice of interpretation" (Schmidt 1983, 240) and the latter will immolate itself on the altar of objectivity.

There are about 5000 new titles a year in children's literature in the U.S. and Britain. Among the most popular, more selling categories are information books, multicultural books, and picture books. This article, one which falls within the category of "self-reflection" on a work of art, is an account of the production — author, publisher, illustrator — the distribution, and the reception of a children's picture book: a story-poem (22 stanzas) I authored and whose illustrations (27 in total) I commissioned from an artist. It was published on August 5, 1996 by a small academic press in the Midwest, Thomas Jefferson University Press, in Kirksville, Missouri. What is the book about? In my own words:

*Hurly and the Bone* is a tale that gives new form and a new conclusion to the ageless story of the wolf and the stork; a story encountered as early as Aesop and La Fontaine who borrowed his themes from medieval Persian sources. It is intended for children aged three to eight and their teachers, parents and grandparents. I had been carrying it in me for many years before it materialised one day, in a moment of leisure and inspiration. I spoke it out before laying it on paper and infused it with strong rhymes and rhythms. It

*The Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature and Culture as Theory and Application*
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University of Alberta: RICL-CCS and Siegen University: LUMIS, 1997
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is ideally suited to be read aloud, with special attention to the music of the language and the sing-song quality of the verse. ("Author's Note")

2. Modalities of Production

2.1 The Author

The entire project, from the moment of inception to the day of publication was lengthy and took four years to be completed. I wrote a first version of the poem in 1992, called it "The Wolf and the Stork," and immediately after registered a copyright with the Library of Congress under the pseudonym of Whitney Wallace Thorpe. I then proceeded to locate a publisher. I approached twenty-five to thirty publishing firms across the U.S. and Canada, from mass market ones such as Random House to small companies such as Holiday House. I did so in a systematic way, a copy of Writers's Market in hand. As a rule my manuscript — often unread, I suspect — came back with a form letter rejecting the manuscript. Not a single publisher ever stated the reasons for the refusal. And yet, the manuscript fulfilled the requisites an editor allegedly looks for in a picture book text (see Seuling 37-39; Chu 10) — the strong tone, the universal theme, the vividness of the images, the familiarity of the rhythms, the fast pace, the strength of the characters, the tightness, sharpness, and playfulness of the language — intrinsic properties, as we shall see below, which have nothing to do with the retention and legitimization of a given literary text. One day, as I was making phone calls, I managed to attract the attention of a very small publishing firm in Winnipeg, Prairie Publishing Company. I told the editor that I was intending to hire an illustrator, and he indicated both verbally and in writing that he was interested. A year later, he suddenly withdrew, owing to bankruptcy.

2.2 The Search for an Illustrator

Meanwhile, I had been seriously looking for an illustrator, having decided to increase my chances of acceptance by submitting a complete product with text and illustrations in color. Was that going to work? Here is what is commonly done in this industry: in 85% of cases a picture-book text is submitted without illustrations; if and when accepted, the editor chooses from his/her pool of illustrators (usually 300 to 400 artists) one likely do a fine job in the "supremely important ... marriage of the text to the art" (Seuling 39). However, this idea did not appeal to me. I wanted to be the one to monitor this "marriage." The book

1 A very greedy wolf, prone to orgies, chokes on a bone. A passing stork who notices him removes the bone and then asks for a reward. The wolf mocks her and claims she is the one to be grateful for he could have eaten her when she had her beak down his throat. The saddened stork goes her way. She suddenly realises that her act of kindness bore its own, sufficient reward.
was going to be dedicated to my son, and I was to have complete control over the production: to engineer it myself down to the smallest details, much as an object you conceive, construct, and design according to my own wishes and specifications.

Finding an illustrator took me two years. Professional artists I approached demanded an exorbitant fee of US $3,000.00 to 4,000.00, and often had a rigid, stereotypic style of drawing which did not correspond to my vision. I soon realised I had to find talented débutant who would be interested in launching his/her name in exchange for a modest fee, and whom I would be able to guide throughout the process. I interviewed a few, and liked none. I finally settled on a young man who had just completed his Master's degree in "Conceptual Art." I was then a Visiting Professor of French at California State University in Los Angeles. George Molina Sy showed up one morning in my office, with a large portfolio of neatly designed drawings: a hand carrying a globe, symbol of ecological awareness, and many other extremely orderly samples. I asked him what colour would a wolf be. I recited my poem so that the walls of my office shook. Happy Omen: unlike his predecessors, he looked pleased, not dismayed. For two hours I rambled about my "vision." I told him to "forget about" rational categories and true-to-nature colors: I wanted what I qualified as wild, outrageous drawings with fluid outlines; I wanted bright colours (red, orange, purple, green, and yellow) which would bleed into the page, and I wanted white to be treated very sparingly. He was attentive and receptive. He expressed enthusiasm. A week later he came up with a which fulfilled most of the attributes I had spelled out: a red wolf with seven cows neatly aligned in his belly. He was hired.

I offered my artist to embark with me on the project on an equal footing, sharing royalties after publication, or to be paid a fixed fee. He opted for the latter. It came to US $600.00, including corrections. We agreed that I would hold copyright on the illustrations. The latter fall under the category of "work for hire" as defined by Section 101 of the US Copyright Statute, making me the "employer," the "legal claimant," and, technically, the "author" (see Circular 1. Copyright Basics 2). The contract we signed and the portion he drew himself stipulated that "authorship credit in the name of the Supplier [the illustrator] shall not accompany the images when reproduced." However, I did opt to overlook this clause. His name shows on the book. In a series of meetings we held over a period of four months, we discussed every illustration at length, carefully choosing the colours, the design, and the double spread sheets occurring at crucial moments of the tale. In April 1995, the set of 27 illustrations (acrylic; air-blown technique) was completed.

2 This was to illustrate the following stanza: "He hurled the food down / Without stopping to breathe. / He swallowed seven cows / With the greatest of ease" (8).
2.3 The Publisher

Shortly before I found an illustrator, I inadvertently aroused strong interest from my own academic publisher, Robert V. Schnucker, head of Thomas Jefferson Press, whom I had never thought of approaching in my search for a publisher. In his own words:

In the correspondence related to the publication of Dr. Dahab’s translation of a book by the eminent French scholar, Yves Chevrel, Dr. Dahab mentioned she had written a children’s story. I was intrigued by this and asked her to send the story to me. When the story came, I was very impressed by it primarily because of the very sophisticated rhyming and the moral. However, what appeals to an old man does not always appeal to small children and that is the first problem my press faced. Since we have to peer review any book we publish, who should do the reviewing? I settled on a two level approach. First I asked all the women in my business office who had small children to take the text home and read it to their children and then tell me the reaction they got from their children. I figured that if children did not like the story, there was no need to proceed further. I read the story to my own grand-children and all the reports I got back, about three dozen reports, were enthusiastically favorable. The second level of reviewing was to approach the experts in the field of children’s literature. Two people were contacted. One had taught the subject for a quarter of a century at the University of Iowa, and the other, a Professor of Journalism at Indiana University, had written on the subject of rhyming. Copies of the story were sent to both and both made suggestions as to how the story might be improved. These "professional" comments were sent to the author. (Schnucker 1)

The editor indeed asked me to seriously consider each one of them, and to defend my ground. This was to be the beginning of a long and very fruitful collaboration with him, one which would not have been feasible had I been dealing with the marketing director of a large publishing firm. As R. Peterson pertinently remarked: "In small firms the relationship between author and publisher can easily be intimate, long-lasting, and complex involving many aspects of getting a book into print" (52). Precisely so.

2.4 Literary Reviewers

The review from the Iowa critic was the more positive of the two. It recommended publication, but read in its concluding remarks:

Though it needs some editorial work, I think this book is well worth publishing. Of all the issues I have raised I think it is essential that two be resolved prior to publication. I was most troubled by the golden beard. When the stork realizes she didn’t need to expect a reward for doing a good deed, she immediately felt better. Why then was a reward necessary... why a beard? Do all storks have a small feathery beard-like structure? ... and why especially, a golden beard? The story doesn’t tell us. (4)

I "defended my ground" and agreed with Schnucker that I would justify the
occurrence of the golden beard in a short "Author's Note":

Some have asked, "why a beard, and why specifically a golden beard"? To which I would simply reply, "Why animals who talk? Why a red wolf and pink trees?" We are in the realm of fantasy, where natural laws do not apply. In quite a different mode I might answer that the beard may be an ultimate sign of wisdom, a spontaneous gratification developing at the onset of the stork's sudden, final insight that helping someone in need is itself a big reward. Why precisely a golden beard? The rays of the rising sun played with it, or an inner light which illuminated the stork's heart gave it its color, or better yet, this image struck my fancy and locked itself into my mind.... ("Author's Note")

To "improve" the rhyming, the Iowa reviewer suggested a few possibilities which perfectly destroyed the music of the stanza. I will provide but one example: it pertains to Stanza number 18, after the stork is dismissed by the angry wolf without reward. It reads, in my original words:

The stork began to walk  
With tears in her left eye  
Lamenting her ill-fate  
And thinking with a sigh. (23)

The reviewer suggested the following alternative:

The stork walked away  
She had tears in her eyes  
She lamented her fate  
And said with deep sighs (5)

The readers' response I received, adults and children on whom I "tried" my poem, favored my stanza over the reviewer's correction. Luckily, in this case as in many other cases, the editor allowed me my own stance, and never imposed on me a single correction I did not agree with, a fact for which I was grateful indeed. On the other hand, I seriously considered suggestions he and my audiences made to me and I made changes to the text up to two months before it went into press.

Another piece of negative criticism from the Iowa reviewer was that "the rhyme structure ... was strongest and most consistent at the beginning of the book. The meter became more irregular as the story went on" (1). To this I replied that the beginning of the story-poem is static, being a description of a state of affairs: how things stand with the greedy wolf and that such a description of a habitual state of affairs calls for more regularity in rhyme. However, as the story goes on, as action is introduced and the climax approaches, it is very natural for the rhythm to become disturbed, hence more irregular. Thus the four verse in the first stanza where the wolf is described are 4, 6, 6, 5 feet long,
respectively:

Hurly the wolf
Was a gluttonous beast
He always ate oodles
And called it a feast (4-5)

Whereas in stanza number 19 when the stork is disappointed and about to reach her final insight, the meter is naturally longer: 9, 7, 9, 9 feet, respectively:

As she dried her tears on a feather
She said once more, with a groan:
Wasn't that a wee greedy of me
To expect a reward for a bone? (24)

The somewhat arbitrary reactions on the part of the peer reviewers of *Hurly and the Bone* are disconcerting although not uncommon. A few studies undertaken in the 1980s and 1990s show how, to quote Suzanne Janssen: "Contrary to what literary critics and reviewers themselves might claim, they are unable to provide sufficient or necessary grounds in support of a specific value judgment" (1988, 282), a view she reasserts in 1991: "There are good grounds to question the self image of the literary critic as the independent expert who merely chooses and judges on artistic grounds" (187). This point Van Rees has corroborated in his 1987 article on "How Reviewers Reach Consensus On the Value of Literary Works," and again in 1996.

2.5 Contract Negotiations

In February 1996, upon acceptance of the manuscript by the Editorial Board of the Press, I received a contract which stipulated in its first clause that "the author hereby grants and assigns to the Press all rights in and to this first edition of the work ... including the power to cause this edition to be abridged, dramatized, serialized or otherwise adapted." The contract further stipulated that Thomas Jefferson Press would register in its own name the copyright for the book as well as any translations of it in the United States. It also stated that it would "pay the author ... one fourth of all net sales the Press receives from this edition" as well as "fifty percent from the licensing of this edition by the Press ... and fifty percent from the licensing of the Press of any right in the work not specified in this paragraph." The publisher invited my reactions and my comments.

Upon careful consideration and many discussions with Dr. N.T.A. Haydn, a mathematician, I objected to the clause on copyright, and after a number of e-mail "conversations," Schmucker kindly agreed to let me maintain copyright on both text and illustrations, and to register in my own name the said copyright
shortly after publication. In May 1996, with gratitude and contentment, I signed a revised and final version of the "Memorandum of Agreement."

2.6 Problems Encountered during Production

When it became clear that the Press would do the book, the problem was to find the money to print 2000 copies. One day, Schnucker suddenly let me know that a group of donors had materialised who wanted to remain anonymous. Their only condition was to acknowledge their donation and to mention the names of their five grandchildren in the inside cover. I gladly agreed. But that was not all. In the publisher’s words:

The second problem was to find a printer who would be able to reproduce the colors found in the drawings that went with the text. ... The drawings are superb and the colors eye-catching. As I phoned around the world and told them what I wanted them to bid on, they all declined to bid because they could not reproduce the colors and text. It took a special press to do such work. (Schnucker 1)

Two printers located on the East Coast proposed too high a bid. A third one, located in a small town (Maybeline) sixty miles away from Kirksville, was recommended by the manager of the University Print Shop and seemed promising: "To my surprise they had the most up to date scanners and color presses available. At first it was thought that we would either have to peel the illustrations from the boards and make color separations from the photos, a risky procedure at best, or make photos of the boards and make color separations from the photos" (Schnucker 2).

It was then decided to use a match print of computer-generated colors and to try to get as close an approximation of the artist’s colors as technically possible. This was to work for all the colors except an iridescent orange:

The colors that could be used by the printer were limited to those available in the Pantone System. ... The effort was made to digitize the drawings and then to match the colors by using a CMYK [blue, red, yellow and black] system, but this only partially worked. We finally had to move to those colors in the Pantone System that most closely matched the artist’s boards with the exception of the brilliant orange which we had custom mixed and then printed on the pages where necessary. The artist used twelve different colors, which would have meant multiple passes through the six-color Komori Press, and there was no guarantee that the registration could be kept a hundred percent accurate. (Schnucker 5)

The next problem was that of the two double spread sheets — the stork’s beak and the golden beard which spread across two pages — which were misaligned on the original artist’s double boards. Digitized manipulation, with the help of a scanner, was effected to solve the problem; color gaps which resulted from this manipulation were filled in; negatives and match prints were then made, and "the book was finally ready to go to the printer for the plate making and the printing"
(Schnucker 5). Meanwhile, Paula Presley, the copy editor, had noted some last issues of punctuation and urgently addressed them to me. After some research, the Press’ book designer, Tim Roland, chose Minion as a suitable font. As for the paper in the book, it was decided to use eighty pound Mead offset enamel, and to laminate the cover (98 point boards). At the bindery, the book was to be Smyth sewn with a case-binding "to ensure a substantial life of use" (Schnucker 3). While these solutions came about, a black and white copy of the book was sent to the Library of Congress to secure CIP data. This process functioned with speed and the data arrived a month later (Schnucker 2).

3. Distribution and Marketing

In July-August 1996 two thousand copies of Hurly and the Bone were printed at the cost of US $10.000.00. The book is sold by the publisher at the retail price of US $11.95. The printing cost of each copy was therefore five dollars. So far, about 250 copies were sold (May 1997).

As my publisher remarked in an e-mail message in September 96: "trying to break into the larger market is similar to hacking your way through the jungle." And jungle it is indeed. The corporatization of publishing has become a widespread phenomenon in North America and the market ideology has been on the rise since the late 1960s when conglomerates started buying up publishing firms, and chain bookstores came forth and put emphasis on large short term profits (see Schiffrin). If one adopts the functional distinction between markets for children’s books, here is the picture: the library market consists of school libraries and public libraries. These will buy directly from the publisher. The mass market consists of the chain bookstores, the independent bookstores, and the department stores, and command a larger readership (see Turow 94-95).

My own groundwork pertaining to marketing has shown me how intricate the whole matter is. Chain bookstores such as Crown, Borders, Barnes and Nobles, etc., will carry a book only upon the decision of the corporate offices. This decision is taken by a selection committee run by marketing and financial individuals. In order for a chain bookstore to buy a book selected by the committee, the said book has to be available through a wholesale buyer, such as Ingrams, for instance. The wholesale book buyer will ask for a heavy discount (60%) from the publisher, and will not be involved in the promotion of the book. Before a wholesale buyer is even approached, a promotional and marketing strategy has to be generated by the publisher himself or by a distributor — a list of distributors is available in The Literary Market Place — hired by the publisher. Failing the existence of such a marketing arm, the selection committee for the wholesale buyer will not even consider purchasing the book. This is precisely what happened with Hurly and the Bone.

The situation with super-market chain bookstores turned out to be similarly
difficult. Walmart wanted 14,000 copies right off (with the right to return unsold copies) at a 60% discount, which would mean a loss on every single copy sold. Upon contacting the major book distributors in the United States, in the publisher's own words: "Without exception we received polite responses that indicated that as a publishing house, we were too small for their offerings. Once we found out what the distributors wanted, it became clear that if we sold through them, we would lose money on every copy they bought" (Schnucker 6).

After fruitlessly trying again with the help of The American Trade Book Directory, both the publisher and myself reached the conclusion that it was best to try a direct marketing approach. Now, the Independent Bookstores operate on a different scheme entirely. For a juvenile book to be accepted, one single person, namely the Trade Book Buyer for the juvenile section of the store, makes the decision to carry it or not. This eliminates the need for middle men. I have thus succeeded in placing my book in two such stores in my area: Vroman's and Midnight Special where six copies were sold in total. As well, the bookstore at my University also carries the book and it sold eleven copies. Schnucker approached two local bookstores in his area. Ten copies were sold by one of them, none by the other. Furthermore, in order to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the press, he put a special offer in the university's alumni newsletter: "five copies were sold through this effort" (Schnucker 7). The book is also advertised on the World Wide Web site of the Press. Finally, it was entered by the publisher in a number of contests, namely the Golden Kite Award, the Newbery Prize for authors, and the Caldecott award for illustrators.

4. Reception

As part of his publicity campaign, the publisher sent 50 copies for review in local newspapers, newsletters, and journals both in Missouri and Los Angeles, thinking that those would be interested in a "home-grown" product. None reacted. Review copies were sent to journals and reviews specialised in juvenile literature. Only one responded. The initial peer reviewers from Iowa and Indiana were approached with the same result: no response. A series of advertisements placed in publications in the Los Angeles area were bought. No orders came from those ads.

Why has the book not been selected by reviewers? Why this "silent approach"? Why this visible lack of reception of a fine product? Several explanations are possible. In the publisher's words: "The press is a newcomer to the field of children's books and we did not plan well enough ahead of time to get the book before the public" (Schnucker 8). He also remarked that parents often seem to be unimpressed by the cover, and that because of its size (8 & 1/2 x 11) it "gets lost in the shuffle" (Schnucker 8). It is true, as some studies suggest that buyers'
criteria of children's books consider the exterior characteristics to be of primary importance (see Turow 94), but is the outside appearance of Hurly and the Bone really less attractive than other juvenile books that fared better? A solution may be that perhaps a clearer vision on the part of the publisher of the type of market the sales of the book should be oriented to would facilitate his marketing campaign. As it is, the book is too expensive for a mass market, and being non-mainstream in its appearance and content, it cannot "sell itself." It is innovative and original in its language and design, and could have attracted library buyers. However it was not offered to them.

According to Janssen (1991), Van Rees and Vermunt, in the course of the selection made by literary reviewers the name of the publishing house will be a determining factor when the author is a debutant. In the case of a previously published author, previous reviewers' attention will be the determining factor. As I am a first time writer of a children's book, the illustrator a first timer, and the publisher having never produced a children's book before Hurly, our collective chances for success look slim at the onset. This factor is further complicated by the fact that the passage from "filter" to "filter" extends over a period of time. As Van Rees pointed out, the selection filters of the institution of criticism are made up of journalistic reviewers, essayists, and academic critics (1983, 397), three categories which correspond respectively to what he calls "primary," "secondary," and "tertiary" criticism and which have the power to assign quality to literary products: "A work which does not pass through all filters fades into obscurity" (403).

I, on the other hand, have tried to increase my book's chances of success by giving public readings and performances in schools, public libraries, and bookstores, activities which have been recognised as propitious to the reception of authors' works (see Janssen 1996). I have joined the Society for Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, and in short, I have not given up. Neither has my patient publisher: "The book is wonderfully written and brilliantly illustrated and it will sell" (Schnucker 8). May these last words prove true.

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Totalitarian Journalism from a Systemic and Dialogic Perspective: The Case of Bulgaria

1. A Systemic and Dialogic Framework for the Study of Totalitarian Media: Postulates and Application

The focus of this article is to trace the shift in some of the characteristics of totalitarian journalistic discourse as a component of the media system. My approach is based on a convergence of Siegfried J. Schmidt’s, Yuri Lotman’s, and Mikhail Bakhtin’s theoretical works while my example is drawn on the contemporary history of Bulgarian print journalism as occurring during the period of recent political changes. At present, mass media in Bulgaria function not only in a new social situation, but under new criteria and conditions. Moreover, they are subordinated to a new professional and creative paradigm. I will concentrate on the discourse of the leading daily newspapers, their transformation and reemergence in the new socio-political conditions. The empirical data I am using is taken from Dimitër Najdenov’s recent study of the Bulgarian press, Preszhurnalistika ili ... E la nave va (Press Journalism, or La nave va). The book is significant in that it is the first study of its kind about the recent history of Bulgarian journalism.

First, I will situate my analysis in the context of two at first glance radically different approaches to culture, exemplified by the works of Siegfried J. Schmidt and Yuri Lotman, specifically Schmidt’s study "Why Literature Is Not Enough, or: Literary Studies as Media Studies" and Lotman’s book, Culture and Explosion, both published in 1992. According to Schmidt, the development of literary studies as a branch of the humanities has been oriented in two major directions: the study of literature as a social system and the study of literature as a semiotic system. He suggests that "the correlation between both systems is as yet not sufficiently clear, to say the least" (11). One may go further and claim

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1 Such a conjoining becomes more acceptable if we apply Steven Tóthsey’s concept of "theory approximation" to account for "aspects of theory building such as the knowledge of and reference to similar and/or analogue factors in other [theoretical] frameworks when building a new one" (13).
that over the years these two approaches have been viewed in terms of a binary opposition, as two irreconcilable poles in cultural and anthropological scholarship. I would suggest, however, that a more careful study of the later works of Lotman would show certain views which are concurrent with a systemic approach to cultural studies. Evidence to support this claim is provided by the shift in Lotman's understanding of the sphere of culture in his _ultima verba_, his 1992 _Culture and Explosion_. In his book, while elaborating on many old issues pertinent to what traditionally has been designated as the semiotics of culture, Lotman at the same time introduces two new components. First, he proposes the term "explosion" as a new metaphor to determine processes in culture and, second, he develops his idea of binary and ternary systems, giving his ultimate preference to the latter. The late Lotman more and more speaks of his "dissatisfaction with existing semiotic studies of culture" (1994, 219) and the hope for the creation of a new general methodology of cultural studies which will provide "prophetic insight into this inherently experimental field of study" (1994, 219).

For Lotman, culture evolves in two different patterns: consistently and cataclysmically. Gradual evolution is premeditated and predictable; the opposite process is characterized by unpredictability and sudden explosive change (1992, 17-34). Explosion and gradual evolution are not necessarily two alternating phenomena. Rather, they coexist and interact synchronically in the same space. Lotman views culture as a multilayered complex conglomerate of planes of human activity. Since human activity as such transgresses the boundaries of the cultural semiosphere, in his last book Lotman substitutes his earlier model of the semiosphere based on binary oppositions and neat evenness for a new triadic model, in which one of the apices is anchored in extrasemiotic reality. In other words, the social domain is incorporated into his schema directly, not merely as context. The two models are referred to as binary and ternary systems, respectively. The major difference between the two systems is contained in the fact that while interaction in the former is realized along a two-dimensional oppositional axis, the latter presents a three-dimensional volumetric model with three apices based on a relation of compensational mechanisms. By anchoring one of the fundaments of his cultural paradigm into society, Lotman in fact transgresses the closed hermetic boundaries of the semiosphere. Moreover, he applies the two models not only to the domain of culture, art, and literature, but even more so to historical reality. It is quite symptomatic that while in his previous works Lotman exclusively illustrates his ideas with cultural artefacts —

2 It may be argued that _Culture and Explosion_ should not be considered Lotman's last book, because several other books by him have appeared since 1992. While from a purely formal point of view this may be the case, I would claim that _Culture and Explosion is de facto_ the last book the living Lotman authored. Anything else which may have been published after 1992 is inevitably material from an earlier period.
literary works, films, paintings, in *Culture and Explosion* he refers to his immediate environment and current events: Gorbachev, the 1991 failed coup d'état in Russia, the European integration, etc. (1992, 265-70). His discussion is followed by a straightforward and unequivocal rejection of the long-established tradition of binarism resulting in antagonism and destruction in favour of the ternary system defining the Western world whose fundamentals are jurisdiction, tolerance, and gradualness.

The introduction of a third point, located in reality, has another crucial consequence: it effects the transition from the system's self-description — the closed immanentist orientation of the Moscow-Tartu school's early endeavours into the semiotics of culture — into its description. The operation of description can become a prelude to further goals: for example, "the teaching of culture," an idea Lotman develops already in the early 1970s (1971, 167-76). Description, then, becomes the first stage for a future influence on the system. Led by his concept to gain "prophetic insight" into the study of culture as an "inherently experimental field," Lotman propounds a new prescriptive, monitoring approach to the system and based on the premise that culture as an anthropological construct. As such it can not only be observed and described, but also governed and guided.

Schmidt, in his discussion of the specificity of the literary system as a social communicative system, applies to it the terms "self-referential" and "self-organizing" to signify those aspects which set it apart from other systems. He points out that "the literary system shows a closed organization" (1992, 7); moreover, he emphasizes that

The history of modern literary systems in democratic societies clearly reveals that other social systems (e.g., the political, religious, scientific, and economic system) never succeeded in exercising a long-term external control over the literary system. Like all self-referential systems, the literary system cannot be managed, intentionally and causally, from the outside.... Internal evaluation of literary activities are always provisional and have to stay their ground in literary discourse. (1992, 7).

This understanding of the structure of literary systems can be correlated to Lotman's theorizing in *Culture and Explosion* about the peculiar nature of the artistic world as a domain of the cultural semiosphere. As Lotman states,

Art creates its own world which is based on the transformation of non-artistic reality according to the formula "if p, then q." ... In any case the laws which structure this world can be divided into two groups: [laws leading to] changes which are impossible [in extrasemiotic reality] and [laws leading to] changes which are possible but categorically forbidden... (1992, 234)

3 Translations from the Russian into English are mine.
For Lotman the mechanism of art is governed by the principle of "explosion plus gradual evolution." However, explosion and gradual evolution in ternary systems, i.e., the systems of "democratic societies," are dynamically and dialogically interconnected and are subordinated to the laws and regularities governing the system of culture.

Thus, both Schmidt and Lotman isolate a set of rules which structure and inform culture as a compact self-evolving entity. At the same time, both scholars stress the impossibility and implausibility of an absolute closeness of the system. Lotman sees the potential of the artistic domain to influence the extrasemiotic sphere; hence, he introduces his open volumetric model which has reality as one of its pillars. Schmidt, whose point of departure has the literary system already firmly embedded in society, stresses the need that "institutions of control and hierarchization" (1992, 8) be taken into account. He, too, highlights a "hierarchical form of regulation or 'control'" (1992, 8) within the global paradigm of the self-regulating unit. Further, Schmidt points out that for more than a century and a half now, literature as a social system has been in close dependency and much influenced by the rise and development of mass media: print media, film, broadcasting, television, video, computer, etc.: "As a consequence literary socialization is embedded in the more complex process of media socialization and cannot be separated from it without distortion" (1992, 11). Taking this claim to be valid both ways, i.e., one cannot disregard the influence of literature on mass media, either, we are justified in applying what traditionally have been considered literary approaches to media. Moreover, in his discussion of how contemporary forms of media affect the receiver of information, Schmidt finds tangential zones in the cognitive processing of literary and media reality:

Media systems provide reports on events which none of us can or has ever experienced (men on moon, wars in jungles and deserts, strange animals on exotic islands, etc.) and whose reliability none of us can ever check. Opinions are spread, life-styles are advertised, (hi)stories are constructed, values are debated which do dwell in our personal lives but, simply by being communicated in mass media, become ingredients of our lives and creep into our cognitive processing. The individual as well as the social construction of reality is increasingly put to work through the perception and processing of media-events. (1992, 14)

Having established a common cognitive framework for literary and media systems, Schmidt discusses the implications of modern media for the relativization of the notion of fictionality in scholarly discourse. He points out the new possibilities of fictional worlds which are constructed no longer only in the domain of the literary work, but are designed in the realm of audiovisual media. The situation is further complicated when they are combined with what Schmidt calls "'free floating' world images" (1992, 16) which only exist in the mental spaces of the cognizing subject.
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One of the productive ways by means of which Schmidt’s appeal for a systemic approach to literary studies and Lotman’s insights for a reorientation of the semiotics of culture can be reconciled is through a basic premise implicitly underlying both methodologies, namely dialogism. I use this term as it is conceptualized by Mikhail Bakhtin. Bakhtin’s overall œuvre is directed towards the creation of an epistemological framework where the main objective is the overcoming of symmetrically postulated binaries and impermeable boundaries — between text and beyond text, between self and other, between life and literature. The very idea of dialogism questions the fixity of boundaries between literary and extra-literary discourse and foregrounds the necessity of a compromise between historicity and simultaneity. Unlike the Formalists’ meticulous immanentist understanding of literature, Bakhtin views literary texts as utterances which cannot be separated from particular subjects in definite social contexts. In other words, for Bakhtin literature is above all another form of communication with a very high organizational structure.

Much has been written about Bakhtin’s influence on the evolution of Lotman’s semiotic endeavours. Parallels between the two methodologies can be discussed at least along two important lines: first, the issue of the communicative dimension of literature and other texts/utterances, and second, the relation of literary texts/utterances to reality (see, for example, Reid; Salvestroni). Having assumed two kinds of objectivity — the objectivity of the world of language and the objectivity of the world beyond language — Lotman defines language communication as "the strained intersection of adequate and inadequate language acts" (1992, 16). Communication between participants in the act can be achieved along a continuum with different degrees of complexity — ranging from easiest (daily language) to the most difficult (literary language). This continuum with fuzzy borders provides different areas of intersection for the participants in communication. Victory of either one of these two extremes is "theoretically impossible while practically fatal" (1992, 16; my emphasis). The supremacy of one extreme inevitably would destroy "the information created in the field of tension which emerges between [the two poles]" (1992, 16). To avoid the establishment of a single, univocal language/discourse, Lotman insists on a compound sense-generating minimal unit of at least two components. Two conditions must be satisfied for the adequate functioning of such a minimal sense-generating unit: the existence of more than one — at least two — languages for the reflection of the language-independent reality; and the impossibility to cover, describe, and exhaust external reality by means of one language only, but through the combined activity of at least two (or more) languages. These claims are a logical continuation of Lotman’s postulate that, "A minimal thinking apparatus must include at least two differently constructed systems to exchange the information they each have worked out" (1990, 36; 1994, 180-81).
The inability of a single language to represent exhaustively external reality is a condition ensuring the existence of the other (other individual, other language, other culture), both within the system and out of it. A system based on the principle "more than one" is an open construct which allows constant inclusion of novel components. The components — languages — become mutually necessary since none of them, taken separately, can "express the world" (1992, 10). Languages' inherent un-inter-translatability, or at best partial inter-translatability, is a source for the adequate rendition of the extralinguistic object as realized within the system of language (1992, 15-16). The importance of dialogism becomes even more prominent when contextualized in the overall schema of Lotman's ternary model with its emphasis on integration rather than confrontation.

A similar understanding of the significance of literature is the starting point for Schmidt's argumentation for the validity of the Empirical Study of Literature: "meaning can no longer be regarded as an ontological property of literary texts because meaning apparently arises through some kind of interaction between the text and its readers within sociocultural contexts" (1996, 1). The role of mass media and the electronic revolution have transformed the print medium into one of many alternatives of "reality-construction" which, furthermore, must "compete with the other media for its cultural position" (1996, 9). The same logic determines Bakhtin's focus on investigating not the opposition of literature versus non-literature, but specifically between different kinds of utterances of which literature is only one instance. Taking this dialogic premise in consideration, Schmidt's recommendation for the future orientation of literary studies as an integral element of media and cultural studies is equally applicable to Bakhtin's epistemology: "In order to discern the specificity of literature, we consequently have to observe the difference between literary works and other aesthetic phenomena" (1968, 9-10; my emphasis). Finally, Schmidt himself defines his constructivism as "post-modernist" in his attempt to shift the focus from "objects to processes, from identity to difference, from truth to contingency, from knowing-what to knowing-how" (1992, 10), stressing that "There will be neither democracy, nor science, nor humanity without pluralism" (1992, 10). Put differently, the principle of dialogism underlies the Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature and Culture.

In my analysis of Bulgarian print journalism, I will apply the above outlined theoretical framework by viewing it as a particular discourse of reality construction. I will try to trace a tendency in its development which can be succinctly summarized as the transition from monological epic fictionality to dialogic open-ended novelness. My starting point is the axiomatic interdependence and mutual influence between the social conditions and their reflection on cultural developments in its broadest sense. I will describe how Bulgarian print media textualizes a particular set of values subordinated to a particular form of
social organization and the shift in its discourse paradigm following the drastic change in the socio-political environment in Bulgaria in 1989. Bakhtin's theoretical postulates seem particularly appropriate. His concepts of dialogism, unfinalizability, author-audience relationship, types of discourses, etc., are relevant for a medium such as print journalism. Furthermore, Bakhtin's philosophical rather than purely literary approach to the text includes not only analyses of the mode of existence and activities of literary characters, but concerns with the mode of existence and activities literally of real people. His focus on notions such as "citizen" and "citizenship" and his exhaustive construction of the "novelistic world" as a world-in-the-making in opposition to the petrified impenetrable boundaries of the epic allow for some adequate parallels from the domain of Bulgarian press journalism before and after the "explosion" of 1989.

Most generally, the dynamic processes in Bulgarian journalistic discourse can be defined in the following way: transition from totalitarian journalism to journalism in a civil society, transition from ideologically-motivated to market-governed criteria, transition from epic to novelistic representation. Totalitarian journalistic discourse was conditioned first and foremost by the three Leninist principles for the press which were the unbeatable dogmas of journalistic theory and practice in totalitarian society: Communist partisanship, ideological primacy of the press, and populism (mass participation). As a result of the absolute implementation of these inherently anti-communicational and anti-dialogic principles, Bulgarian media in essence were deprived of their function of expressing public opinion and were transformed into yet another tribune for official ideology. Totalitarian journalism developed and thrived on the basis of two axiomatic conditions: economic dependency on the Bulgarian Communist Party, which was the sole publisher and distributor of journalistic production, and ideological subordination expressed in the premise for confrontational opposition "us" (the good Socialist society) vs. "them" (the evil Capitalist world). Given this framework, several characteristics of totalitarian journalism can be defined.

The intentional hypercentralization of the mass media system led to gaps in the communicative field or, conversely, abundance of particular publications. Thus, while some semantic fields were saturated in terms of news coverage, others were practically liquidated by having been denied the right to textualization. Or, to paraphrase Stalin's macabre aphorism "No person, no problem" with respect to the media, the situation was "No coverage, no problem." The result was the creation of particular thematic fields of journalistic coverage, e.g., economic subjects, the achievements of Socialism, the celebratory opening of yet another factory "for the good of the people," etc. Consequently, readers were forced "to follow closely the implementation of the five-year economic plan, the gathering of crops, and to get involved in specialized economic issues"
The concerns of the young generation were treated from an official, idealized perspective in which young people were presented as totally public individuals whose sole objective was the "building of a developed socialist society." In short, Bulgarian journalism was gradually creating a whole mythology of success, which penetrated all spheres of social discourse and activity. Social activity itself was perceived as totally public; the individual was turned into a hero of modern times, a builder of socialism who was deprived of any individual characteristics or private concerns.

The ideologization of journalism motivated the creation of a specific axiological genre system. It was characterized by disregard for the presentation of the current event in favour of evaluative essays, biographical sketches, and pseudoreports. The reporting of events in the course of their occurrence was practically liquidated. This totalitarian journalism created its own model of presentation of news which was entirely detached from the real event in its spatio-temporal progression. Status of news was given to meetings, gatherings, summits, conferences, in other words, to forums at which nothing happened.

At the same time, there was a monstrous proliferation of analytical and even fictional genres: the memoir, the biography, and the commentary. The iconography of totalitarian journalism was particularly fond of the biographical sketch based on the fictionalization of the individual and the heroization of his/her life. The sketch portrayed the hero/heroine in a mythologized spatio-temporal coordinate system — outside the event and social activity, suspended in the cosmos. These individuals, larger than life and basking in optimism, seemed to have sprung directly from the directives for the representation of the perfect Socialist type introduced by Maxim Gorky at the First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers in 1934:

I would again draw your attention to the fact, comrades, that the most vivid and profoundly conceived, artistically perfect hero-types were created by folklore, by the oral tradition of the working people..... pessimism is entirely foreign to folklore ..... the community seems to be aware of its own immortality and sure of the victory over all hostile forces.... outside reality, man eludes recognition and ... reality is permeated by politics ... man, whatever cunning a picture he may develop of himself, still remains a social unit.... (136-37)

The preference for the non-event was conducive to the construction of a vast social space which in essence remained totally anonymous. Even the rubric of the reportage was misleading since in the majority of cases it was not based on an actual happening but aimed at yet another idealized textual version of contemporaneity. Thus, through the intentional mythologization of the heroes and

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4 Translations from the Bulgarian into English are mine.
"builders" of Socialism, totalitarian journalism in essence canonized the construction of a frozen, finalized, and immutable epic world as its operative and justificatory principle.

In his seminal work on the epic and the novel, Bakhtin provides an exhaustive analysis of the rules governing the two kinds of fictional worlds which emerge in these genres. According to Bakhtin, the principal feature defining the epic world is the existence of "epic distance [which] separates the epic world from contemporary reality, that is from the time in which the singer (the author and his audience) lives" (1968, 13). He emphasizes the necessity for the transferal of the represented world into the past which would immediately render it inaccessible to either participant in the communicative situation. As a genre, the epic is "completely finished," "congealed," and "half-moribund" (1968, 14) and possesses a whole scale of valorizing categories which function to the extreme. The epic as an absolute past is "both monochronic and valorized (hierarchical); it lacks any relativity" (1968, 15). Being inaccessible either to the author or the receiver, the epic world is inaccessible to any personal experience whatsoever and hence "does not permit an individual, personal point of view or evaluation" (1968, 16). It presents a single, unequivocal point of view which is subordinated to the dominant ideology governing the concrete society. This ideology, which Bakhtin defines as "tradition" is "sacred and sacrosanct, evaluated in the same way by all and demanding a pious attitude toward itself" (1968, 16); it excludes initiative for personal insight, new understanding, interpretation, and evaluation (1968, 17):

The important thing is not the factual sources of the epic, not the content of its historical events, nor the declarations of its authors — the important thing is ... its reliance on impersonal and sacrosanct tradition, on a commonly held evaluation and point of view — which excludes any possibility of another approach — and which therefore displays a profound piety toward the subject described and toward the language used to describe it... (1968, 16-17; my emphasis)

Since the epic world as such is frozen and finalized, any section of this world can be taken and presented as a finished unit: "each part is complete and circular like the whole" (1968, 31). The beginning and the end of any epic are arbitrary and random; since the general plotline of the tradition is known to everyone, the component of surprise and closure becomes irrelevant.

Given Bakhtin's discussion of the epic genre and the world it reconstructs, one cannot fail to see some drastic parallels with the journalistic algorithms governing representation of the Socialist reality in the Bulgarian press. However, while Bakhtin relates the epic to the distant tradition of the past, the artificial world created in totalitarian journalism is unidirectionally and unequivocally oriented towards the distant future. Having established itself on the social scene as a result of an annihilating explosion — to employ Lotman's apocalyptic vision
— Socialism rejects the past and historical tradition in favour of a utopian future. Yet, despite its unevidenced, prophetic essence, this future is as frozen, finalized, and immutable as the realm of the epic. It is as distanced from the present, both in terms of space and time, as the epic past is. Thus, it is equally incapable of undergoing any changes.

A direct consequence from the construction of a surreal epic world in Bulgarian print journalism was the petrification and artificialization of language *ad absurdum*. The ancient epic, having sprung from the oral tradition, has a very specific arsenal of stylistic devices and linguistic strategies for the presentation of events — at its core, it relies on ready-made formulas and recurrent patterns. The same phenomenon occurred in journalistic discourse. On the one hand, a hyperbureaucratic and official jargon became the distinct label of newspaper discourse. Notably, there was a direct dependency between the centrality of the paper and the degree of bureaucratic jargon to be found in the paper. Thus, while there was little differentiation among the journalistic editions in Socialist Bulgaria, the Bulgarian Communist Party daily "organ" held the infamous victorious position with regard to disinformation and meaningless grandiloquence. The word "organ" itself was an all-pervasive cliché employed to characterize different publications of the print media. Every newspaper, journal, magazine, etc., published in Bulgaria was some organization's "organ." In the same way that every individual had to be at least one but usually several organization's "member." The double entendre carried by such lexemes, which through abusive usage, had become simultaneously desemanticized — no one really took them to mean anything; yet everyone inserted them automatically in the necessary linguistic slots given the official Newspeak — and hypersemanticized — as "safe choices" they were used to mean anything and everything whenever the necessary degree of bureaucratic style was required — was exploited by the population in the subversive unofficial domain of the carnivalesque: through rather vulgar punning on the sexual meanings of these worlds. Consequently, the lofty political phraseology of the Communist ideologists was often spoofed and inverted by mere play on the level of language polysemy.

In his extensive study on carnival as the fundament for unofficial popular culture *Rabelais and His World*, Bakhtin discusses the phenomenon of carnivalization. For him the locus of carnival activity is the public square, where the "exalted and the lowly, the sacred and the profane are levelled and are all drawn into the same dance" (1968, 160).

The clichéization of language was also accompanied by a proliferation of its emotive and evaluative functions. Phraseological units in the press inevitably carried positive or negative connotations, depending on whether they were used to describe "us" — the Bulgarian Communist Party, the "brotherly Soviet Union," "the brotherly Socialist camp," "proletarian internationalism and brotherly solidarity" — or "them" — the capitalist exploiters, "the American
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aggressors," "the class-enemy," etc. In this tightly regulated journalistic jargon, it was impossible to go beyond the formula or the official newspaper register. The style of print journalism could not be invaded by other registers, it did not tolerate every-day language, it did not allow for the mixture of levels and styles.

The absolute opposition between good and evil was further sustained by the creation of a mechanism of pseudocriticism and "scapegoating" through journalism which aimed at creating an illusion of objective depiction of reality. This involved the reporting of minor deformations in society, which mirror the flaws of the chief protagonists in the epic, followed by coverage of the deus-ex-machina intervention of the "just sovereign" (the Communist Party Central Committee, the Secretary General), ever attentive and ready to act in the name of the people. The so represented Socialist Reality as a constructed epic world was totally inadequate to the then current state of affairs in Bulgarian society. The mode of discourse employed for the representation of this world was normative and prescriptive in character. It functioned as a substitute of the primary prerequisite of journalistic discourse for informational content. Thus, consistently and manipulatively, dialogism was eliminated by propaganda.

From an economic perspective, there was a total lack of correlation between product and market management and this state of affairs had profound effects on not only the media but also its systemic correlate, literature. Each publication was predetermined in its circulation by centralized quotas. These quotas were not the result of readership demand but were justified by ideological criteria. Quite often in fact, popular publications would be artificially suppressed and would disappear from the media market to the public’s frustration. This phenomenon was absolutely logical, since the popularity of a newspaper, a magazine, or a book would be directly proportional to its marginality in terms of abiding by the rules and regulatory mechanisms of epic social discourse. Within this framework perhaps the greatest paradox of the last years of Bulgarian totalitarianism involved the practical disappearance of the liberal tribune of Soviet glasnost, the magazine Ogonek, from all news-stands in the country. Subscriptions were not officially forbidden and could not be controlled, however, Ogonek being a foreign publication, the Bulgarian postal service became highly unreliable and parcels simply disappeared. Naturally, these publications were considered even more dangerous than straightforward Western propaganda because this was subversion coming from within, from the very centre of the system rather than from the class enemy.

Totalitarian journalism in its essence can be presented as a closed binary system based on monologism, confrontation, and total isolation. With the changes in the historical and political reality, a rejection of the epic for the novelistic world with a parallel substitution of the binary for the ternary model is under way. The ensuing changes are slow, imperceptible, and often unequivocal. Their quintessence is the transition from the ideal to the real; the rejection of
monologism for dialogism; the emergence of polyphony in the media (different views on the issue) as a reflection of the heteroglossia in society; the transformation of propagandistic into informational content; the substitution of the axiological in favour of the factual; and the demonopolization of the mechanisms of media management, production, and distribution. From a Bakhtinian perspective, in effect it is a clear movement from an epic to a novelistic world. The gradual establishment of this new conceptual paradigm implies the construction of an actual actor-governed "network of interacting items" (Schmidt 1994, 17; see also Schmidt 1996, 289-90).

This basic shift in the paradigm of journalistic discourse did not happen immediately after the political change in Bulgaria in November 1989. It is mediated by several crucial events, which in Lotman's terminology would represent explosions, that instigated the reshuffling of the long-established socio-political and cultural frozen models: the first true coverage of public opinion at the mass gathering in front of the Parliament building on 17 November 1989, the (re)emergence of oppositional press, and the active influence of independent business-oriented press. After 10 November 1989, for a while Bulgarian journalism appeared to disregard the change. The majority of the newspapers proceeded in applying the old arsenal of journalistic stereotypes and devices to the new range of topical issues. The register in journalistic positions remained narrow and tended to gravitate towards one and the same "official" position which expressed a homogeneous official public opinion. At a time of tremendous variety often reaching extreme polarization, the Bulgarian press displayed a monolithic unity. No differentiation in the media system took place. The same press which had for so long supported and served the old regime as a chief tool of propaganda and control suddenly launched a unified massive attack against the political apparatus. The chief target became the epic hero of the previous epoch, the longest ruling dictator of the Eastern block, former Secretary General of the Bulgarian Communist Party Todor Zhivkov. An almost epic competition of rejection erupted: the mode of discourse adopted relied on quasi-Classicist devices of absolute negation, hyperbolic exaggeration, elaborate phraseology of insult, and gloating against Zhivkov and Zhivkovism. Yet, no attempt was made at an objective analysis of the past and the conditions which had allowed for the rise of totalitarianism. The newspapers adopted a stance of blamelessness and not a trace of self-criticism could be detected. On the contrary, an attempt was even made to foreground instances of the "journalistic battle" (Najdenov 21) against Zhivkovism. The chief means of expression was the emphasis on the collective formulation "Our newspaper has always been...." The other favourite strategy of self-exoneration was the implementation of readers' letter expressing support for the paper quite reminiscent of the recent past. The concept of Zhivkovism was quickly constructed as the new propaganda myth and was reinforced through endless repetition.

During this early period of transition, the Bulgarian Communist Party
continued to be the chief publisher of journalistic publications. This was another crucial, economically relevant reason, which conditioned the consistently homogenous quality of Bulgarian journalism. Discoursewise, it was manifested by identical linguistic usage, overlapping of headlines, rubrics, rhetorical figures, and stylistic constructions. In other words, journalistic discourse was practically mimicking the totalitarian model.

On the way toward a democratic transition in journalism a major change did, however, occur: the ideological principle of self-identification without altogether disappearing ceased to be dominant. In the subsequent months it was gradually being replaced by a new principle — that of the political identification of journalists, publications, programmes, etc. In other words, the first manifestation of true pluralism could be observed. Some formal changes in the Communist Party's statutes were soon to open the way for the legal emergence of a politically motivated oppositional press.

According to Najdenov, one event on 17 November 1989 played a decisive role for the further identification of the new Bulgarian journalistic discourse (21-22). After Zhivkov's ousting on 10 November, the old Socialist parliament remained in session. On 17 November a large rally had been summoned which received coverage on the evening news. The main focus was naturally on the emphatic denunciation of ex-leader Zhivkov. Yet, during the shots from the rally the camera stayed for a few seconds on a slogan which read: "Kubadinski, Iotov, Panev — resign!" The importance of the slogan was contained in the fact that it demanded political change in the present situation, rather than being oriented toward the past state of affairs. This was an event that gained the status of precedent — it was the first media coverage of unofficial public opinion on a political matter since the big change.

On 10 January 1990, the first issue of the Social-Democratic newspaper Free Nation (Svoboden narod) appeared after a 45-year ban. A month later, the oppositional daily Democracy (Demokratsija) also found its place on the market. This was a radical change in the communicational situation in the country. Gradually, some of the defining characteristics of the oppositional press found their manifestation through their consolidation and self-organization within the structures of the unified opposition coalition front. Another crucial process was the beginning of a polemical dialogue between different media publications. This early attempt at dialogism was crucial for the subsequent subversion and eventual obliteration of the long established journalistic practice of totalitarian media.

Yet, the most important trend that was crucial for the formation of the new journalistic paradigm was the appearance of a politically independent press in the period of 1990-92. The media situation in Bulgaria immediately after the political change was so dynamic and diversified that an exhaustive description and analysis of it could not be very accurate at this point. There was a monstrous proliferation of publications which had been suppressed by the previous regime:
tabloids, hard-core pornography, TV guides, and bargain finders, gay publications, as well as a vast selection of pirated translations from Western publications (see Deltcheva). In this heterogeneous environment, one of the crucial roles was played by the non-partisan dailies, which have claimed at least on the surface the status of independent tribunes. It is in them that the radical switch towards the present and novelistic representation is most prominently displayed. At the same time, these publications managed from the very beginning to ensure their relative independence with regard to publishing procedure. Having managed to circumvent economic dependence from the official publishers, they were able not only to promote and sustain their status of defenders of free speech, but almost overnight became the most widely read publications in the country. For instance, an interesting phenomenon became evident at the time. As already mentioned above, immediately after 10 November 1989, Bulgarian society was highly polarized and politically intolerant. Within such circumstances the preference for political publications would be natural. In fact what could be observed at the media market was a curious hybridization of readers' demand. While allegiance to the political party newspapers persisted, the independent publications, especially the so-called "Hour newspapers" inevitably were being purchased as a source for alternative (more plausible?) information.

Of the innumerable quantities of journalistic production in the early 1990s, three independent dailies merit individual attention: 24 Hours (24 часа) published by a journalist association known as the Press Group, Standard News (Standart нюз) which is funded by the Tron business corporation, and Continent (Континент), the creation of a group of professional and experienced investigative journalists and political commentators. I agree with Najdenov's claim that they more than any other publication shaped the foundations of the new paradigm of Bulgarian journalistic discourse (78-98).

24 Hours is a phenomenon which merits an in-depth analysis in its own right. This daily was the first one to claim legitimation in the media space filled with old and new party organs. The formula it presented from the very beginning can be summarized in the phrase "news as they are." The concept was simple and totally novel: minimum words, maximum news. The socio-economic consequences from a similar approach were not only a smaller, hence cheaper publication, but also for the first time a direct correlation between reality and reality-construction through language was achieved. Instead of a heavily marked

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5 Together with 168 Hours (168 часа) — the weekly publication of the Press Group — these became known as the "Hour newspapers." As a result of a well-prepared campaign they soon gained the reputation of being "favourites of the entire nation." Whether this status is necessarily true is arguable; however, Najdenov is quite accurate in claiming that "Today the 'people's favourite' daily [24 Hours] may be despised by many but it is read by all, including its enemies and disputers. In many respects it is the symbol of free speech and the power of the media in our [the Bulgarian] version of a civil society" (80-81).
axiological mythologization, the public was presented with bare facts and reports, unmediated by any additional subjective interpretation on the part of the journalist. Significantly, the unusualness of this methodology and the public’s lack of preparation for this kind of discourse was reflected in the early accusations against the daily that the news presented were "anonymous, lacking authorial individuality, universalized, and devoid of the journalist’s position" (Najdenov 81).

The other shocking consequence resulting from the appearance of *24 Hours* was the total reshuffling in the petrified schema of stylistic registers, linguistic means and devices, and the normative vocabulary defining Bulgarian journalistic discourse. By concentrating the attention on the world "still in the making," the language is inevitably conditioned by the tendencies and phenomena governing this "novelistic" environment. For Bakhtin, the dominant genre best expressing modernity is the novel because it is "the only genre born of this new world and in total affinity with it" (1981, 7); moreover language in the novel "renews itself by incorporating extraliterary heteroglossia" and the novelistic layers "become dialogized, permeated with laughter, irony, humour, elements of self-parody" and thus a certain "semantic openendedness" is inserted, "a living contact with unfinished, still-evolving contemporary reality (the openended present)" (1981, 7). The "Hour newspapers" were the first to implement this kind of polyphonic rendition of reality-construction: by the adamant refusal to show party affiliations or preferences, by the rejection of the empty rhetoric of pseudoinformation, by the incorporation of low registers and newly emergent neologisms and coinages, and the legitimization of slang in the print medium. In addition, the conservative Bulgarian grammar and syntax was subjected to such radical ludic metamorphoses that some of the extreme language purists are still writing outraged and denouncing exposures against the "undertakers of the Bulgarian language."

Another trend defining the new journalistic paradigm in Bulgarian print journalism came with the establishment of the newspaper *Standard News* on the media market. Its importance can be discovered along two axes — as a business enterprise and as a novel approach to the act of journalistic writing. Economically, this was the first publication by means of which the emerging big financial capital penetrated the media space. Its strategy to conquer territories was bold and assertive: outrageously low prices, an aggressive advertising campaign, and the promise for an alternative perspective. In terms of its professional principles, *Standard News* was the complete antipode — a rejection of polemics and sensationalism in favour of an image which would "become the personification of newspaper assurance and peacefulness" (Najdenov 85). Another original idea underlying the conceptual framework of the newspaper was the orientation towards a balanced compromise of a daily and a weekly. As a publication it was quick to grasp the weakening in audience interest towards the old weekly formats and very quickly it managed to present an alternative. Thus, among the objective,
nonpartisan rendition of current events, the newspaper also abounds in a high percentage of rubrics dedicated to commentaries, analyses, editorials, and other evaluative genres.

Conceptually, *Standard News* represents the attempt of Bulgarian print journalism to develop its version of a democratic forum on which the variegated image of a society in transition can be represented. From the very beginning it came out with a strict code of professional and ethical norms which has led to its labelling as a "conservative" newspaper which is contrasted to the more "tabloid" format of *24 Hours*. It targets a more exigent readership which is less prone to giving in to polarized stands in favour of greater tolerance and pluralism. As a result, a major characteristic of the newspaper is the strong editorial and authorial presence of the journalistic staff. And while over the past five years the newspaper has undergone serious restructuring and reevaluation, it has nevertheless preserved its defining style: the calm, balanced, independent rendition of news.

A somewhat different approach in establishing itself on the media scene was undertaken by the third pillar in new Bulgarian print journalism, the newspaper *Continent*. As early as at the time of its launching campaign, this publication opted for an original strategy — that of the "newcomer," the "foreigner," which has come from the outside but is now here to stay. The early commercials promoted the image of a Renaissance ship (an important symbolic icon for the Bulgarian spectator) amid the roaring ocean (of news?) with the crew finally spotting *terra* in the distance and shouting: "Continent on the horizon!" Thus from the very beginning the newspaper constructed its history within the framework of a myriad of foreign yet not unknown sources of public opinion formation: *The Guardian, The Independent, The International Herald Tribune, Le Monde,* or *Die Welt*. *Continent* was to be perceived as one of them. An adjacent issue to this concept is the peculiar understanding of the interconnectedness between reality and reality construction in the news. The key element in determining the place of this publication lies specifically in the "how." For *Continent* is unique not in its particular choice of themes and their arrangement on the page, but also in how the events are reflected — the type and level of discourse, the interpretation of the event, and the general world-view shared by the journalists making the daily.

There is no doubt that rhetorically and linguistically, *Continent* is a "difficult" piece of reading. It does not provide straightforward solutions or commonsensical generalizations. On the contrary, its article lengths exceed the average length to which the average Bulgarian reader is used to. Moreover, the analyses and commentaries involve technical and professional layers not so frequent in other daily publications. The drastic diversity of views and positions which coexist on its pages is the result of a carefully devised policy to promote pluralism as a direct reflection of the opinions and views of the different individuals making up
its editorial staff. Naturally, the targeted audience of *Continent* cannot be very broad. Yet, what is lost in circulation, i.e., quantity, is made up with regard to the readership, i.e., quality. However, the *Continent* is not a newspaper without flaws. First of all, there was too long an interval between its public announcement and its actual launching on the media market. Secondly, in spite of its ambitions to be a "serious" source of information regardless of subscription numbers, it eventually did succumb to some cheap tricks for broadening its readership quotas such as the promotion of competitions of the Lotto type. The result was a dramatic increase in its readership for the "wrong reasons" — specifically, the hope of winning a Western car or another "prestigious" prize. Yet, this increase was observed among the less educated strata of society. Despite these commercial strategies, however, it must be granted that *Continent* accomplished a feat which was crucial for the overall legitimization of the new type of journalistic discourse in the Bulgarian media system. It succeeded not only in fulfilling, but also in creating the need for serious, trustworthy, augmented information, and a calm, unbiased, well-argued interpretation.

2. Conclusion

Having described above the most prominent and relevant tendencies in Bulgarian journalistic discourse, it is at least problematic to fully accept Bulgarian media critic Khristina Kochemidova's assessment that the new Bulgarian journalism is not interested in presenting the facts, but merely "to fill the page with words" (3). It is true that the vast majority of current Bulgarian dailies is overall homogeneous and consistent in their predilection for violence, scandal, sensationalism, gossip, and the proliferation of "well-informed" and "very well-informed anonymous sources.” At the same time, I have tried to demonstrate above that there is a distinct transition in the journalistic discourse before and after the changes in November 1989. This shift in the creative paradigm of reality-construction is conditioned by an important change in the levers governing the structure of Bulgarian society, namely the substitution of the utopian Communist ideology for the pragmatic algorithms of capitalist free market. In Bakhtinian terms, this is the transgression of the finalized closed domain of the epic world into the always changing parameters of the novelistic present. Given this state of affairs, it is to be expected that the Bulgarian media system should be in a state of transition, a process of self-searching, and an attempt at sophisticated self-identification and self-definition. And once the different semantic layers within the media system have undergone their explosive renascence, there inevitably will come a time of stability, tolerance, and gradual

6 For an extensive discussion of these trends in the conditions of post-totalitarian socio-political development in Bulgaria, see Deltcheva.
evolution — the immutable tokens of a truly democratic and pluralistic society.

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Works Cited


NEL van DIJK and JEROEN K. VERMUNT

Literary Careers and Critical Reputation: A Longitudinal Study

1. Introduction

Literary careers develop very differently. Besides the relatively few authors whose books become serious candidates for the top-10 of most read books, there are many writers whose new works are hardly noticed by literary critics and the reading public. The difference in the development of literary careers cannot exclusively be accounted for by looking at intrinsic qualities of literary works. The valuation of literary works is limited in time and place. In different periods, opinions on the literary value of cultural objects vary. The history of canon formation clearly shows that sometimes highly esteemed works fall into oblivion, while others are reassessed. Even at one point in time different judgments on a literary work can co-exist.

The major dissimilarities between literary careers are partially the result of characteristics of the profession. First, authorship is a free profession, that is, one does not need a "diploma" to become a writer and there are no conditions or rules a debutant author has to comply with. Second, only a very small percentage of all writers is capable of making a living out of writing fiction. For example, in the Netherlands most authors have to make use of the possibility to register with and to apply for a working grant with the "Foundation for Literature," a national organization that supports writers. Furthermore, many writers perform other activities in order to secure income.

Authors may also be more or less successful owing to factors related to the reception of their work. Each new title can be seen as an event in time that receives more, less, or an equal amount of attention in the literary field. In our opinion, the dissimilarities between literary careers can also be explained by factors that are non-textual and that are related to this process of assigning quality and value to literary works. The questions posed in this article deal with factors which influence the careers of writers. Our intention is to determine

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1 Recent research in the sociology of literature has shown that the attention of literary critics is focused on a very small percentage of all fiction titles published (yearly) (see Janssen; see also Rogers).

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which non-textual aspects are important for a writer in order to be successful. For non-literary careers, income is usually the most important indicator of success. That is, however, not true for literary careers. As already mentioned, only very few writers are able to make a living out of writing fiction. In addition, the relation between art and commerce has always been rather difficult. Financial profit and a serious performance of a creative activity do not go together (see Bourdieu). When we call an author successful, we more often refer to the reputation of this author within the literary field than to his or her income. This reputation can be made clear by looking at the critical attention a literary work receives. The descriptions and judgments in book reviews influence both the reading public as well as other critics in the literary field. The continuity and broadness of the attention paid to a body of work by newspapers and magazines, together with the way that attention is being articulated, can be seen as an important indicator of the value attached to an author and his or her body of work. In investigating the role of criticism in gaining a reputation as a writer, both qualitative and quantitative modes of research are needed to specify the factors involved. In this article, we will present the results of our quantitative study of an event-history analysis of authors’ reputation.

2. Methodology and Debutant’s Data

On an earlier occasion Van Rees and Van Rees and Vermunt reported on their research concerning literary authors’ reputation. Their study is innovative in using the method of event-history analysis for this purpose. The present research is, however, based on a larger set of data. The larger corpus of data makes it possible to measure the dependent variable in a more refined way as well as to use a larger set of independent variables. We performed a quantitative analysis on Dutch authors’ data derived from a survey of the critical reception of 53 writers. The selection criteria were as follows. Authors made their debut in prose or poetry in the period from 1975 to 1979. This enabled us to perform a long term analysis of twenty years. Thus, we complied data on all titles — 468 in total — the 53 authors produced between 1975 and 1994. Consequently, some 1750 reviews were examined. Our set of data differs from that of Van Rees and Vermunt on some points. Van Rees and Vermunt used the number of reviews in important and recognized literary periodicals as the measure for the amount of

2 The Dutch National Science Organization recently started a Humanities research programme entitled "The Impact of Using Conceptions of Literature on Quality Assignment in the Literary Field" (see Van Rees and Dorleijn; Dorleijn and Van Rees). Several projects address the issue how, from a synchronic or diachronic viewpoint, components of conceptions of literature — its core and its prototypical traits — may be constructed into data permitting to answer precise questions on the material and symbolic production processes in Classical, English, French, German, and Dutch literature.
attention. Instead, we measured attention with regard to the number of reviews in national newspapers and magazines (dailies and weeklies). In the Dutch situation, most national newspapers are published in the "Randstad," a conglomeration of several big cities and these newspapers are also read in other parts of the country. Furthermore, different areas in the country have their own regional newspapers.

Van Rees and Vermunt selected 18 authors who made their debut with a prose title. Furthermore, with regard to the titles following the debut title, they collected reviews on prose titles only, whereas we collected data on all titles, irrespective of the genre. The size of Van Rees and Vermunt's set of data is not much smaller than ours, however. This is caused by the fact that prose titles receive more reviews than the other genres. Consequently, while we compiled more authors and titles, we have a smaller average number of reviews per title.

A strong point of the data on the careers of 53 Dutch debutant authors is that it is of a longitudinal nature, that is, for each author there is information about the reviews of all their titles which appeared during a long period of time. This means that information is available about changes in attention between subsequent titles. That is the reason why the analysis is focused on explaining differences in changes in attention instead of differences in attention. The central question to be answered can be formulated as follows: Which factors determine whether an author experiences an increase, a decrease, or no change in attention between subsequent titles? To answer this question it is necessary to define the basic time dimension which is used in the analysis; to select the most appropriate measure for the dependent variable "amount of critical attention"; and to specify the explanatory variables to be used in the model.

3. Time Dimensions

The time dimensions that are most frequently used in event-history analysis are calendar time, process time, and waiting time. In the case of the analysis of changes in attention, these time dimensions can be equated to the month or year in which a title is published, the time since the start of an authors' career, and the time since the previous change in attention, respectively. In the current analysis, however, another time dimension seems to be more appropriate, namely, the rank order of the title. The main reason for using this discrete variable as a time dimension is that changes in critical attention can only take place when a new title comes out. When the rank order of a title is treated as the time dimension, the authors' data can also be seen as discrete-time event-history data. This means that for each point in time, that is, for each title, there is information on the dependent and independent variables of interest. Therefore, a discrete-time event-history model was used to specify a regression model for changes in attention. To be able to use such a model, the data have to be organized into a person-period file. That is, a file with titles as records, rather than with reviews.
or authors as records (see Allison; Yamaguchi). It should be noted that since we defined the time variable as the rank order of a title, the length of the observation period in terms of number of titles is not equal for each author. Some authors publish a vast body of work over a couple of decades, while others publish only a few books in the same period. This, however, does not complicate our methodology because event-history analysis makes it possible to deal with observations of different length.

The 53 authors in the data set produced 468 titles. However, since the first title cannot be used to model transitions between titles (the first title cannot be compared to a previous title, so we cannot speak about an increase or a decrease of attention), a file was constructed with 415 records. The number of titles per author after the debut ranged between 1 and 24.

4. Defining Changes in Reviewers' Attention

The first step in performing event-history analysis is defining the events of interest. In our case, an event is a change in "amount of attention," that is, the variable under scrutiny. As mentioned above, the number of reviews in national dailies and weeklies was used as the measure for the amount of attention. To make an event-history analysis feasible, the dependent variable "amount of attention" was collapsed into five categories. These categories are shown in the top row of Table 1: 0, 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, and >6 reviews. They represent the states that an author can occupy at each "point in time."

Table 1
Mean Transition Probabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>original state</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1-2</th>
<th>3-4</th>
<th>5-6</th>
<th>&gt;6</th>
<th>outflow-table</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;6</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An event is defined as a "transition from one state to another state between subsequent titles." For instance, the transition from one or two reviews of the second title to five or six reviews of the third title. An impression of the mean transition probabilities among the five different states can be gained from Table 1 above. This table reports the transition probabilities which are obtained if one assumes them to be independent of the rank order of the title and the explanatory variables we used in the analysis. For instance, it can be seen that an author with 0 reviews of a title has a probability of 0.25 of getting 1-2 reviews of the next title (P[0|1-2]) and a probability of 0.20 of seeing the number of reviews
increased to 3-4 (P[0;3-4]). Note that for an author who was in the lowest or in the top category with the previous title, there is a high probability that he or she will remain in the same category with the next title (0.45 and 0.44, respectively).

Note, furthermore, that it is not very likely that an author improves or deteriorates more than two levels of attention between two titles: the values of P[0;5-6] and P[0;>6] are very low (0.04 and 0.06), so is the value of P[>6;0] (0.07). In general, we can say that the probability of having an event is high, which shows that this part of the literary field is quite dynamic. Nevertheless, most events represent little movements rather than large ones. Reviewing is a conservative process, large fluctuations in the attention paid to literary works are not very likely.

A problem with the transition probabilities appearing in Table 1 is that there are many of them; there are 25 independent probabilities. Remember that an "event" was defined as a transition from one state to another state between subsequent titles. Since the distinction between increase and decrease is the most interesting one from a substantive point of view, we decided to distinguish four types of events in the event history model, namely, a little increase, a large increase, a little decrease, and a large decrease in the amount of attention between subsequent titles. We talk about "little" when we observe only one step: an author changes from one category to the next or to the previous one. When an author moves more than one category forward or backward, we refer to it as a "large" change. This amounts to combining values adjacent to the diagonal elements of Table 1 into the category little changes. Values further away from the diagonal elements refer to large changes.

The fact that the dependent variable was collapsed into a limited number of categories to make an event-history analysis feasible, can be seen as a disadvantage of the approach that is chosen here. It may seem to lead to some loss of information. However, modelling transitions among a small number of categories instead of, for instance, differences in the number of reviews between subsequent points in time, also has advantages. It makes it possible to define relevant states, and, therefore, relevant transitions, while when modelling differences it is assumed that a difference between, e.g., 1 and 5 reviews, has the same meaning as, e.g., 11 and 15 reviews. Here we only use information on the ordering of different categories of attention. Thus, in fact, the number of reviews is treated as an ordinal level indicator rather than an interval level indicator.

An event-history model for analyzing the debutant authors' data has more advantages compared to ordinary regression methods. First, within the event-history analysis framework, the fact that we have a different number of titles for each author does not complicate the analysis because we have the possibility of dealing with observations of different length. Second, it is straightforward to model the time dependency of the process and to include time-varying covariates in an event-history model. This is important in our case because the variables of which we want to know the effects are all time-varying, that is, their value
changes over time. Finally, the event-history analysis framework permits the explanatory variables to have different effects on the different types of transitions, thus providing more flexibility than performing an ordinary regression analysis on differences scores.

5. The Explanatory Variables Used in the Model

The explanatory variables we used resulted from the formulation of different hypotheses. Van Rees and Vermunt found that with each successive title it becomes more difficult to receive more attention thus resulting in less attention. This result can be interpreted by understanding it as a "wear out effect." After an author has published several titles, literary critics may have felt that they said all there is to be said on a body of work. Moreover, they can focus their attention on a different group of authors such as new debutants belonging to a younger generation. With these considerations in mind, we assumed that there can be observed a turning-point in the amount of attention literary critics pay to an author. We formulated this assumption in two hypotheses: 1) After an author has published 5 titles, it becomes more difficult to receive more attention and easier to receive less attention and 2) When an author has a seniority of 10 years, it becomes more difficult to receive more attention and easier to receive less attention.

In the case when an author who usually writes poetry, publishes a novel, this can be seen as a news item worth paying attention to by literary critics. We must take notice however, that prose titles in general receive more critical attention than other genres. Thus, in the reverse, when an author who usually writes prose, publishes a collection of poems or essays, may easily escape the notice of reviewers. Consequently, in our view a change of genre can have a two-sided effect and we propose the following hypothesis: A change of genre will lead to a change in the amount of attention and this change can show either an increase or a decrease in critical attention. Finally, we propose the hypothesis that a positive judgment of the previous title leads to an increase in attention, while a negative judgment leads to a decrease in attention.

With these hypotheses in mind, the explanatory variables used in the analysis are the following: 1) Rank order of the title; 2) Seniority; 3) Diversity; and 4) Mean Judgment of the previous title. The variables were measured and arranged in different categories: Rank order of the title 1) 2-4 titles, 2) 5-9 titles, 3) 10 or more titles; Seniority 1) less than 5 years active, 2) active between 5 and 10 years, 3) active between 10 and 15 years, 4) 15 years active or more; Diversity 1) no change of genre, 2) change of genre; and Mean Judgment of the previous
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title: 1) <=2.5, 2) 2.5-5.5, 3) >=5.5.

The discrete-time logit model used in the current analysis can be described with the following equation:

\[ \log\left( \frac{P^d}{P^0} \right) = b^d + b^d_{\text{TITL(i)}} + b^d_{\text{SEN(j)}} + b^d_{\text{DIV(k)}} + b^d_{\text{JUDG(l)}}. \]

Here, \( P^d \) denotes the probability of experiencing event type d, which may be a little/large increase or a little/large decrease, and \( P^0 \) indicates the probability of no change in attention between subsequent titles. Thus, remaining in the same position is used as the reference category for the dependent variable in the logit equation. In the equation, the log-odds of the probabilities of a little/large increase or a little/large decrease rather than no change in attention are related to TITL (the rank order of the title), SEN (seniority), DIV (diversity), and JUDG (the mean judgment of the previous title). The indices i, j, k, and l denote the levels of the covariates which are treated as nominal variables. As can be seen from the use of the index for the type of event (d) as superscript of the b parameters, the parameters may differ for the various transitions.

After the arrangement of the data, the discrete-time logit model can be estimated with standard programs for log-linear analysis. In our case, we used the LEM program (see Vermunt).

6. Results and Discussion

As in log-linear analysis, the fit of nested models can be compared by means of the likelihood-ratio chi-square statistic, denoted by \( L^2 \). The values of \( L^2 \) and the number of parameters for some of the models that were estimated are reported in Table 2. The easiest way to gain a clear insight into this figure is by comparing the values of the likelihood-ratio chi-square and the number of parameters of the various models. In fact, the models can be tested against each other using differences in \( L^2 \) and the number of parameters.

3 The judgement was first measured on a 7-point scale: 1) very negative, 2) fairly negative, 3) negative, 4) neutral, 5) fairly positive, 6) positive, and 7) very positive.

4 The reported \( L^2 \) values are obtained by comparing the model concerned with the saturated model, that is, with the data. If the sample size is large enough, we can use these values to test the absolute fit the estimated models. This is, however, not the case in the current analysis. Therefore, we only use differences in \( L^2 \) values between nested models to compare their fit.
Table 2
Test Results for the most Important Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model Description</th>
<th>$L^2$ statistic</th>
<th># of parameters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>null model (only main effects):</td>
<td>819.3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>full model (all effects):</td>
<td>751.1</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>model A (10% level of significance):</td>
<td>770.9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>model B (5% level of significance):</td>
<td>785.0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First, a model was estimated containing only the main effects $b^d$ (null model). This model has a $L^2$ value of 819.3 using 4 parameters (little and large increase, little and large decrease). Next, a model was estimated that contained all effects (full model). This model has a $L^2$ value of 751.1 with 44 parameters, which is 68.2 lower than of the null model using 40 additional parameters. Thus, we can gain about 68 chi-square points by turning the null model into a full model (note that the lower the value of $L^2$, the better the fit of the model). However, the difference of 40 parameters is rather large.

Next, we tried to reduce the number of parameters of the full model by omitting non-significant parameters and by imposing equality restrictions among covariate levels and among transitions. This resulted in models A and B, in which we used 10 and 5 percent significance levels, respectively, to decide whether a particular restriction deteriorated the model fit. Model A — which has a few more parameters than model B — reduces seriously the value of $L^2$ compared to the null model using only 9 additional parameters ($L^2=48.4$; $df=9$; $p=.000$). It also fits significantly better than Model B ($L^2=14.1$; $df=5$; $p=.015$). And, finally, it does not fit significantly worse than the full model ($L^2=19.8$; $df=31$; $p=.940$).

Table 3
Parameter Estimates for Model A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>$b$ parameter</th>
<th>Standard error</th>
<th>$\exp(b)$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>little increase</td>
<td>-0.52</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>main</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>large increase</td>
<td>-1.54</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little decrease</td>
<td>-0.73</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>large decrease</td>
<td>-1.11</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rankorder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tit=2, decrease</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>1.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>title</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tit=3, large increase</td>
<td>-0.69</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sen=4, little increase</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sen=3, large increase</td>
<td>-0.93</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sen=4, little decrease</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sen=3, large decrease</td>
<td>-0.94</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The parameter estimates for model A are reported in Table 3. The values of the log-linear parameters (b) can be used to determine the direction of an effect and its relative size. For the interpretation of the covariate effects, it is easier to use the multiplicative effects (exp(b)) which are on the scale of the odds rather than the log odds. The main effects indicate that little changes are more likely to occur than large changes. This is in agreement with the results reported in Table 1.

Let us now have a look at the covariate effects on the transition probabilities. For the rankorder of the title, we found a positive effect on a decrease in attention (irrespective of whether it is a little or large decrease) for level 2 and a negative effect on a large increase of attention for level 3. The multiplicative effects indicate that the odds of a decrease rather than staying in the same position is 1.52 higher between the 5th and 9th title than before the 5th or after the 9th title. Furthermore, the odds of a large increase rather than no change is 0.50 higher (or 2 times lower) after the 9th title.

The reported parameters for seniority show that when seniority is 4, there is a higher probability of both a little increase and a little decrease. The multiplicative parameters show that the odds of small changes rather than no change are almost 2 times higher (1.86 and 1.88) for authors who are active for more than 15 years than for other authors. The other parameters for seniority indicate that when an author has a seniority of 3, that is, when an author is active between 10 and 15 years, he/she has a much lower probability of large changes. The multiplicative effects of 0.39 show that the odds of a large increase or decrease, instead of no change, is almost 3 times lower for level 3 of this covariate than for the other levels.

What do these results reveal? We assumed that there would be a turning-point in the amount of attention literary critics pay to an author. With the above results our assumption can be confirmed. When we relate the rankorder of the title and the literary age (seniority) of an author to changes in the amount of critical attention, our analysis shows that literary careers have stable and more instable periods. We saw that between titles 5 and 9 (titl=2) attention is most likely to decrease. Obviously, this is the more instable period in a literary career. For authors with 10 or more titles (titl=3), there is a lower probability of a large
increase. The fact that for authors who are active between 10 and 15 years there is a lower probability of large increases or decreases is in agreement with the latter result. Authors who have reached this record in their careers receive more stability in the critical attention to their works. In other words, large fluctuations are less likely when seniority is high.

Parameter b for diversity is relatively high compared to the other covariate effects. A change of genre increases the probability of large increases or decreases, which is, of course, a very general result. This is probably owing to the fact that we formulated the idea of a change of genre very roughly. We did not consider the nature of the change we are looking at.

Finally, a non-negative judgment (neutral and positive) increases the probability of a large increase or, the other way around, a negative judgment decreases the probability of a large increase. This is in agreement with the results of Van Rees and Vermunt.

7. Conclusion

In this article, we showed how one may compile data permitting to analyze the process of earning a literary reputation in more detail. We also made clear how these data can be rearranged in such a way that it is possible to submit them to an analysis of the kind we now proposed, that is, a logit model shaped in the form of a discrete-time event-history model. Our analysis shows that there are effects of certain independent variables on the probability of an increase or a decrease in attention for a title, compared to the previous title.

Although the results confirm the hypotheses we formulated, there remain questions to be answered. We found that the effects of the explanatory variables were often two-sided and that attention could either decrease or increase. Further research must be more specific on this point. Under which circumstances is attention likely to increase and when is it likely to decrease? Furthermore, questions remain on the issue of a change of genre. Future analysis must make clear which genres exactly we are referring to. Finally, the analysis showed that literary careers have stable and instable periods. We focused on the amount of titles published and on the amount of active years as a writer. This results must be related to other factors that influence stability and instability in literary careers, for example, the productivity of an author and the status of the publisher of a literary work.

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Works Cited


Discourse Genres in Nineteenth-Century Portuguese Newspapers and Literary Journals

1. Introduction

The purpose of this article is to present further results of my research on the Portuguese literary system in the period of between 1836 to 1846 (see Esteves 1996 a,b). It also aims at stimulating discussion about the Empirical Study of Literature categories of mediation and post-processing with regard to dramatic genres in the specific subsystem of Lisbon’s periodical literary and cultural press of the mid-nineteenth century.

2. "Genre" in Constructivist Literary Historiography

My research and study are based on the theoretical and methodological premises of the Empirical Study of Literature as developed by Siegfried J. Schmidt and his colleagues at Siegen University (see, for example, Schmidt 1985, 1994, 1995, 1996a,b). In this context, the theory of "synreferential social systems" (see Hejl) as well as the concept of "diachronology" (see Rusch, 1985, 1996b) may prove to be particularly useful in rethinking central questions of this specific area of the approach.

Despite current controversies in literary studies, I would say that a consensus has been reached regarding the insight that literary historiography is a constructive enterprise and not a reconstructive one (see Rusch 1985, 276). The concept of "diachronology," that is, the development of dynamic models of literary life, will enable literary historiography to account for both the components of the subsystem literature (a structuralist approach) and to account for its specific dynamic levels (a functionalist approach). According to Gebhard Rusch, a number of problems of historiography such as interconnectivity, relativity, reflexivity, recursivity, etc., can be solved if we are able "to distinguish a system we can characterize as an organisational unit with identifiable borders and to account for its relationships with other systems and with the environment" (1996b, 162-63; my translation). In this context, Peter Hejl’s definition of culture...
may also help to solve many issues of the said problems: Literature is a specific branch of culture. In other words, it can be modelled as a multi-layer evolutionary biological, social, and cultural dynamic process, which involves a (small or large) group of individuals who 1) Share a certain number of conceptual items about the nature of their physical and social worlds and 2) Proclaim the conviction that they have "something" in common (see Hejl 228; 235). From this standpoint, it will be possible to observe, to describe and to thematize literary discourse genres, periods, tendencies, and concepts of literature of the past. Further, if we look at the question in the context of media historiography, the controversial concept of "genre" becomes further problematized (for an elaboration on a constructivist theory of media genres, see Hauptemeier 1987; Schmidt 1987, 1994; Rusch 1987, 1996a). However, as shown by Hunt and Vipond, Bakhtin’s philosophy of language and genre theory can be developed, mutatis mutandis, in the framework of the Empirical Study of Literature (see also Hunt).

3. Taxonomy

In my study, by "dramatic literature" I mean secondary speech genres (sensu Bakhtin) consensually labelled as "drama," "comedy," "opera libretti," and other types of media offers staged in Lisbon theatres. If they obeyed current conventions, they were deemed literary by experts.

By "experts" I mean Portuguese intellectuals and playwrights; many of them had lived in France and England; mediation and post-processing was just one among the considerable number of roles they played; some of them often held influential positions in prominent spheres of political and social activity.

By "media genres" I mean the available cognitive schemata which organize cognitive activities by means of media; "genres" are subject dependent constructs, some of which are given consensually accepted names ("labels"); they are produced according to social needs at a given time and place (Schmidt 1987, 387-90).

By "social systems" I mean a group of human systems who "must have generated socially a common set of reality constructs, together with the knowledge of how to handle specific realities; they must communicate, act or interact in such a way that other members of the group successfully interpret their behaviour with respect to the common realities" (Hejl 230).

By "synreferential domain" I mean any shared domain of knowledge which is
produced in the framework of a group's specific cultural concepts; it is transmitted by means of and during interactions of the members of a given social group: "As members of a social system refer during communications and behaviours either implicitly or explicitly to the domain of system-specific knowledge of the system ... this domain of knowledge [is] the synreferential domain of the system. Because it is only in social systems that synreferentiality plays a crucial role, such systems can be characterised (and distinguished from other systems) as synreferential systems" (Hej 307).

4. Application: The Newspapers and Journals Studied

Data were collected from five periodicals: three were prominent newspapers, edited by three different political groups: O Independente, A Revista, and O Nacional and two were literary journals written in French: Le Voltigeur Français and L'Abeille. Journal Encyclopédique. A number of periodicals which specialised in theatre and opera were also scrutinised. As a rule, they accepted the same criteria as the cultural serial output produced between 1836 and 1846; they were expected to be politically uninvolved and to promote reading.

5. Results and Discussion

As I have stated elsewhere (see Esteves 1991), the Portuguese bourgeois intelligentsia aimed at establishing by every possible strategy an encompassing synreferential domain which was supposed to strengthen the new social system after the Civil War was over and Mary I was crowned as the rightful sovereign (1834). However, the small but influential group who replaced an absolute monarchy by means of military action with a liberal monarchy, held different positions on political and economic issues. This group was supported by an urban strata, e.g., businessmen who were rewarded with estates and ennobled, intellectuals who took over the political power until 1842, and specific professional groups of the elite. However, supporters of the overturned regime — the old aristocracy backed by priests, the academe, influential bureaucrats, etc. — were the majority and had kept their social and cultural influence on an illiterate rural population (93% of the Portuguese population at the time).

While the outdated economic system was rejected, the political and cultural systems prevailed. As a matter of fact, the influential groups mentioned above feared popular riots. The shock produced by the French Revolution took a long time to be absorbed: the middle and upper classes feared the aspirations of the lower classes. In this context, the general education reform implemented by law in 1836 was met with strong resistance until the end of the century (see Reis).

Liberal groups who supported a constitutional monarchy were aware of their unstable political position and they tried to implement consensus in the social
spheres where they held influence. A long period of negotiation over cultural domains ensued in the period of 1834 to 1852. The Roman Catholic religion remained officially unquestioned, but, although they were publicly condemned, superstitions and religious intolerance endured. In addition, a serious conflict with the Roman Catholic Church broke out in 1834, owing to the extinction of all religious orders and the nationalisation of the Church's estates. However, by 1842 the Portuguese government came to terms with the Church.

Another telling example is the bullfighting question. In 1836, this was certainly a big issue: the popularity of dethroned King Miguel I was partly due to his exceptional skills as a bullfighter. As a result, bullfights were condemned both on political and cultural grounds, but this condemnation was so strongly opposed that the small group of liberals who supported abolishment were unable to succeed. The fact is that members of every social class attended bullfights as this was a largely shared politically safe synreferential domain. A similar phenomenon can be observed with multi-cultural melodies, called "fados": they were sung and danced by debased women, but they would be played by male aristocrats who, like in bullfighting, would mix with the lower classes.¹

To sum up, Roman Catholicism, religious festivities and bullfighting (attended by the Queen and by her German husband) constituted a deep-rooted domain of shared beliefs and communicative interactions. The astonishing number of narratives and other discourse genres that these activities resulted in have, so far, been neglected in scholarship. However, available writings and iconography produced in favour and against old ways and new ways of living as well as attempts to reconcile opposite positions suggest that these genres played an important role in the construction of a slowly emerging and new individual, social, and cultural identity (for a constructivist notion of cultural identity, see Viehoff 1996 and in this volume). As a matter of fact this was a long and hard process because, among other reasons, the liberal regime was periodically shaken by political and military conflicts. Censorship, although abolished in 1834, was reinforced in 1837 and became very severe under the dictatorial government of Prime Minister Cabral (1842-52). Another civil war broke out in 1846 for cultural and economic reasons: the government forbade the burying of the dead inside the churches and a peasants' revolt spread all over the northern part of the kingdom. The war was brought to an end by the intervention of the French and English governments but Cabral's dictatorship lasted until 1852 when it was overcome by a military revolt supported by the new bourgeois elites which had melted with aristocracy after 1834 in much the same way as had happened in France after the Revolution of July 1830. In other words, it took the Portuguese elites more than twenty years to agree upon new synreferential domains. Even

¹ The "Fado" became an important political means in promoting a largely shared model of reality under Minister Oliveira Salazar (1928-1974).
so, the ontological question — in the context of Schmidt (1987, 375) — was only partly solved. Conflicting world models would coexist even after the Republican Revolution of 1910.

This situation entailed bitter cultural defeats for progressive intellectuals. Two main reasons may be mentioned: 1) The popular audiences' wickedness and/or morbid curiosity and 2) The greediness of "show business" agents who staged low budget and inferior French, English, and German dramas and comedies translated into Portuguese. However, there was a clear-cut distinction between aristocratic and non-aristocratic strata in that cultural activities were expected to support the new social hierarchy but which, in many respects, was inherited from the previous regime.

In the course of this dramatic process of structural coupling between contending world models — and that was paralleled by a necessary structural coupling of the Portuguese system with the changing European economic system — the media industry developed slowly while improving it became a priority. Cultural and literary periodical press and book reading were promoted as a means for educating men and also women. The cultural emancipation of the women was supported because of the way illiterate and superstitious Portuguese mothers educated their children, which, in turn, was considered counter productive in many aspects (see Esteves 1989, 1991).

This said, I think it is possible to conceptualize the Portuguese literary system between 1836-46 as a dynamic interactional network of literary and non-literary activities which developed into a wide range of actions and action-roles. At the same time, original literary production was far behind translation and other mediating activities, such as the importing, editing, and publishing of foreign books. For example, in the early nineteenth century a surprisingly wide range of "genres" was received or rejected by specific groups of readers, whose choices were based on social, moral, and economic criteria. Depending on the customers' gender, social status, and reputation, groups of people who borrowed books from circulating libraries instead of buying them, were either praised for their economical habits or suspected of trying to consume frivolous, immoral, or seditious literature.

Members of well-off high-brow synreferential domains would borrow books only from circulating libraries which were run by well known book traders specializing in French and English literature (see Esteves 1991). By the 1840s, less expensive circulating libraries, which offered translated best-sellers, became a meeting place for journalists, writers, and young men with limited incomes, who were known to lead a somewhat Bohemian style of life. Friendship among these culturally active groups was often made on the basis of their literary tastes (see Santos 263). The owners of some circulating libraries played an important role as mediators by assessing writers' status and talent and by indicating which groups of readers should (or should not) read certain texts, mostly theatre plays.
and novels. Very often, dramatic works were read and commented upon at home parties, just before or after they were staged. Thus, it soon became clear that theatre could play a significant social role in urban centres: it was meant to assist elites to improve their mother tongue as well as manners and to help them learn French (Parisian theatrical groups came regularly to Lisbon and played in the fashionable theatre of the Rua dos Condes, also called the "French Theatre").

Both traditional and newly introduced dramatic "genres," such as melodrama, modern comedy, vaudeville, romantic drama, and opera, etc., were thus expected to be a powerful instrument in the construction of a new social reality of Portugal. Hence, endless descriptions about who should see what and about what was to be considered as good theatre were published in the daily press. If corrupt life styles were staged they would be duly and dutifully condemned. Consequently, the educational function of theatre was consensually accepted. In other words, the Portuguese intelligentsia of the period recognized the importance of teaching people about theatre "genres" as it expected this would help audiences to gain new insights on what might be necessary and desirable for a new society.

Available data confirm my hypothesis that consensual definitions of literature, its nature and functions as well as the roles to be played by its producers, mediators, receptors, and post-processors were largely shared. Canonical French literature and, to a lesser extent, literary English models were favoured while Romanticism was accused of ideological and aesthetic extravagance. There are hundreds of examples of this line of reasoning in the periodical press, mostly until the 1850s. I shall list here but a few:

1) Almeida Garrett, a liberal novel writer, playwright, and poet of this period severely criticised several Romantic dramas. As the Director of the National Theatre School and Theatre Inspector (1836-41) he refused to allow Alexandre Dumas's "La tour de nesle" to be played at Porto. This Romantic drama had been staged in French in 1836 and in Portuguese in 1841 in Lisbon (see Cruz 48). I quote Garrett's letter of February 5, 1838: "as long as the Portuguese Theatre of Porto does not undergo considerable improvements, it will be attended by the uncultured classes." Therefore, it was felt that it was not wise to allow these classes to watch "La torre de nesle" and other dramas of the same kind.

2) The journal L'Abeille, published in French, had already condemned Dumas's works on moral grounds in 1836; in 1840 its editor emphasised that elite audiences were "tired of crimes and incest" which were too frequently thematized by popular romantic French writers.

3) O Independente, a left-wing paper and that shared Garrett's political and cultural ideals criticises "The Moranval Family" on the same grounds. The anonymous critic says: "[this] is a remarkable drama, and not so dangerous as others but it is unsuitable for Portuguese audiences. We are not in London or Paris. Most of our fellow citizens are unable to understand the magic world of theatre. Instead of delighting and educating audiences, this kind of play will
corrupt them" (13 [1836]: 52; my translation).

4) A Revista, a conservative periodical, attacked Rossini's opera "The Marriage of Figaro." The opera was criticised both on political and ethical grounds and its readers and audience were warned against comedies which did not respect aristocracy (24 [1835]: 17).

5) Much more severe reactions were triggered in the case of contemporary issues. The journal L'Abeille, read by the elites and that published polemical essays on women's issues, disapproved of both the London theatre which staged Madame Laffarge's story and the London periodical which praised it for staging this shocking fait divers and that shook French bourgeois society and triggered endless discussion on women's condition (Marie Laffarge was accused of murdering her husband). Its editor considers this an outrageous enterprise: "Madame Laffarge is praised in the Theatre Adelphi, in London. English theatre companies seem to be anxious to stage Mrs. Laffarge's case in a rather unashamed way. Events and people are overtly shown with a licentious liberty" 

Further data such as debates over the function of theatre in cultural-ideological socialisation and the promotion of Portuguese playwrights, etc., show that an influential theatre criticism was emerging. However, mediators and post-processors were expected to pass moral judgements on plots. Possible reasons for this may have been: To warn readers and the audience about unsuitable plays; To meet readers' long repressed curiosity about forbidden subjects in the sense that immoral and/or bloody plots were very accurately described and thus deemed corrupting social and moral values; and to provide entertainment for middle class readers who could not afford to go to expensive places such as the Opera House and the "French Theatre."

To sum up, the Portuguese intelligentsia who would deal with theatre had to act both as good storytellers and as education agents (for the social function of narrative, see Miller; Viehoff 1996 and in this volume). To put it in Hejl's terms, coexisting new systems whose human components had hoped for "self-regulation via self-organization" through cultural change soon found out that it had to be hurried by all available means, including persuasion and covert or overt coercion (116-17). In other words, only a few people had learned to follow the reigning aesthetic convention, let alone the dominant polyvalence convention (for an explanation of these conventions, see Schmidt 1987). An exception was Le Voltigeur Français which preferred to comment on artistic issues.

The aesthetic and the polyvalence conventions have been recently questioned

2 "Madame Laffarge illustrée. Théâtre d'Adelphi [London]. Le théâtre anglais, avec une impatience qu'on ne peu s'empêcher de trouver assez avide et même assez cynique, s'est déjà emparé du procès de Mme. Laffarge. Tous les événements et même tous les personnages qui ont figuré dans ce procès sont reproduits et représentés avec une liberté qui mériterait le nom de licence."
on several grounds (see Groeben and Schreier; Schreier) and my study corroborates some of these criticisms in the sense that in Portugal, these conventions were certainly not the current criteria for delimiting the Portuguese literary system. Censorship and the fact that Portugal was a peripheral cultural subsystem, delayed its autonomisation from political and religious power. Further research in literary historiography may, however, provide relevant insights on this issue. As we know, the polyvalence mode of reading paves the way for taking a text as fictional. Thus, between 1836 and 1846, the argument of fictionality did succeed. Prevailing concepts of literature were founded on their degree of "artistry" (to use Pasco's neologism). On the other hand, legitimate literary "speech genres" such as parliamentary, religious, and political genres, art criticism, private written genres as compared with illegitimate ones such as oral literature, words for "fados," and other contemporary popular songs, etc., were not considered as "literary."

In Portugal, based on my study of theatre criticism in the periodical press in the period of 1835-1841-1852, it was only after 1852 that the time has come for aesthetic evaluation. It should be stressed, nevertheless, that a considerable number of the differentiated levels of action, entailed in the literary system, such as non-literary actions such as those "about and with literary texts" (see Barsch 138) were then deemed literary in their own right. As a result, translators and other mediators and post-processors were seen and tended to see themselves as co-producers of literary works. This was a current lasting concept in many other European social systems, of course, but in Portugal criticism and mediation were highly valued, at least until literary studies were fully integrated into the university after the World War II.

6. Conclusion

My provisional results of the study of discourse genres in Portuguese newspapers and literary journals of the nineteenth century are as follows:

1) The construction of new synreferential domains was considered as the best means to advance desperately needed cultural change among old and new elites. However, there was a general consensus about the danger of the lower classes changing their own synreferential domains too quickly.

2) The central question may be coined as "biological/social" conservatism vs. cultural change: people could not and would not dispense overnight with ways of living they had shared and cherished for centuries.

3) Until long after the 1850s, there existed an encompassing synreferential domain in which people intermingled, i.e., were able to "communicate" about and act in the expected consensual ways. Its components were: a strong religious faith, "fado," and bullfighting. In other words, if we speak in terms of system components and organization, it is probable that a scarce number of influential
individuals — whom I define as autopoietic systems sensu Maturana — believed that their fellow citizens would be able to compensate internal deformation if properly oriented. The Portuguese communication system was a strongly hierarchical one. To put it in Maturana's terms, changes in conduct were quickly imitated (e.g., fashion, social life, etc.). However, changes in behaviour were extremely slow, irrespective of permanent promotion of cultural synreferential domains.

4) The Portuguese nineteenth-century media system seems to have been much more complex than expected by literary scholars. Ongoing research in literary and media historiography and sociology may prove to be institutionally and socially relevant, if we are to understand how "genres" interwove and were imported by producers as well as mediators in different spheres of social life.

As I stated above, the situation of the study of literary history and teaching is rather unsatisfactory in Portugal. Although I do not entirely agree with Verdaasdonk and Van Rees’s argument to account for little progress in literary studies, there is no denying that explicitness and intersubjective discussion on concepts of literature is too often avoided. In Portugal this was perhaps to be expected; social discourse and scholarship have had serious difficulties in coping with history in general for theoretical and methodological reasons and also because of political and cultural motives. Since censorship was abolished in 1974, considerable progress has been made and there has also been an increasing social demand for historiography. However, some literary scholars seem to suspect (or to fear?) that history as the "best" vehicle for neo-positivism would, instead, handicap literary and cultural scholarship.

It appears to me that De Berg is right in pointing out that giving up history may be the worst way "to make up for the failure of obsolete empiricism" (142). However, this is not (and was not) a problem for the Empirical Study of Literature (for a similar argument, see Schmidt, 1995, 1996b). The Empirical Study of Literature is founded on a constructivist theory of action, developed since 1982. Theoretical production and scientific research have yielded results which can and should be stabilised through transdisciplinary and intersubjective discussion. In this context I claim that empirical research based on systems-theoretical thinking should not be ignored without further discussion (see Chico Rico). If literary studies are to play a relevant social function in our media system we should acknowledge the need for a shift in perspective which, as Siegfried J. Schmidt has often put it, is bound to change literary studies into a specific branch of media studies. My above study and its empirical data clearly support these postulates.

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Works Cited


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& Ca., 1835, 1836.
1. Introduction

The literary standing of authors is strongly dependent on the attention their publications receive from critics in the daily and weekly press. As professional judges of literature, reviewers are "authorized" by certain factors of the literary system to qualify a book as "good" or "important," and thus to legitimize it as a worthwhile literary work. On the other hand, they can withhold this legitimization by giving no or strongly negative attention to a text. In the latter case, a work runs the risk of quickly dropping out literary view. When a work does become the subject of discussion in journalistic criticism, this attention implies the attribution of a certain limited or a priori literary quality to the text in question. For a good number of literary texts, this initial literary validation ceases after the initial attention by the journalistic media. For some others, however, it is precisely this initial journalistic attention which will have consequences in a later phase of the text's history. Subsequent phases of the text's history include the switch from journalistic validation to other branches of criticism such as essayists and the academic field of the study of literature, the text's readership, its publication and publishing history, and other or further areas of the literary and culture system.

In the Dutch and Swedish literary system, it appears that the initial stage of positive critical attention in the daily and weekly press determines the future history of a literary text (see Van Rees 1983; Rosengren; Verdaasdonk). Journalistic criticism, therefore, represents a crucial moment of selection in the formation of a literary canon, a moment that precedes other forms of criticism and effects an initial sifting and evaluation of literature.

In this article, my objective is to present data and a discussion about possibilities writers have at their disposal to exercise influence on the critical interest for and appreciation of their work at the above explained initial journalistic stage of critical attention. In my view, while the author is an important actor in the process of the formation of opinion about a work, the critical reaction to his/her work depends on the manner in which the author presents himself/herself in the literary world. For example, writers who do not restrict themselves to the publishing of one genre of writing only, may have
more of a chance to raise critical attention to their work. The substantiation of this hypothesis has been the objective of several studies recently (see Van Rees 1987; Rodden; Janssen 1994; Van Boven; Van Dijk). Van Rees (1987), for example, points out the active role played by the poet Hans Faverey in the formation of a critical consensus on his work. Faverey did not restrict himself to producing a new book of poetry every so often. Rather, in intervals, he orchestrated interviews which he used to respond at length to the critical reception of his recent work. Importantly, in these interviews he elaborated on and clarified his poetic premises. Moreover, he presented himself in a positive fashion through performances at literary festivals and by publications of poetry in literary magazines. According to Van Rees (1987), these activities of the poet appear to have made an important contribution to the positive trend in the critical evaluation of his poetry.

2. A Framework of Authors' Intervention in Critical Reception

It goes without saying that publications form the basis of every writer's career or reputation. Who is or is not a writer, after all, is not determined by diplomas or other formal criteria, but, in the first place, by publications. A writer is not so much someone who writes, but someone who is recognized as such. This recognition is expressed first and above all in the willingness of a literary publishing company or house to publish his/her texts. In the Dutch literary system, in addition to the obvious book-form publications of creative texts, publications in literary magazines also comprise a form of recognition. Especially for aspiring writers, they can be a crucial step for gaining access to certain literary publishers (see Janssen and Olislagers; for the role of publishers, see also Rogers 160-63). Magazine articles or newspaper reports alone are, however, in the long run insufficient for attaining the status of author. If such publications are not followed in a given time by publications in the form of books, more often not such writers cease to participate in the literary system as far as the presence of published material is concerned. This happens to be the case of a great many of newcomers who publish in literary magazines (see Janssen and Olislagers).

In particular book-form publications are a confirmation of someone's status of authorship and of claims he/she can make on that basis. For this reason, the publication of new works in book form and at regular intervals is a requirement for laying a lasting claim to the attention of the critics in the daily and weekly press. Book-form publications appear, however, in most cases to be insufficient to hold critical attention. Or, to put it in a more general way, the publication of a book or even books appear to be insufficient to result in the status of "writer" or "author." The literary system allows only a limited number of individuals to hold a successful career as a writer, while there are many more who aspire to
such a career. In the Dutch literary system — but this probably holds for all literary systems — only a small number of the authors, who, in a given period, are competing for the favour of the critics, can count on the critics' full attention (see Janssen 1994, 1996). For most writers, it remains a fact that their work will not be critically noticed. This holds true not only for literary debutants but also for writers with a respectable number of titles to their name. Very even successful writers will observe how their on the critical scene, lose out not only to the latest products of more famous writers, but also to debutants.

My hypothesis is that in order to maintain any level of critical attention, writers must be willing to engage in other — "sideline" — activities within the literary system. As suggested above, such sideline activity may involve various areas, including presence through publications in literary magazines. Literary magazines — a more frequent form of outlet of literature in Holland or in Europe in general than in North America, for instance — is an important forum for writers because there their readers consist chiefly of people who are professionally involved in the production or dissemination of literature (see Verdaasdonk and Seegers). Thus, through publications in literary magazines an author can stimulate interest in his/her work by fellow writers, critics, publishers, and other literary agents. At the same time, this activity would have a chance preventing his/her work from disappearing from view in intervals when he/she is working on the next book. Obviously, the choice of magazine x or y is in this regard very important. On the one hand, because it can have far-reaching consequences for the creation of an image of the author's work (see De Nooy), and, on the other hand because magazine articles, depending on just who the other contributors of a magazine are, can place the author in a network of more or less useful social relations and, possibly, contacts.

Further, activities such as giving literary lectures or interviews, taking part in public literary debates or polemics, and publishing writings of a critical nature will also assist the writer to maintain profile and image. Such activities are not only important for increasing the familiarity of a writer's name among critics and the more general public, but also because they provide the opportunity for the author to express his/her aesthetic views on literature and to make clear where he/she stands or wishes to be situated as a writer. In addition, these types of activity can also assist in confirming or adding nuance to the "place" the writer has chosen for the publication of his/her work published in both types of production, that is, the book with publisher x or the other types of writing with magazine y. In critical practice much value is attributed to an author’s literary pronouncements on his/her own work as well as those of his/her peers in

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1 Obviously, critical attention will influence readership. Further empirical research will be necessary to establish the relationship between levels of critical attention and readership — including the sale figures of copies — of literary works.
Literary Reputation and Authors’ Intervention

Interviews or other writings (e.g., literary magazines). That such pronouncements are regularly described as "theoretical" statements says much about the weight attached to them. Critics assume not only that an author of some stature has an all-encompassing view of the nature and function of literature, but also that he/she knows how to integrate this view into his/her creative products. For this reason, an author’s pronouncements on his/her own work or on literature in general can exercise a great influence on the critical interpretation of a work, on what are seen as the central themes of that work, and the view it embodies with regard to literature and authorship. Thus, interviews, lectures, essays, etc. offer the author the possibility of intervening in the reception of his/her work by making explicit his/her ideas and premises and also to use this activity to react to the interpretation the critics have given about his/her work. In this way, possible "misunderstandings" of the work in question can be "set straight" and possible objections by the critics anticipated. For example, Van Boven demonstrates how in the first decades of this century Dutch women novelists hardly concerned themselves with the reflection on their authorship or literature in general. They did not engage in literary polemics nor did they rebel against literary predecessors. In short, they failed to take a literary stance and thus neglected the opportunity to influence the increasingly negative image of their work that emerged in literary criticism. Thus, they thereby failed to advance their works in the process of canonization and instead, failed to prevent their works from falling into oblivion.

Becker, for example, provides several examples of the various strategies writers and other artists follow to exert a positive influence on the formation of opinion on their work:

Since artists know that other art world participants make reputational inferences from their work, they try to control the work that becomes available for making such inferences. They destroy work they don’t want considered, or label it "unfinished"; if they are lucky, a court may (as French courts can) prevent the circulation of work they don’t want publicly attributed to them. They distinguish categories of work, as contemporary photographers sometimes distinguish their "commercial" work (not to be considered in assessing them as artists) from their "personal" work (to be so used), according to the seriousness of their intentions in making it. They revise their work when they can, as Stravinsky and Henry James did. (357)

It goes without saying that an author can follow another path to keep his/her work from getting into an impasse once everything about it seems already to have been said. The writer can, for example, present a critical interpretation of his/her work by inserting, as a new impulse, revelations of autobiographical particulars or by turning to the practice of other literary genres (see Janssen 1994, 185).

In a further step still, writers can perform such activities which may contribute
to increasing what can be called the author’s "social capital" (see Bourdieu 1986, 243). In other words, the whole range of real or potential resources which flow from the possession of a more or less institutionalized and stable network of relations of mutual acquaintance and recognition. Such a network of relations does not arise naturally nor can it be established by a single intervention. Rather, it is the result of continuous efforts on the part of writers. While the possession of such social capital considerably simplifies the lives of people in general (see Boxman), it seems of special significance to those in creative professions, for they must operate in a world where most activities take place on a freelance basis and are not controlled or regulated by formal organizations, agreements, or criteria (see Crane; Boxman; Flap and Tazelaar; Granovetter). In many situations, the various actors in this specific world of the arts cannot therefore appeal to one or another higher, impartial authority, but are rather continuously reliant primarily on each other for the fulfilment of their ambitions. In such a situation personal contacts and feelings of mutual regard, respect, friendship, and, most importantly, tangible support, are crucial for achieving numerous objectives. These objectives include, as I mentioned previously, such as being able to publish in a literary magazine all the way to such minute problems as to simply have access to or finding copies of magazine in question. The same applies not only to obtaining a say in the granting of literary subsidies, but also to recruiting members for a literary advisory commission, and so forth (for research on networks among German writers, see Anheier and Gerhards 1991a, b). The more writers are able to obligate a critical mass of other and more influential colleagues to themselves, the better they will succeed in realizing their goal of critical as well as general attention, including the crucial aspect of readership. Whoever has been accepted into an extensive and varied network of personal relations, has had sooner access to relevant information possessed by other members of the network thus benefits sooner from the intercession of the network’s influential members. This is also true, mutatis mutandis, for other cultural sectors such as the world of visual art and the music industry. Research by Crane and Ridgeway shows, for example, how for young artists informal contacts with fellow artists — including but not restricted to established ones — and other persons in the art world play a important role in gaining access to galleries and exhibitions. Similarly, research on the significance of social networks for studio musicians shows the same patterns. Peterson and White demonstrate in their study that session musicians in fact do help each other to obtain commissioned work and at the same time employ various strategies of exclusion in order to restrict competition (248).

Consequently, it is clear that for writers to undertake activities by which they enter into and maintain social relations with people in the literary world who are able to bring attention to their work or otherwise help their career, signifies an integral and crucial factor of success. This intertwining network includes fellow
authors, publishers, editors of newspapers and magazines, critics, academics, government contacts for grants, etc., and this network is realized in such activities as sitting on literary juries, joining the editorial board of a literary magazine or the executive committee of a writers' organization, acting as an advisor or editor for a publishing house, and making literary contributions to newspapers or magazines. Depending on the status of such bodies and organizations and of that of their members and contributors, such activities involve an increase in the social capital an author can draw on in the course of his/her career.

It is worth noting that the auxiliary activities cited above do not exclusively furnish writers with more or less useful contacts, just as little as the activities through which they make their aesthetic principles known are alone responsible for influencing the image of their creative work. What counts, after all, for both types of activity is that they also give writers a "profile" and turn them into agents to be reckoned with and whose work is difficult to ignore. Just as publications admit someone to the status of writer, each of the other activities an author undertakes in the literary system signifies a further confirmation of that status and an increase in his/her chances of obtaining the appropriate treatment, that is, winning the recognition of other actors in the literary system as well as the general public and the readership.

However, the recognition gained does not necessarily imply respect or appreciation for an author's performance or work. There is just as much a question of recognition when that performance or work is taken as a negative reference point, that is, when and if it is rejected or criticized. Recognition primarily means that other actors in the literary system cannot ignore an author, but feel compelled to respond to his/her activities and products.

3. Method and Data

The effect of the various activities an author can bring to bear in the literary system in addition to publishing books — the way in which and the extent to which whether to undertake or not to undertake these activities influence his/her success as a writer, or, more particularly, the critical reception of his/her work — cannot be determined with sufficient exactitude. For this reason the analysis which follows does not pretend to make precise pronouncements on this matter. Rather, my objective is to furnish more detailed empirical support for the proposition that a successful career as a writer in many cases requires a proactive attitude involving decisions and strategies as outlined above.

In the following, I will present data about Dutch authors who published a new work of prose or poetry in 1978 and who proved to be engaged in the types of activities I described above. Further, I investigated data about whether prominent authors — authors whose work received significant attention in the daily and weekly press — can be distinguished on this point from their less successful
To study the year 1978 was made possible by the availability of a database with details of all the new prose and poetry titles that appeared in that year and the attention these titles were given in the Dutch daily and weekly press. The inventory of titles in the database was drawn up by consulting the relevant issues of Boekblad, the independent Dutch book-trade magazine. The magazine is published weekly and contains an extensive bibliography of newly published books in the Netherlands and Flanders. The record of reviewers' attention for each title is based on the collections available in the NLMD (Dutch Museum of Literature) and the NBLC (Dutch Library and Reading Centre). These collections are fairly complete as regards the national daily and weekly press. The list of regional media for which the reviews were systematically collected includes one third of the existing regional daily newspapers (for a detailed description of the database, see Janssen 1994).

The total of 444 new original Dutch-language prose and poetry titles in 1978 was produced by 371 authors. Authors only represented by special publications and those whose work appeared exclusively with Flemish publishers have been left out of consideration. These two groups counted 92 authors, thus leaving us with a total of 279 authors for the study.

For each of these authors, various kinds of literary sidelines have been inventoried for the period 1975-78. The inventory contains the following activities: publishing creative work in literary magazines, contributing reviews, essays and other critical pieces to literary magazines, and performing other auxiliary functions in the literary world. In contrast to the latter two activities, publishing creative work in literary magazines cannot be strictly considered as a sideline for literary authors. Just as with the publication of novels, novellas, collections of short stories or poetry, this type of production involves what authors are first and above all expected to do: to publish creative work. But unlike book publications, contributions to magazines are not a prerequisite for receiving attention from critics in the press. For clarity's sake it should be noted that in this paper the term literary "sideline" is used to indicate all the activities an author undertakes in the literary world besides publishing creative work in book form. I begin with a more detailed list of the authors' "sidelines":

A) Creative Contributions to Literary Magazines. Using the Bibliografie van de Literaire Tijdschriften in Vlaanderen en Nederland (BLTVN), creative work in literary magazines has been inventoried for each author in the period 1975-78. This inventory involved eighteen Dutch literary periodicals: Bzzlletin, Chrysallis, Gedicht, De Gids, Gist, Hollands Maandblad, Horus, Kentering, Maatstaf, Mandala, Naar Morgen, Raam, Raster, De Revisor, De Schans, Tirade, Tijd Schrift,

2 "Special publications" mean compilations, omnibus editions, posthumous editions, collected works, joint publications of several authors, and similar items.
and WAR. The total number of publications per author in the magazines cited and the number of publications in the most prominent of these have been recorded. The latter have been defined as those with a print run of more than 1000 in the years 1975-78 (Bzzlletin, Gedicht, De Gids, Hollandas Maandblad, Maatstaf, Raster, De Revisor, and Tirade).

B) Critical Writing for the Daily and Weekly Press and Literary Magazines. With the help of the KUB-recensiebestand 1975-1980, the number of contributions on literature each author placed in Dutch dailies and weeklies in the period 1975-1978 was counted. The total number of articles on literature, the number of literary book reviews, and the number of other critical pieces, such as survey articles, etc., were recorded. In addition, the number of these articles and that appeared in the national press was counted. Drawing on the Bibilografie van de Nederlandse Taal- en Literatuurwetenschap (BNTL) and the BLTVN, the authors’ critical contributions to the above eighteen literary magazines in the period 1975-78 were inventoried. For each author, the total number of contributions and the number of contributions to prominent periodicals were recorded.

C) Other Literary Sidelines. For this category, I investigated whether the authors in the database performed other functions in the Dutch literary system in the period 1975-78. The following factors are included: membership of literary advisory commissions and juries for awarding literary prizes, positions on the board of literary organizations, and editorships of literary magazines. The inventory of administrative and advisory functions was drawn up by consulting the annual reports of institutions and organizations involved in granting subsidies and awarding prizes for literature and of the Vereniging voor Letterkundigen. Memberships of juries were inventoried through Michaël et al. Drawing on Bakker, it was determined for each author whether he/she served as editor of one of the above mentioned literary periodicals in the period 1975-78. Editorships of those periodicals not covered by this survey were established by consulting the relevant issues of the magazines themselves. For each author, the total number of other sidelines and the number involving prominent juries, boards, advisory

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3 This database consists of all the literary book reviews and articles on literature which appeared in the Dutch press in the period of 1975 to 1980.

4 The following institutions or organizations were included: Raad voor de Kunst (the Dutch Art Council), Fonds voor de Letteren (the Foundation for Literature), Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde (the Dutch Literature Society), Jan Campert Stichting (the Jan Campert Foundation), Prins Bernard Fonds (the Prince Bernard Foundation), Amsterdams Fonds voor de Kunst (the Art Foundation of the City of Amsterdam), Rotterdamse Kunststichting (the Art Foundation of the City of Rotterdam), and provincial cultural councils.
bodies, and magazines were recorded.

D) Number of Sidelines in the Literary System. Finally, a score was given to each author on the basis of the number of different activities performed in the period 1975-78, in addition to publishing books. The score varies per author from 0 (none of the above activities) to 3. In the last-mentioned case an author wrote both creative and critical work for newspapers or periodicals and, as well, sat on at least one literary jury, commission, or organizational or editorial board.

4. Results

4.1 Literary Sidelines of Authors According to Type of Publishing House

In the previous section three clusters of literary sidelines were distinguished: publishing creative work in literary magazines, writing literary essays, reviews or other critical pieces for literary magazines, and the press and performing managerial, advisory, or editorial work in the field of literature. This section examines the relationship between the type of publishing firm with which the authors in selected for this study were affiliated and the extent to which they undertook additional activities within the literary world.

Based on their Dutch-language fiction — including poetry — production in 1978, I divided the publishing houses in the database into the following categories: large (over 20 titles per year), medium sized (6-20 titles), and small (less than 6 titles). Subsequently — using the Nugi-system — a distinction was drawn between non-literary and literary publishing firms. Among the latter were rated those publishers whose publications in the field of narrative prose consisted for the greater part of titles with Nugi-code 410 ("novels and short stories"). In the case of small publishing firms, the application of this criterion proved to be problematic because a substantial number of these firms mainly published books of poetry, whereas at the time the Nugi-system did not distinguish "serious" poetry and "popular" works of poetry. For this reason, no further distinction was made within the category of small publishing houses.

Table 1 below gives for each type of publishing firm the percentage of authors

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5 The following juries are included: P.C. Hooft Prize, the Prijs der Nederlandse Letteren (Literature Prize of the Low-Countries), the prizes of the Jan Campert Foundation, the Poetry and Prose Prize of the City of Amsterdam, the Martinus Nijhoff Prize, the various prizes awarded by the Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde (the Dutch Literature Society), and the commissions or boards of the Vereniging voor Letterkundigen (Dutch Association for Writers and Translators), Raad voor de Kunst (the Dutch Art Council), Fonds voor de Letteren (Foundation for Literature), Amsterdams Fonds voor de kunst (the Art Foundation of the City of Amsterdam), and Rotterdamse Kunststichting (the Art Foundation of the City of Rotterdam).

6 Nugi refers to the Dutch Uniform Genre Classification. This is a coding system the Dutch book publishing industry uses to categorize their publications before sending them to the legal depot at the Royal Library in The Hague.
who had none, one, and several of the various sidelines. Chi-square indicates a significant deviation from independence in the table. The figures show a clear division between the large and medium-sized publishers, on the one hand, and the three other types of publishers, on the other. Almost 70% of the authors affiliated with large or medium sized literary publishers combined the writing of a new book with at least one additional literary activity, whereas one third of the authors had several sidelines. In this regard, these authors contrast sharply with the writers from non-literary and small publishers. The latter three categories hardly vary on this point. Within each category less than 15% of the authors performed one of the sidelines and practically none of them engaged in more than one additional activity.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of publisher</th>
<th>Percentage of authors with sideline(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N None One Two or three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large/Literary</td>
<td>72 31% 30% 39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium/Literary</td>
<td>41 36% 32% 32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large/Non-literate</td>
<td>26 96% 4% -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium/Non-literary</td>
<td>71 83% 14% 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>69 86% 13% 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>279 64% 20% 16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Chi-square = 95.310, p < .001

In the remainder of this study, authors writing for non-literary and small publishing houses are left out of account. A few final observations can be made on the sidelines of the small minority of 23 "active" authors within this group. Thirteen of these writers published creative work in a literary magazine, nine of them contributed critical work to a newspaper or magazine, while three authors performed other auxiliary functions in the literary world.

4.2 Literary Sidelines of Authors According to Their Literary Standing

This section examines the relationship between the writers' literary standing, measured in terms of the amount of critical attention for their new book titles, and the extent to which they combined their creative work with other literary activities. Only the 113 authors whose work was marketed by a large or medium sized literary publishing house will be taken into consideration.

The authors were grouped into three categories according to the number of reviews devoted to their new title. Authors who published more than one new title were classified on the basis of the title that received the most reviews. In view of the differences in the attention reviewers paid to works of poetry and narrative
prose (see Janssen 1994, 55), a slightly different criterion was applied for grouping practitioners of these two genres. Each author was assigned to one of the following categories:

A) Top: Prose writers whose new title received more than 11 reviews and poets whose new title received more than 9 reviews.
B) Semiperiphery: Prose writers whose new title received 7-11 reviews and poets whose new title received 5-9 reviews.
C) Periphery: Prose writers whose new title received less than 7 reviews and poets whose new title received less than 5 reviews.

I chose for this criterion and for a classification into three categories in order to create categories that were (more or less) of equal size and included a substantial number of cases each. Below, I first examine the relationship between the authors’ literary standing and the number of sidelines they had in the literary world. Next, I explore for each separate sideline whether there are differences between the three categories of authors.

4.3 Number of Literary Sidelines

Table 2 below presents for each category of authors the percentage that performed none, one, several, and all of the recorded sidelines. Chi-square indicates a significant deviation from independence in the Table. As can be seen from the Table, a large majority of the writers (85%) within the top segment combined the writing of a book with at least one literary sideline. The percentage of authors who engaged in no literary sidelines at all, appears to be very small in comparison with both other categories. In their turn, the writers from category B prove to have been active more often in at least one additional field than the authors belonging to category C.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>One</th>
<th>Two</th>
<th>Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A) = Top; B) = Semiperiphery; C) = Periphery (here and in subsequent Tables); * Chi-square = 18.032, p < .01

In addition, Table 2 shows that a comparatively high proportion of the top authors were active in several areas. Approximately 50% of them engaged in two or three literary sidelines as opposed to about a quarter of the writers from the
two other categories.

4.5 Publication of Creative Work in Literary Magazines

The left side of Table 3 below shows for each category the percentage of authors who contributed creative work to literary magazines. Although I found a substantial number of active authors in each category, the figures show a clear division between category A on the one hand, and categories B and C, on the other. The top-ranking writers prove to have contributed far more frequently to literary magazines than their less prominent colleagues. Categories B and C hardly differ from one another. Almost half of the writers within both categories published creative work in literary magazines during the period studied.

Table 3
Publication of creative work in literary magazines according to category of authors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All authors</th>
<th></th>
<th>Active authors</th>
<th></th>
<th>Active authors</th>
<th></th>
<th>Several prominent magazines</th>
<th></th>
<th>Mean no. of publ's</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>magazines</td>
<td></td>
<td>of publ's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>(5.1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>(4.2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>(1.2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>(3.9)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Chi-square = 10.283, p < .01; † I did not calculate the value of Chi-square on these data because more than 10% of the expected frequencies are less than 5; ‡ Mean number of publications: F = 2.187, p = .12 (In parentheses: Mean number of publications in prominent magazines: F = 4.555, p < .05).

The right side of Table 3 offers a closer picture of the authors' creative writing for literary magazines by considering the number and the type of magazines to which they contributed their work and their average number of publications. Here, only active authors from each category are taken into account. For each category, the percentage of authors who contributed to more than one magazine and the percentage of contributors to prominent magazines are presented. The last column comprises the average number of contributions per author, and, in parentheses, the average number of contributions to prominent magazines.

This time, it is between categories A and B, on the one hand, and category C, on the other, that we observe a division. The first two categories both include a substantial number of writers who contributed creative work to several magazines. By contrast, nearly all of the peripheral writers contributed to one magazine only. Furthermore, it appears that the vast majority (94%) of the writers from categories A and B published in prominent magazines, as opposed to only half of the writers from category C. Finally, considering the frequency of the authors' contributions to literary magazines, we find that on average both
the prominent and the semiperipheral writers published about twice as much as the members of category C. In their turn, the authors from the top category chalked up more publications (notably in prominent magazines) to their name than those from category B.

4.6 Critical Writing for Literary Magazines, Dailies, and Weeklies

Table 4 below shows for each category the percentage of authors who contributed critical work to the press or to magazines. The top authors clearly distinguish themselves from the other writers. Half of them published literary reviews or other critical pieces during the research period. For categories B and C, by contrast, the percentage of active authors amounts to less than 30%.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Active authors</th>
<th>Active authors</th>
<th>Mean no. of contrib.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Chi-square = 6.228, p < .05; I did not calculate the value of Chi-square on these data because more than 10% of the expected frequencies are less than 5; Mean number of critical contributions to literary magazines: F = 1.411, p = .256 (In parentheses: Mean number of contributions to prominent magazines: F = 3.266, p < .05).

On the right-hand side of Table 4 only the active authors in each category are taken into consideration. For each category, the table presents the percentage of authors who contributed critical work both to the daily and weekly press and to literary magazines and the percentage that contributed critical writings to prominent media. The last column gives the number of critical writings the authors from each category contributed on average to literary magazines. Shown in parentheses is the mean number of critical contributions to prominent magazines.

We find that more than 60% of the prominent writers contributed critical work

---

7 In category A, both the number of authors who wrote critical pieces for the press and the number of authors with critical contributions to literary magazines are more than twice as large as in categories B and C.

8 The frequency of the authors' publications in the daily and weekly press was found to range from 1 to 197, depending on whether or not they were connected to a particular daily or weekly as a regular or principal reviewer. For that reason, it seemed reasonable to not consider the average number of the authors' contributions to the daily and weekly press.
to both literary magazines and the daily and weekly press, which is a high proportion in comparison with the other two categories. Among the writers of categories B and C, only a (small) minority published critical work in both literary magazines and the daily and weekly press. Considering the status of the media for which the authors wrote essays and reviews, the three groups of authors hardly differ from one another. Not only the top authors, but also a large majority of the other writers contributed critical writings to prominent media. As regards the frequency of the authors’ publications in literary magazines, the prominent writers prove to have made about twice as many contributions as the members of categories B and C. The latter two categories of writers hardly vary on this point.

4.7 Performance of Other Functions in the Literary System

In addition to each author’s creative and critical contributions to literary magazines and the daily and weekly press, it was recorded whether they performed other functions in the literary system. We recall that these other functions include administrative positions on the boards of literary organizations, memberships of literary juries and advisory bodies, and editorships of literary magazines. To begin with, Table 5 below shows an overview of the percentage of authors in each category who performed — at least — one of the above-mentioned auxiliary functions. The figures show a clear distinction between category A, on the one hand, and categories B and C, on the other. The top writers prove to be relatively more active in this respect. About 40% undertook administrative, advisory or editorial activities in the Dutch literary world, as opposed to less than 20% of the other authors.9

Table 5
Engagement in literary functions (administrative and advisory bodies, juries, editorial staff) according to category of authors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All authors</th>
<th>Active authors</th>
<th>Active authors</th>
<th>Mean no. of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Active authors</td>
<td>Several fields</td>
<td>Prominent bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Chi-square = 6.051, p<.05; †The value of Chi-square on these data is not calculated because more than 10% of the expected frequencies are less than 5; ‡Mean no. of functions: F = 2.455, p = .11 (In

9 In each category we find only a few authors who served as editor of a literary periodical. As to each of the remaining auxiliary functions, category A contrasts sharply with both other categories. A substantial number of the prominent writers performed administrative and advisory functions, while this category also includes a considerable number of jury members. On the other hand, in categories B and C there are hardly any writers who fulfilled an administrative or advisory function or served as member of a jury.
parentheses: Mean number of functions involving a prominent literary organ: $F = 3.962, p < .05$).

The figures on the right-hand side of Table 5 pertain only to those authors who performed one or more auxiliary literary functions. The first column shows for each category how many of the active authors undertook several of the various activities, for example, served both as editor of a magazine and as member of a jury for awarding a literary prize. As can be seen from the table, a comparatively high proportion of the top authors (63%) had sidelines in more than one field.

The next column gives the percentage of writers who were involved in prominent literary organs. The vast majority of the top writers appear to have been members of prominent entities, as well as a fairly high percentage of the semiperipheral authors. By contrast, practically none of the writers from category C was affiliated with a prominent body. The last column presents the mean number of functions per author, and, in parentheses, the mean number of functions involving prominent entities. We find that on average the prominent writers performed twice as many functions as the members of both other categories.

5. Conclusion

In this study I investigated the literary sidelines of authors who published new poetry or prose titles with large or medium sized literary publishing houses. The analysis revealed that authors whose works received substantial of attention from critics in the press can be clearly distinguished on this point from their less successful colleagues. In comparison with the latter, they appear in many more cases to have combined the publication of new work in book form with various other literary activities. They published creative work more often in literary magazines, were more active comparatively in writing literary criticism and appear to have performed other literary functions more frequently. These findings confirm the hypothesis that the reception of an author’s work is related to the way in which he/she makes his/her presence felt in the literary world. Authors who are active on several fronts seem to have more chance of receiving the critics’ attention than those who limit themselves to publishing new work in book form.

Several remarks can be made about the results of this analysis. In the first instance, I would like to make some comments about the relative weight of the literary sidelines examined in my study. The analysis performed does not reveal anything in this regard since the activities were treated as equal constants. As has been said, it is doubtful whether the significance of one or the other for the critical reception of a work can be determined exactly. Keeping in mind the different nature of the activities concerned, it is nonetheless likely that they do vary in importance. With regard to creative work published in magazines and literary criticism, it can be stated that they are activities that form a part of or
at least are related to the primary occupation of writers, producing creative work. These activities can have a stronger effect on the critical reactions to a work than other functions in the literary system (editorships, memberships in advisory boards, etc.), as these are activities farther removed from what is seen to be the writer's primary occupation and upon which he/she is chiefly judged by the critics.

In contrast to creative work in magazines or the literary views advanced by writers, these other auxiliary activities do not in general furnish the critics with any (valid or useful) reference points for characterizing a work. Their influence on the critical reception of a work seems, therefore, to be in most cases limited or at any event difficult to trace; certainly in so far as the appraisal of the nature and quality of the work are concerned. The importance of these activities probably lies foremost in their potential for drawing the critics' attention to an author's work and winning him/her the goodwill and support of people in a position to promote it. When an author does not engage in such activities, he/she distances himself/herself from the possibility of generating interest for his/her work by such means. It is, however, unlikely that critics will attach negative conclusions to this with regard to the quality of the author's work. However, the opposite situation probably arises sooner. Namely, that precisely the (numerous) other sidelines of an author give occasion to the critics to call his/her literary qualities into question. In these terms, authors who do not publicly concern themselves with reflection on their authorship or literature in general seems to run a greater risk. After all, critics assume that authors of stature have an all-encompassing view on the nature and role of literature, which, just as the critics themselves, they are able to articulate. When an author lets it be seen that he/she does not have such a literary outlook, doubts concerning the level of his/her work can arise.

It needs to be remarked that the way in which an author acts in the literary world cannot simply be regarded as something he/she chooses for himself/herself. The more limited range of action of authors from the lowest attention categories does not necessarily signify less willingness to intervene on the fronts investigated. It can also be connected to the limited possibilities of these authors or to the weak demand for them to perform certain activities. The connection established between the critical interest in a work and the author's sidelines is probably double-edged in nature. On the one hand, undertaking or failing to undertake these activities can influence the critical attention given a work; on the other hand, this attention is probably codeterminant for the "margin of manoeuvre" an author enjoys in the areas concerned. Thus, authors standing squarely in the critical limelight will have fewer difficulties in getting their work placed in a certain magazine if they wish and will sooner be approached to join the editorial board of a leading periodical or sit on an important literary jury than their less celebrated colleagues.

Further, the analysis shows that each of the three author categories defined
contains authors with sidelines. Such activities are, therefore, not in themselves sufficient to assure an author of wide critical attention. As far as this point is concerned, it can be recalled that the authors in the higher attention categories are proportionately far more often active in the top organs and score higher to the degree to which they intervened on the fronts investigated. One and the other indicate that the presumed effect of literary sidelines partially or perhaps even largely depends on the situation in which and the intensity with which they are pursued. It turned out that a number of frequently reviewed authors engaged in no literary sidelines in the period studied, which shows that the necessity for authors to take part in other activities in the literary system is relative. In some cases apparently authors can actually afford to devote themselves exclusively to the publication of new books. In this connection the question arises as to the circumstances in which an active stance on the part of the author is or is not a requirement for wide critical attention. On this matter the current phase of an author's career seems to be relevant. For when we look into which frequently reviewed authors limited themselves in the period concerned to the publication of books, we find, a few first authors aside, only veteran well-established writers. This suggests that an author can forgo the extra efforts when critical opinion on his/her work has crystallized and the recognition of a wide circle has been obtained.

On the basis of a number of case studies of the careers of writers (see Bel; Bourdieu 1993; Janssen 1994; Ritchie; Rodden; Van Boven; Van Dijk; Van Rees 1987) several hypotheses can be formulated concerning the circumstances under which certain activities on the author's part are needed to attract or hold the critics' attention. In the first place, an author who has not received any external marks of recognition, such as prizes or public interest, and who cannot rely on the interest of one or more renowned critics to keep drawing positive attention to his/her work, is virtually required to engage in other activities in addition to publishing books. In such a situation it seems to be of import for the author to increase his/her "social capital," that is, to perform activities that can bring him the recognition and support of literary colleagues. He/she can, for example, make himself/herself useful in critical or organizational ways. Without the recognition and support of at least a few actors on the literary scene, someone's role as a writer seems stagnant or even finished.

It does not suffice, either, for an author only to publish books when far-reaching changes are taking place in the literary constellation, such as the arrival of new authors, critics, or magazines because such events confront an author with stiffer competition from fellow writers. In such a situation it is crucial that an author seek contact with the newcomers or strengthen his/her ties to the established players in the literary world. Given the leading role the opinion of celebrated critics can play, an author seems further compelled to perform authorial interventions when critics of repute make negative pronouncements on his/her work. In such a case authors will have to strive to refute the objections
of the critics involved and make clear that their judgment is based on a false interpretation of their work. On the other hand, authors who can fall back on one or more advocates among the critics seem more or less shielded from the necessity of undertaking additional interventions. This is all the more true when the critics concerned are prestigious and the author’s work has also attracted the necessary attention and appreciation outside the world of criticism. All the same, even under these circumstances an author’s citing chapter and verse on his/her work appears to promote its positive reception by the critics.

The case studies mentioned above also draw attention to the effect of a versatile performance by authors in relation to the way critical interest in their work evolves in many instances. There is only a select group of authors whose work is followed closely and continuously by the literary critics. For a much larger group of writers the attention of the critics tends, after an initial period of intensity, to diminish and shift in favour of a new consignment of writers. The cases examined show that by "product differentiation," that is, by turning to the practice of new genres, authors can give critical interest in their career a new impulse and decrease the chance that their work will cease to be discussed. In this manner, several Dutch authors of recent decades have focused attention on themselves by becoming columnists for Dutch dailies or weeklies. The empirical data presented here demonstrate that authors can intervene in different ways in the formation of critical opinion on their work and are thus not dependent on the whims of (critical) fate for the fame and reputation they acquire. It would, however, be leaning too far in the other direction to conclude that they largely have their literary fate in their own hands. Reputation building and canonization are not the work of individuals but of a collectivity as Bourdieu and Becker have argued and as my study suggests. Moreover, the possibilities for individual critics and authors to exercise influence on the image formed of a work are regulated and restricted by both institutional norms and practices and structural relations and developments within the literary system. Thus literary pronouncements by an author can only have an effect on the characterization of a work when critics attribute particular insight into the work to that author. The impact an author’s statements (may) have therefore has an institutional and systemic basis, consisting in the critical premise that the creator of a work is by definition in the best position to adduce the underlying intentions and meanings of that work or to judge the critics’ assessments of that work on their merits.

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The Function of Literary Journals in the Literary System of Mainland China

1. Introduction

In this article, I will introduce and analyse several Chinese mixed genre literary journals currently published in Beijing: Ren Min Wen Xue (People’s Literature), Dang Dai (Contemporary), and Shi Yue (October). I will describe the above journals’ contemporary publishing situation in the context of the literary system, i.e., who publishes them, who funds them, who the editors are, who the readers are, the pertinent technical details of their publication and distribution. Following the above description, I will discuss their importance and function in the literary system of Beijing and China. I will pay particular attention to the question of canon formation of specific literary genres and authors.

I should mention that to my knowledge there are no analyses extant of the function of contemporary Mainland Chinese literary journals. After a search through the data base of the Modern Language Association of America International Bibliography I found one single article dealing with this aspect of the Mainland Chinese literary system, Bruce Bennett’s "Winds of Change: Literary Magazines of China." For similar studies in other literary systems I used Steven Tótosy’s recent "Factors in a Theory of Cumulative Canon Formation," where he discusses the situation of literary journals in Hungary and in Canada (see Tótosy 1996 and in this volume). Hungary, being a former Communist state, is particularly relevant for a discussion of literary journals in China. However, my main source of information was personal interviews with editors of the above mentioned journals (Liu Baiyu for People’s Literature; Wang Zhangun for Contemporary; Wang Zhaqian for October). Additional interviews were conducted with writers Liu Zheng Yun and Zheng Wan Long, as well as one government official, Zhao Ming Liu of the State Publishing Bureau, Journals Division. These interviews were conducted in Beijing from November 1995 to March 1996.

For my theoretical base and approach I am using The Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature and Culture as Theory and Application.

The Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature and Culture as Theory and Application
Edited by Steven Tótosy de Zepetnek and Irene Sywenky
University of Alberta: RICL-CCS and Siegen University: LUMIS, 1997
ISBN 0-921490-08-9 / ISSN 0934-8697
Approach to Literature and Culture.

2. Background Information

In the Chinese literary system, "literary" journals include so-called "pure" literary journals — which mainly publish fiction, poetry, and essays — and journals of literary criticism. The journals discussed in this paper are limited to "pure" literary journals whose situation reflects the rise and fall of contemporary literary circles, the emergence of post-1989 Mainland Chinese literature, and those who play a crucial role in the Chinese literary system.

Chinese authors usually first publish their works in a journal, then as a book by a publishing house after they receive criticism from critics and readers. The publication of a text in a journal takes from three to six months after submission, and for a book usually more than a year. Therefore, in a country where the marketing and promotion of books are extremely underdeveloped, literary journals function as the most important and immediate outlet for literary works. Furthermore, with the decrease of state funding for the arts, nowadays the remuneration of writers from both journals and books has become an important source of income. In the 1980s, after the end of the Cultural Revolution, literary journals played a significant role in China for the dissemination of new ideas, literary as well as social and political. The flourishing and popularity of literary journals in this period were part of a trend to describe the suffering people experienced during the Cultural Revolution and their search for a happier future. Some major journals — such as People's Literature in Beijing and Harvest in Shanghai — claimed more than 1.2 million readers (Bennett 35; see also Liu 158-78). However, since the late 1980s, especially after the events of Tian'an Men Square in 1989, with the changes from a socialist planned economy toward a market economy but with concurrent leftist political pressure, Chinese writers, both professional and amateur, have had to face the decline in their economic and political status. To put this into perspective, today, a young professional writer's salary would be on the average only 1/6 of that of a taxi driver (the basic salary of a junior writer is around 500 Yuan per month; a taxi driver in large cities, like Beijing or Shanghai, can easily make more than 3000 Yuan a month). Consequently, there is a growing feeling of insecurity among authors and thus many abandon a literary career and some go into business (for an elaboration on this, see Pirazzoli). In addition to the new financial insecurity, some refuse to write as a protest against the political persecution of Chinese liberal intellectuals. Also, the sudden change in the status of writers and

1 As I have access to the approach through English only, I used Steven T. Toosy's extensive bibliography for my familiarization with the approach in his "Systemic Approaches to Literature — An Introduction with Selected Bibliographies" (1992).
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intellectuals in general created a "postmodern" state of writing where writers produce a large amount of texts ironizing and even ridiculing themselves and their situation (perhaps the most prominent example of such texts is the writing of Wang Shuo). At the same time, the "fast-food" pleasure promulgated by entertainment magazines takes the place of the more polyvalent satisfaction offered by "pure" or aesthetic literature. Along with the assault of popular culture and the rising price of journals, the market of readers has seriously declined. At the end of 1995, there were only four or five journals that made a profit and their circulation is approximately a mere 100,000 copies each.

Because of historical, cultural, and political reasons, many important literary journals are concentrated in Beijing. These journals in Beijing are not only well-known for their stylistic excellence and focus on aesthetic qualities, but also for immediately reflecting controversial issues of contemporary Chinese society and culture. Of the three journals I analysed, People's Literature, first published in 1949, is the oldest and best known. It used to be known as the best Chinese short story journal and many short stories, canonized in modern Chinese literary history, first appeared there. It had tremendous influence on readers and writers alike and was regarded as the "royal journal" of China because of its close relations with the Chinese central government. Only very prestigious writers became editors, including Wang Meng, who later became minister of culture (1985-89; he resigned after Tian'an Men). In the early 1980s, the journal's circulation was more than 1.4 million. However, the journal is now confronted with serious financial as well as artistic quality problems (i.e., too many contributions are published based on personal connections and political stand, etc.). After June 1989, the journal lost much of its leadership in Chinese literary circles because of its close identification with the government. After Tian'an Men, many important writers refused to contribute to this journal because in their opinion People's Literature forfeited its artistic standards by adopting a "peasant-worker-soldier" (Gong Nong Bing) orientation, following the new restrictions imposed by the government. Consequently, its circulation dropped from 1.4 million to 20,000 in the early 1990s, although it has increased its output later. After the journal lost its major writers and many of its readers, it was confronted by the new economics in China now implementing a partial market economy where literary journals receive significantly less government subsidies and have to show profit to be able to survive (government subsidization will cease altogether in 1998).

The journal Contemporary, first established in 1980, is a financially profitable journal. Among all literary journals, its artistic quality as well as its financial situation are exceptionally good. In the literary boom years after the Cultural Revolution, it could claim more than 500,000 readers. It still publishes 120,000 copies an issue and has become a best-seller among literary journals in China. The journal, beginning in the early 1980s, in order to mirror the then current
changes in society, was the main outlet for reportage, although some sensitive topics it published caused the journal and its editors political and legal problems.

The journal October, first published in 1976, was the first major literary journal published after the Cultural Revolution. Although a profitable journal, it has different characteristics from Contemporary. October publishes texts for young people and university students and is more experimental and avant-garde than Contemporary. In 1992, October published Wang Qiming's Native Beijinger in New York (Beijing Ren Zai Niu Yue) and Li Zhou's China Woman in Manhattan (Man Ha Dun de Zhong Guo Niu Ren), which initiated the current interest in Chinese expatriate literature. In 1993, it first published Jia Pingwa's The Discarded Capital (Fei Du), which tells of a writer's sexual and spiritual adventures, much of it autobiographical. The publication of this novel started a nation-wide interest both in the publication and the reading of sexually explicit novels. October appears to exert increasing influence on Chinese literature and also on society in general but the journal pays clearly for its experiments. The Discarded Capital, which vividly reflects on the confusion of contemporary Chinese intellectuals and artists, was charged with obscenity and the spreading of decadence by venturing into the forbidden zone of sexual writing and fin-de-siècle decadence. Under the pressure of censorship, the general editor of October (Feng Li) had to resign and the novel is now banned in China.

3. Analysis

Here, I will analyse the three journals in question with reference to the following categories of the literary system: their agents of publication and funding, distribution and marketing, editorship, readership, contributors, aesthetic objectives, response to political imperatives, and aspects of technical matters.

3.1 Agents of Publication and Funding

People's Literature is published by the Chinese Literature Association (Zhong Guo Wen Lian); Contemporary by People's Literature Press (Ren Min Wen Xue Chu Ban She; the biggest publishing house in China), and October by the Beijing Press (Beijing Chu Ban She). With regard to funding, from the day it was established, People's Literature has been totally funded by the central government. When the journal was profitable, the profits were given to the treasury's general revenue fund. Because of the great economic and political changes since the 1980s, financial subsidies for People's Literature and other literary journals supported by the government has been progressively diminished. The government subsidy for People's Literature was 250,000 Yuan ($30,000) in 1994, 220,000 Yuan ($27,000) in 1995, and 140,000 Yuan ($17,000) in 1996. Contemporary and October have no financial problems, not only because they are at present profitable but also because the publishing houses they belong to are financially
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stable. Subsidization of these journals is therefore indirect for it is the publishing houses which receive government funding and not the journals directly.

3.2 Distribution and Marketing

Chinese post offices and Xinhua bookstores (a government bookstore chain), throughout the country act as the agents of distribution for the journals. Decisions about the size of a print run for a particular issue are based on up-to-date subscriptions levels and orders submitted to the journals via the post office (see also Bennett; Liu). The current market orientation of China has impacted on the distribution and marketing of literary journals. For instance, in order to capture a larger market share, two years ago People's Literature attempted to sell their copies in street bookstands. This strategy did not appear to increase subscription levels. The reason, according to the editor, may have been that few people would be interested in the journal owing to its government orientation after Tian'an Men. With regard to marketing and advertising, People's Literature solicits donations from businesses and advertises on its back cover. Another fundraising strategy is to sponsor literary prizes, named after the business enterprise that donates the prize money: the most striking example is the first Da Jia literary prize of 10,000 Yuan, the highest literary prize in China, sponsored by the biggest Chinese tobacco company. Although the tobacco industry in China cannot openly promotes its products, by donating money to literary journals it delicately impresses the public. Although Contemporary does not accept paid advertising, in the March 1996 issue there was an announcement about the Red-Bean Literary Prize sponsored and financed by the Red-Bean Shirt Company. October's general editor, Wang Zhan Jun regards his journal as a business and therefore accepts advertising as well as other fundraising venues.

3.4 Editorship

Editorial boards of literary journals vary in size. People's Literature has a staff of more than thirty, Contemporary has about ten, and October about twelve. The general editors of literary journals, usually well known writers, take responsibility for the aesthetic quality and ideological content of literary works published. The executive or chief editor is normally assisted by an editorial and administrative staff who are in reality involved in the assessment, acceptance, or rejection of manuscripts submitted for publication (see also Bennett).

3.5 The Readership

People's Literature claims to have a broad and general readership. Contemporary is popular among intellectuals, college students, and generally lovers of literature. October's readership is similar to that of Contemporary, but it has more young readers. The editorial board of October intentionally promotes its journal among university students; for example, every year they invite famous
writers to give lectures to young readers and university students.

3.6 The Contributors

After Tian'an Men, most famous writers refused to submit any works to *People's Literature* and this hurt the journal's stature significantly. For this reason, any famous writer now submitting work to this journal is automatically published. At the same time, with the gradual improvement of its aesthetic quality, more and more young writers' works appear in *People's Literature*. *Contemporary* believes in the priority of artistic standards and this approach affects both its process of manuscript assessment and editing standards. For instance, as the deputy director of the *Contemporary* editorial board (Wang Zhao Qian) explained to me during my interview with him, they have rejected for aesthetic reasons texts by some of the most prestigious writers. *Contemporary* has a committed interest in the fostering of young talent as well as female writers, and at least one new face appears in each issue. The editors always give enthusiastic comments on new writers' works and present some biographical details about those young writers to readers. *October* has no special policy on fostering young and female writers, but it pays more attention to celebrated and popular writers and it less stringent than *Contemporary*, for it seldom refuses manuscripts submitted by famous writers.

3.7 Aesthetic Objectives

As the general editor of *October* told me, "Chinese literary journals cannot raise their circulation just by one or two stirring works. They must find their own artistic objectives and the publication must be deep, new, and true" (Wang Zhan Jun). My interviews with the editors of the other two journals resulted in my general impression that for *People's Literature*, a literary text should be "serious, grave, and graceful" (Liu Baiyun) and for *Contemporary*, literature is to be "timely, realistic, popular with the masses, and full of variety" (Wang Zhaqian). All three journals regard themselves as a mirror reflecting contemporary Chinese society and they claim to be against works without ideological value or works which show only linguistic mastery. All three claim to be "realistic," and profess no interest in encouraging literary experiments similar to those of the 1980s.

3.8 Response to Political Imperatives

All three journals claim utmost loyalty to the government and the Communist Party. Without exception, the general editors of these three leading journals are party members in good standing. However, unlike *People's Literature* — a journal very sensitive to political issues — *Contemporary* dares to publishes works such as Zhao Yu's *The Dream of a Strong Country* (*Qiang Guo Meng*), a novel disclosing bureaucratic corruption and rebuffing propaganda in sports. At
the same time, *Contemporary* is also often under political pressure: for example, it submitted to an order from the propaganda section of the Communist Party to publish *The Second Sun* (*Di Er Ge Tai Tang*) by Liu Baiyu, who became the general editor of *People's Literature* after Tian'an Men. In addition, *Contemporary* then recommended the novel for the MaoDun Literary Merit Prize (the most prestigious literary prize in China). After *The Discarded Capital* affair I mentioned earlier, a functionary of the Beijing Press — who is not a writer — was appointed general editor (Wang Zhan Jun). He, admittedly, keeps his journal politically safe.

3.10 Technological Aspects of Journal Production

All three journals use desk-top publishing technology, employing computers, and Chinese word processing software and fonts. In the case of *October*, more than 95% of the manuscripts submitted to this journal are on diskette. The editorial board actively encourages such electronic diskette submission in order to be able to edit texts on the computer. The editors and staff of *People's Literature* and *Contemporary* also receive, although to a lesser extent, manuscripts on diskette. But there is still resistance to computer technology and many of the older editors argue that manuscripts submitted in printed form are not as clear as handwriting. In addition, they are uninterested in learning computer editing and composing. *People's Literature* used traditional hand-set type-setting before 1996 and only in January 1996 did they switch to photo offset print technology of the camera-ready copy. Because *Contemporary* and *October* belong to two highly developed publishing houses, they have used photo offset technology from the early 1990s.

4. Conclusion

From the above, we can draw some conclusions about the function of literary journals in the contemporary Chinese literary system, as follows:

1) The genres promoted by journals have developed very quickly. Although the three journals I analysed are mixed genre magazines, they still specialize in their own favourite literary types. For *People's Literature*, it is the short story; for *Contemporary*, it is reportage; and for *October*, it is the novelette and Chinese expatriate literature. Reportage and the novelette are the two genres which have developed most recently and fastest and whose length and content appear to be suitable for most Chinese literary journals.

2) With regard to dealing with political imperatives and party censorship, there are no special and declared regulations about censorship. However, "The Publishing Law" (*Chu Ban Fa*) and some other decrees of the State Council stipulate what must be censored or banned. These include the private lives of communist party leaders, criticism of state policies, certain aspects of the modern
history of China, Christian proselytizing, etc. (see Zhang and Wu, 49-57). As in the Western literary system, censorship can help a bad work become famous. The Discarded Capital, for example, was not a successful novel, but after being banned, it gained notoriety among readers. Obviously, censorship prevents readers from access to important texts. Chin Ming's The Decisive Battle of SongHu (Su Hu Da Jue Zhan), published in Contemporary, is a story about Chang Kai-Shek's troops bravely fighting the Japanese invasion. However, as the official line is that only Communist troops ever fought the Japanese, the government had Contemporary destroy the issue and all copies printed. Another example, the novel Old Boat by Zhang Wei, which bitterly criticizes Mao's policy toward Chinese peasants, irritated some government officials, and consequently Contemporary's editorial board was informed they could not recommend this work despite its high critical acclaim to compete for the Mao Dun Literary Prize. No journals in China dare to mention a sympathetic word about student and intellectual participants in the events of June 4, 1989 on Tian'an Men Square. However, in 1995, a new journal in the south of China, Da Jia (Master), published an essay by a writer who fled China after Tian'an Men. For this, the journal was almost forced to close.

3) Literary journals, including the above three discussed, had significant influence over literature and public opinion in the 1980s, but after 1989 some modification of this influence occurred. Importantly, the situation of journals underwent some changes with regard to their relationship with the readership. Unlike the early 1980s, when a journal had ultimate power to decide what it would publish, the literary journal of today has to consider more its readers' tastes and interests. One reason all journals claim that they do not encourage avant-garde literature any more is because there are only a very limited number people in China who can appreciate it. Interestingly, this factor of readership interests and rejection of avant-garde and experimental literature appears to coincide with the government's objectives. At the same time, the genre of reportage obtained great popularity and indicates the readership's interest in current social, political, and as well as every-day issues (personal information by Wang Zhaqian).

4) Following the partial move towards a market economy, economic factors have an increasing influence on the Chinese literary system and on the thematics, aesthetics, and reception of literature. Most Chinese journals face financial problems: for the government subsidy of journals, literary publishing houses, as well as writers will slowly be phased out. Among 328 "pure" literary journals, only 1.7% made profits in 1996. "Literature for Money" (Wen Xue Wei Jin Qian) begins to take the place of "Literature for Politics" (Wen Xue Wei Zheng Zhi). Just a few years ago, reportage used to focus on important current or historical issues, but now has become disguised advertisement for certain business enterprises. People's Literature published an essay in December 1995,
entitled "The Achievements of Leaves" by an entrepreneur who is the president of a successful tobacco company (see Wu). The essay is full of clichés and ideological preaching, but the editor gave it very high praise, and even published a reportage by two clerks from this tobacco company to give more support to this entrepreneur's achievements.

5) Most literary journals appear to have ambiguous aesthetic objectives. This causes confusion among both readers and writers. Almost all journals claim that they advocate realism, thus following the political and pseudo-artistic line of Marx, Lenin, and Mao.

6) The difficult situation of Chinese literary journals is not necessarily hopeless as they attempt to define their new situation in society and in the literary system. They have now begun to implement the view that literature and literary journals should no longer function solely or mainly as subservient tools of propaganda. This recognition is a result of the disappearance of government subsidies and the necessity to please the tastes of the readership in order to attract subscription and purchase.

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The Québécois- and English-Canadian Literary System: Translation, Republishing, and the Preface

In 1886, Sara Jeannette Duncan confidently declared that a "national literature cannot be looked for as an outcome of anything less than a complete national existence" (36). A century or so later, Jon Kertzer concludes his reading of the ascendency of myth and thematic criticism in the 1960s and 1970s and the subsequent shift to a "new historicism" in Canadian literary studies in this way: "History (history as narrative, as discourse, that is) is an art that confers national identity, but the identity conferred is not an absolute, essential, or even true" (119).1 Defining and "conferring" identity — or rather, identities, no matter how incomplete or how fragmented, however, remains a constant in the development of both English-Canadian and Québécois-Canadian literary knowledge. As an ongoing preoccupation with defining distinctive "national" characteristics, cultural nationalism has, as Dermot McCarthy put it, "driven the process of canon formation in Canadian literary history" (41). It is clear that myths of origin, to paraphrase Robert Kroetsch, or constructions of national and literary identity, continue to constitute a fundamental criteria for the selection of works to be republished in both paperback format and critical editions and thereby reactivated as part of an ever expanding canon taught in both the English-Canadian and Québécois-Canadian literary systems.

As some systemically oriented studies have already shown (see, for example, Perkes; Tökösy; Träger), the literary preface proves to be a key to, or as Gérard Genette suggested, a "threshold" into a history of literary knowledge as it is linked to reading traditions and determined by ideologies and editorial and publishing practices. In my article, I will briefly discuss Genette's suggestion as applied to the ways in which the nineteenth century is reread in prefaces to republications and translations of nineteenth-century Québécois- and English-Canadian novels. By drawing on my research into the English-language

1 In fact, this is a paraphrase of Robert Kroetsch's essay "Beyond Nationalism: A Prologue" (see Kroetsch).
prefatorial discourse on the Québec novel in translation and the data base gathered and prepared by my colleagues in the DIDECQ research group studying the republishing of Québec literature at Université Laval, I will focus as much on the differences as similarities between the English-Canadian and Québécois-Canadian practice of prefacing.²

As Siegfried J. Schmidt explains in his "An Introduction to Constructivism," no matter how vigorously we attempt to exercise control over what we construct to observe other constructions such as that of national and literary identity, our ability to act as "second-order observers," is always in question, because our observations are themselves mediated by discourse. In other words, our "blind-spots" are more extensive than we would care to admit. This is particularly true of translation and republishing, both of which are discursive activities that recontextualize literary texts. In this context and in an application of The Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature and Culture to the genre of preface, in The Social Dimensions of Fiction, Steven Töthösy confirmed that the dominant aesthetic of nineteenth-century English-Canadian and French-Canadian prefaces is one of realism (124). In my own work, I established that realism, or more precisely, ethically shaded varieties of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century British realism as well as Anglo-American modernism also inform evaluation and interpretation in the argumentation of English-language prefatorial discourse accompanying the Québec novel in translation since 1960 (see 1996a,b). This is evident, for example, in the abundant although not always acknowledged allusions to John Ruskin, George Eliot, and Henry James, the frequent recourse to E.M. Forster's Aspects of the Novel and the comparison with realist works of other literary traditions. Framed in these terms, the Québec novel enters the Canadian "realist" tradition that accounts for a substantial proportion of the works comprising several "Canadian Literature" publishing series, in particular the New Canadian Library collection of reprints (U of Ottawa).

One may well ask who reads these prefatorial texts? While hard empirical evidence on such realities as print runs and sales receipts has yet to be gathered,

² The DIDECQ research group is involved in a research project studying the republishing of Québec literature, Les Effets du discours didactique et critique sur la littérature québécoise (see Moisan et al., forthcoming. The documentation gathered is to take the form of a CD-ROM, entitled La Réédition au Québec. Bibliographie and it is now awaiting release) and Le Discours d'une didactique. La Formation littéraire dans l'enseignement classique au Québec (1852-1967) (see Moisan et al., 1988).
I do not think it would be too unrealistic to suggest that students of Canadian literature are the principal readers of prefaces. More importantly, however, the prefatorial discourse should, therefore, tell us a great deal about the transmission of literary and other values through the teaching of the Canadian literatures in English and in translation.

In the course of my research since 1990, I have established that 77 of the 235 titles published or republished in translation between 1960 and 1992 have prefaces. Of these, 64 were also republished in French in Québec. These 77 translated titles generated about 100 documents in English between 1960 and 1992. Approximately 40% of these prefaces accompany titles that were first published in French before 1960 (see Perkes 1996a, 1997). If republishing is an indication of canonization and thus an element of canon formation, it is worthwhile to note that among the some 1,100 literary works originally published since 1760 and subsequently republished by 1989 in French (see Moisan et al.), only 585 — of which approximately 350 are works of novel fiction, one of the four traditional genres of Québec literature (see Homel) — have been translated, at least between 1973 and 1993. In addition, the republishing of some 500 narrative works in Québec literature, the Québec literary system has generated some 200 documents — 180 appearing between 1960 and 1989 and almost a quarter of these accompany republished works of the nineteenth century. Moreover, of the fifteen most frequently republished titles in Québec, titles that have also been translated, retranslated, or republished in English before 1990, four are nineteenth-century works (Les Anciens Canadiens, Jean Rivard, Angéline de Montbrun, and Pour la patrie). These fifteen titles alone have generated fifty documents in French and in English.

What do the English-language prefatorial texts tell us? First, they show that quantitatively speaking, there is not a significant progression with respect to the acknowledgement of translation as a literary activity. If, as Sherry Simon pointed out, "la préface est depuis la Renaissance le lieu désigné de la parole du traducteur" (34), this is not the case for English-Canadian translators and prefacers. This brings to mind Tötösy’s observation that nineteenth-century prefaces — in both English and French — do not reflect "a defined progression or development" in terms of literary knowledge or aesthetics (125). However, a chronological analysis of the argumentation in the English-language prefaces shows that despite a dominant tendancy to evaluate the authenticity of representation — that is to say, the representation of historical, social, and ideological context or human nature; in short, the signified; in terms of what E.M. Forster called "life by values" — a definite shift occurs in the 1980s. This is clearly

3 A few statistics drawn from the data base compiled at Université Laval (see Moisan et al.) gives us a partial idea of the extent and the nature of republishing and translation of Québec literature (for data of translations in the twentieth century, see Martin).
linked to the question of representation and linguistic and cultural equivalence on the part of translators-prefacers. After 1980, the dominant metaphor for translation is no longer "reproduction" or "portrait." At this time, two opposing positions emerge with respect to equivalence: "la traduction identitaire," as Annie Brisset defines it, "qui [a] pour effet de masquer systématiquement la provenance du texte premier" (22) and translation as rewriting or the "endless slippage of signifiers," which exposes the strangeness or otherness of the text as Barbara Godard writes in her preface to France Théorêt's The Tangible Word.

Second, the argumentation in English-language prefatorial texts, particularly the New Canadian Library introductions published in the 1960s and 1970s, are more often than not grounded in an Anglo-American moral aesthetic that vacillates between underscoring the uniqueness of the novel's content — the French-Canadianness of the characters, setting, and stories — and the universality of the novel's themes and form. In the case of Gabrielle Roy, for instance, this aesthetic is expressed time and again through allusions to George Eliot, John Ruskin, Virginia Woolf, and comparisons with Willa Cather and Henry James.

While a comprehensive analysis of the Québécois prefatorial discourse to republished works has yet to be undertaken, a brief comparison of English and French-language prefaces accompanying two of the most polemical titles selected from the nineteenth century necessarily reflects conflictual re-readings of French-Canadian nationalism of that era. According to Gilles Dorion, Jules Paul Tardivel’s Pour la patrie (1895), republished in 1989, is a "document précieux sur les idées ultramontaines du 19e siècle" as well as the work of a "bon ouvrier qu'a su mettre ses talents au service de sa cause" ("Introduction") and in the introduction accompanying the 1975 edition, John Hare qualifies the novel as "la meilleure expression littéraire du messianisme québécois." In contrast, I.A. Silver, citing André Laurendeau — who called the novel unreadable (xv) — proceeds with a rigorous dissection of ultramontain thought in the French-Canadian press of the era in his introduction to Sheila Fischman's 1975 translation of the novel. Further, René Dionne justifies the didacticism of Antoine Gérin-Lajoie's Jean Rivard (1862) by calling the novel a denunciation of "une situation sociale pénible" that bears witness to the author's fulfilment of his "devoir patriotique" ("Introduction") and the translator, Vida Bruce, also evaluates the novel as an ideological document. She states, however, that its "literary value" can be "explained" by the fact that it reveals the author's unconscious ideology of conservative nationalism disguised in democratic ideals ("Introduction"). The point is that the object of evaluation and interpretation here is not the form of these novels, it is the ideology, the ideology of nationalism. Yet the question remains: How do English-Canadian prefacers re-read their own nationalism in the founding Canadian literary narratives? Second, how does their evaluation of the literary value of these texts compare with that of Québécois prefacers?

Roy Abrahamson, in his introduction to the 1981 Cherry Tree Press edition of
"This is not a great piece of literature. It is interesting to us principally because it's a Canadian first, its setting is largely Canadian, the life and customs described and the language used have an archaic charm. Add to this the interesting background of the author, and the rarity of the book ... and there is good reason to resuscitate this unique piece of Canadiana" ("Introduction"). And after a brief enumerative plot resumed, the prefacer makes his marketing pitch: "This is the stuff of paperback romances" ("Introduction").

In the editor's introduction to the Carleton University Press early Canadiana series editions, Douglas Lochhead reframes the same promotional argument in the more staid and authoritative tone of the critical edition:

The book is "manic," yet, despite its melodramatic plot, its thin characterization, its many and often pedestrian coincidences, it is surprisingly readable and "soothing." This first work of fiction written by a native-born Canadian and published in what is now Canada is also an important cultural artifact. Its particular significance is its revealing exploration of early Canadian manners, morals, and myths that reflect the way of life of a distinctive Canadian society. ("Editor's Preface")

In contrast, André Senécal's lengthy introduction to the 1984 Hurtubise HMH edition of L'influence d'un livre by Philippe Aubert de Gaspé (fils), which reproduces the original text published by William Cowan et fils in 1837, does not explicitly apologize for the novel's lack of realism or "vraisemblance" nor does it appeal to a large modern reading public ("Introduction"). The intended readership is immediately identified as Québec's scholarly and literary critics, particularly "les tenants d'une esthétique réaliste," beginning with Séraphin Marion's 1944 evaluation of the incoherence of the novel's plot ("Introduction"). The prefacer's major preoccupation lies with a reevaluation of the novel's narrative structure followed by a summary of Abbé Casgrain's revisions in order to redefine it as a "roman d'aventures" along with the literary production of the pre-ultramontain period and concludes with an assessment of self-censure in the latter half of the nineteenth century in Québec. And in the case of St. Ursula's Convent, both of its introductory texts mention the novel's content and the Lochhead introduction to the Carleton University Press editions also reclassifies the novel in terms of its "structure" and "narrative voice" as children's fiction, providing further justification for a new edition. Yet, there is a significant difference between the English and French prefacers' readings of two "founding" novels: both reproduce and comment on past critical evaluations of the novels negating their value as examples of realism. However, the greater part of Senécal's "Introduction" to L'influence d'un livre comprises a careful

4 Both the author and her novel "are true issue of Canada's two founding races" ("Introduction").
analysis of narrative time, voice, and the Abbé Casgrain's emendations while barely two pages of the Carleton University Press edition of *St. Ursula's Convent* are devoted to an actual reading of the text.

A comprehensive comparative reading of English-Canadian and Québécois-Canadian prefatorial discourse must take into account distinctions between critical editions and "popular" reprintings. Georges Boucher de Boucherville's *Une de perdue, deux de trouvées* also appeared in the Hurtubise HMH "Cahiers du Québec, Textes et Documents" series with an introduction by Réginald Hamel. The novel is primarily interpreted in terms of the author's life and political career as well as the "souvenirs historiques et d'allusions à la vie sociale et politique des Québécois autour des années 1830-1840" (Hamel 11). Although the prefacer classifies the novel as a "roman d'aventures," he concludes that "toute l'écriture du roman ait été déviée par des ambitions plus idéologiques qu'esthétiques" (25), inviting the modern reader to a "lecture démystificatrice" (26). This is a far cry from Louis Caron's prefatorial appeal to the modern reader in his preface to the 1987 Stanké pocket edition of *Une de perdue, deux de trouvées*: "Si l'auteur de *Une de perdue, deux de trouvées* vivait de nos jours, il écrirait les scénarios des films de Steven Spielberg!" ("Introduction"). Prefacer Yvon Boucher's "fonctions et séquences" in Pierre-Joseph-Olivier Chauveau's *Charles Guérin. Roman de moeurs canadiennes*, in other words, his structuralist reading of the historical novel republished in 1973, is a radical departure from and attack on the tradition of biographical criticism: "rien ne sert d'expliquer une oeuvre par les conditions socio-culturelles qui l'ont entourée ... L'analyse des formes, n'en déplaise à plusieurs, ne saurait se laisser nationaliser" ("Fonctions et séquences"). Thus, the prefacer's text is clearly not addressed to the larger public nor is this characteristic of the Québécois corpus of prefaces. In comparison, nothing comparable exists in the English-Canadian prefatorial corpus, not even in university critical editions.5

Obviously the depth of the rereading varies according to the editorial types of prefaces in both literary systems. The ideological content of the nineteenth-century novel is valued as a document and over time, genre reclassification is a major preoccupation. Nothing less than an exhaustive analysis is required, however, to chart the evolution of shifts in interpretative frameworks in both systems and to clearly establish the importance of university critical editions and thereby evaluate the question of readership. It seems clear, however, that re-interpretation through critical dialogue gains more importance in the prefaces of recent years, particularly in the Québécois documents where scholars reassess the various types of novel in an attempt to come to terms with the dominant

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5 This is more than likely owing to the fact that Propp's "functions" and Barthes and Lévi-Strauss were simply not on the curriculum of Canadian university English departments in the 1960s or early 1970s.
ultramontain discourse: the roman d'aventures and the historical novel are often recast as a subversion of an ultra-conservative, moralist aesthetic. At the same time, other readings of the roman paysan — such as André Vanasse's 1972 introduction to Patrice Lacombe's La Terre paternelle, republished in 1993 in the affordable BQ series — focus, if apologetically, on a comparison with the historical novels in order to describe typicalities of the genre. According to Vanasse, although the author of La Terre paternelle is "le plus négligé de la première génération de nos romanciers" (21), the novel ought to be valued as an ideological document contributing to "l'éveil d'une conscience nationale" (11) and recognized as the founding text in a genre that would dominate Quebec letters until the Second World War.

It also remains to be established to what extent and when prefacers themselves are explicit about their evaluative criteria. In his introduction to the 1970 NCL reprint of Francis Grey’s The Curé of St. Philippe, R.M. Schieder begins by offering a candid appraisal of the selection criteria used to include Canadian fiction published between 1880 and 1929 in the first edition of The Literary History of Canada: "every now and then [we would come across] a book by a non-professional writer who wrote because he or she had something he wanted or needed to say" ("Introduction"). Of course, continuity in the British tradition was also a decisive factor and Schieder states that Grey’s novel, although "not original in form or techniques ... is shaped by his knowledge of the conventions established by predecessors such as Fielding, Jane Austen, Thackeray and ... the influence of George Eliot and Anthony Trollope. ... As a result, it is in the tradition of the most finished Victorian novels" (ix). Most important, however, is that "Grey presents ... situations and problems that were particular to the region and important for the whole country" (x). Schieder’s introduction resonates with the texts accompanying the translations of Gabrielle Roy, focussing on narrative attitudes to character and George Eliot’s moral aesthetic, that is, ideas "made thoroughly incarnate" in characters. However, Schieder is unusually explicit about his own literary training: "Some readers, like critics of the twenties and thirties and forties, influenced by followers of James, will find too much intrusion. But perhaps we have grown more tolerant lately, less intent on exclusiveness in point of view" (xv). In the final analysis, this novel, which is a dramatization of the 1896 federal election campaign as fought in a small Quebec parish, told from a sympathetic English "point of view," is seen "not as a political or religious novel, but as one whose centre is ethical, whose chief events are not elections or the building of a new church, but decisions and attitudes and the actions that result from them" (xvii).

As Northrop Frye concluded his introduction to the 1960 NCL reprint of Thomas McCulloch's The Stepsure Letters,

There are two main values to be derived from the study of our cultural traditions. One is that what writers write and readers respond to instinctively, by virtue of their context in
space and time, they do with greater skill and pleasure, respectively, if they know more about that context. The other is that such study helps to distinguish for us what is past from what is permanent. ... The society McCulloch depicts is gone.... But if it is not here now, it was there then, and our own society is continuous with it. (ix)

In conclusion, I would like to risk an analogy here: The British legacy of an ethical aesthetic and Anglo-American literary modernism continue to shape the critical dimension of English-Canadian prefatorial discourse well into the late twentieth century, at least until pragmatic discursive approaches, reception theory, and feminist literary studies make their appearance in such documents as John Thurstons's 1991 introduction to the University of Ottawa Press collection of Susanna Moodie's short narratives. The strong tradition of sociological literary theory and criticism, constituting a bridge between traditional biographical criticism and the influx of European structuralist and semiotic theory distinguishes the more scholarly Québécois prefaces from their English-Canadian counterparts. What is permanent and common to both English- and French-language prefatorial documents is the ongoing rereading and reclassifying of literary origins against the background of the nineteenth-century European and American canon and, as Barbara Godard said of English-Canadian structuralism, a refusal "to focus exclusively on the text" (35).

Although a thorough comparative analysis is needed to test this observation, the republishing and translation of Laure Conan’s Angéline de Montbrun illustrates both the similarities and the distinctions between Québécois- and English-Canadian rereadings of the origins of nineteenth-century realism in Canada. While Bruno Lafleur positively assesses the realism or the "naturel" of Conan's characters in his introduction to the 1950 edition, Angéline de Montbrun is to be valued as a "touching" transposition of personal experience; reclassified as confessional writing, the novel merits a reprinting ("Préface"). In 1974, Roger LeMoine applies a psychological framework — la psychocritique — to all of Conan's oeuvre, which he feels can be and should be explained and interpreted in terms of the author's unhappy life as a spurned spinster. In both prefaces, however, Abbé Casgrain's original judgment is repeated: Angéline de Montbrun is "une peinture de la vie réelle" qui "révèle la souffrance de l'auteur" ("Étude"). It is not until the 1990 BQ edition that Louise Milot and Fernand Roy, both semioticians, combining a "petite histoire de la critique" with a feminist reading of the novel's narrative structure and interdiscursiveness, focus on the text not simply as Québec's first psychological novel but as the first example of women's writing in Québec, even though it is marked with the traces of "l'identification ... à l'idéal social du père, l'histoire et homme d'écriture François-Xavier Garneau" (12). And in his introduction to the English translation published in 1974, Yves Brunelle offers a reading of the novel's literary modernism, a reading that also proceeds from a summary of past critical evaluations and his own interpretation of the ambiguous relationships between the characters. Further,
according to Brunelle, although Angéline is Canada's "first character in the round," clearly referring to E.M. Forster and Anglo-American modernism, the faulty omniscient narrative angle of vision sets this novel apart from the dominant patriotic and historical fiction of Québec.

In my analysis, there appears to be a common thread in all the prefatorial texts. In particular, there is a shift away from arguments focussing on an equation between the novel's story and characterization and the author's life in the texts. In prefacers Lafleur's and LeMoine's texts there is a move toward the demolition of preceding critical interpretations linked to the reinterpretation of the novel's narrative structure in the texts. Abbé Casgrain's original assessment that Angéline de Montbrun is a flawed novel because it is too feminine and European is thus reversed. Most important, the object of judgement in the prefaces accompanying the reprints and the translation is as much the prior critical discourse as it is the text.

Finally, perhaps recognizing what is "past" involves poking through the blind spots to retrieve that part of the past that is still with us, in this case shifting forms of an ethical literary aesthetic. Claus Träger wrote that the preface is "a genre in which the science of literature ("Literaturwissenschaft") reaches its unity of literary history, theory, and criticism" (185; qtd. in translation by Tóth 16). In my brief study here, I have merely suggested that the nineteenth-century canon of French and English Canada, such as it is reappropriated in twentieth-century prefatorial discourse, is a good place to begin. Or, if not to begin — since the study of canon formation has been well underway for some time now in both Québécois-Canadian and English-Canadian scholarship — then at least it provides a clearly delimited discursive point of departure to sort out our shifting ideologies of cultural and literary identity.

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Children’s Literature and the Changing Status of Child Readers

1. Utilitarian Values and/or Symbolic Power

Children’s literature is undergoing a world-wide transformation: in nearly all countries a variety of factors related to humanism, politics, and economics have led to a search for new readers. The protection of the individual was highlighted in the 1991 convention on the Rights of the Child — a convention which marked a new political will shared by more than one hundred nations. Article 17 stresses the importance of information in education, which is itself a central factor in the construction of the person. The fight against illiteracy is therefore proclaimed as a priority and article 17 expresses the hope that the states which sign the Convention will encourage the publishing and distribution of books for children. Although the publishing and distribution of books is given priority, this is not opposed to the information provided by the new media, but does carry a risk of seeing children’s literature reduced to a purely educational function, an ambiguity which lies at the heart of all the discussions about this sector of publishing. Literature is seen as intended entirely for the purpose of acquiring new knowledge, and some young people in industrialised countries, while not going as far as to totally reject oral literature and stories, definitely prefer the game context of video games and the interactive approach of CD-ROM. In the unfolding of these stories they find an illusion of the "pleasure of the text." Their experience further highlights the contradiction which splits the market between the utilitarian value and the prestige value of cultural goods. This division could be narrowed, not by a blanket condemnation of stories provided on electronic media, as was initially the attitude to television, but by promoting the "literary" qualities of the "hypertext" information network (see Slothower).

It can be seen that our definition of children’s literature is a wide one which includes one feature which has always characterised culture for young readers: the uncontrolled appropriation of stories or objects. This is now done via the new media, which were not originally intended for them. Conversely, texts intended for children can help to enhance a symbolic capital, masking the true balance of power between the ranks of the literary institution and contributing to the creation of all powerful myths. Late nineteenth-century Swedish children’s literature, for instance, was able to provide an ikon of "Swedishness" which is
still accepted in the national consensus: the "childhood home" shown in the form of the little house painted red — using a pigment which is a by-product of the Falun copper mine — in the works of Elsa Beskow and Carl Larsson or in the books produced by the Sörgarden school, corresponded to "the desire of the swelling ranks of the bourgeoisie to return to the country in their leisure time" (Albrechtsson 44). This isolationist model illustrated a symbolic withdrawal, the ambiguities of which are also symbolically displayed in the workings of the Nobel Prize. This prestigious institution provides both international justification of the country and a confirmation of the tendencies which it expresses. At the same time, it reflects "a certain incapacity on the part of a group within Swedish society — a group which addresses the whole of society — to create new forms through which to express itself, in this case through a description of the Other" (Albrechtsson 397). A similar analysis would show that in the minds of many Swiss citizens, Heidi by Johanna Spyri has taken on the same role as that of the works of Elsa Beskow for the Swedes: the potential young reader of these novels is here the implicit model of the ordinary adult, sharing "popular culture." This was also the case of the literature of Victor Astafiev, which gave a utopian view of nature as seen by young people in the Soviet Union.

Significantly, in the field of children's literature, the equivalent of the Nobel Prize is not the result of a single nation seizing a symbolic capital, but is awarded by the International Board on Books for Children, an association which set up the Andersen Prize in 1956 and which includes librarians from all countries (particularly from Europe and English language countries at the time and thus expressing the outlook of Western ethnocentrism). However, it should be noted that the second prize winner, who was awarded the prize in 1958 after the English writer Eleanor Fargeon, was a Swede: Astrid Lindgren. This writer reflected the appearance of new readers and created a special form of the exaltation of childhood and the questioning of parental authority, i.e., a attempt by the children's writer to use derision to reduce the gap which separates children's literature from adult literature. It can be seen that the relationship between the technological development of some countries, the utilitarian values of literature and the symbolic power of cultural actors and the structures of legitimisation have been combined to define a specific area undergoing change and in search of legitimacy. This area, which extends from oral literature — represented by the transcription of fairy tales — to electronic writing has now been redistributed through the phenomena of decolonisation and by consumerism which has placed the same books in the hands of children in all developed countries and has blurred distinctive features.

2. Culture, Consumerism, and Criticism

The definition given in the Convention on the Rights of the Child in fact raises another difficult question, because the first article of the Convention defines a
child as "any human being under eighteen years of age unless majority is reached earlier under the legislation applicable." It is very difficult to ignore the fact that in the opinion of societies and social categories, teenage readers have to a great extent already acquired affective and intellectual maturity before this age and view themselves as adult readers. The effects of supply and demand depend, therefore, on cultural and institutional codes which are closely interrelated, as we shall see, in a literary system which is marginalised in many countries by the status of the reader who is still not independent and results from a cultural construction (see Ariès). Similarly, the recent expansion, since 1980, of readers to include very young children between six or nine months of age, calls for a re-evaluation of the approach to pictures, which are considered to be authentic reading matter, and a rejection of any imperialism of text, the appearance of new objects which also consecrate a profitable sector within publishing.

We also know that the act of reading, despite being highly personal, takes place under specific conditions which are sometimes subject to sudden changes — migrations of populations, unemployment, new economic domination of one country over another — and by the absence or questioning of learning methods at school, particularly with regard to dealing with "literary" texts. We have to take into account the upheavals in contemporary publishing which affect the book market — restructuring of holdings in an attempt to cope with world-wide competition from major publishing groups, the disappearance of small and medium sized publishing houses, the appearance of new forms of marketing in superstores — where the books are measured by the "yard." Finally, we must face the fact that children are now increasingly viewed as "consumers" and as a vulnerable target of advertisers. Above all, we should not overlook an equally complex "crisis" in "ideologies," which calls into question the traditional transmission of knowledge. Two conflicting trends are therefore emerging. On the one hand, the increased importance of derivative products and the accelerated circulation of cultural goods may stimulate reading: it is obvious that nowadays the young Finn will approach writing and reading through the Moomin Troll Amusement Park at Turku based on the work of Tove Jansson and made known world-wide through Japanese television series. Similarly the young French child will meet Cinderella, accompanied by Babar, at the Disneyland park or in the Journal de Mickey.

On the other hand, however the increasing independence of young readers — educated by librarians and school teachers or even politically by newspapers and magazines as in France in Le Journal des Enfants, Je Bouquine, or Gullivore — their independence reflects the demands of an increasingly well-informed public who sometimes sit on prize-giving juries (the secondary schools' Prix Goncourt, the Young Readers' Prize awarded by the Ministry for Youth and Sport). The contradiction of the period in this sector lies in a heightening of critical discernment and in a general weakening of respect for the text encouraged by
what we could call the "mass" consumption of images.

This gap can be reduced to some extent by the work of a new breed of intellectual addressing children: the authors, story tellers, illustrators and mediators who lead creative "workshops" and discussion fora in schools and help to establish a more balanced relationships between readers and artists. These activities seem to reflect a "repetition" currently occurring in the world of publishing for children in countries which are technologically advanced and which still display the difference from adult culture pointed out by Philippe Ariès. In France, this "repetition" mirrors the transformation which occurred in mainstream literature during the "Naturalist Crisis" in the nineteenth century as analyzed by Christophe Charle in 1979 in his book *La Crise littéraire à l'époque du Naturalisme*. In France, we are also witnessing the recognition of a new status of children's books, corresponding to that conferred by the academies and prizes to authors organised within a literary field recently recognised as different (partially defined in the Children's Writers Charter of 1975) and some categories of young readers considered to be autonomous within the symbolic legitimisation system of adults.

Once again, however, we should recall that there is no single definition of childhood, and their status may vary from one country or one social group to another, nor is there any single theory about the entity of literature for children. Notably, following the work of Yuri Lotman, Zohar Shavit, has taken up the concept of a polysystem and proposed a reversal of attitude with regards to studies of children's literature which she wants to "free from the reductionalist frameworks of a pedagogical or sociological approach, from that of the sciences of education and of conventional literary research" in order to approach it in the perspective of a "poetic" and "semiotic" approach to culture (1993, 17-18). In this type of approach, children's literature is considered to be part of a polysystem and runs the risk of seeing itself reduced here too to its utilitarian function and value: this danger was mentioned, for instance, by Francis Marcoin in his article "Sans fin la lecture" which highlights the utopian nature of theories which consider the text as a closed object on the model of the "hard" sciences. Criticism in this case has stressed the importance of "poaching," a type of flexible reading recommended by Michel de Certeau, which is doubtless the favourite method of young readers because it is guided by the pleasure principle. Such an acceptance should put researchers on their guard against any new academic approach to receiving works since it will make it impossible to ensure a reliable encounter between the writer and his/her readers (Marcoin 396).

These considerations lead us first to return to a Comparative Literature perspective and to evaluate the factors which, in various countries, have contributed to the building up of readerships related to specific editorial targets. This approach leads us to envisage mapping the status of childhood based on questions of periodisation, to the extent that cultural variety introduces significant
differences, even into neighbouring nations, corresponding to age-old differences in the models of development.

3. Mapping or Periodisation of the Status of the Child Reader

We will take as our starting point the formulation of the problem by Edmir Perrotti in a paper presented at the Xth Congress of the International Research Society for Children's Literature under the title "Les Échos de la querelle: Littérature d'enfance, critique, éthique et esthétique" on children's literature in Brazil. In the paper, the author pointed out the historical parallels between the development of children's books in his country and the quarrel between the "traditionals" and the "moderns" in seventeenth-century France, which was typified by a switch from oral culture to written texts for children, and particularly those of the bourgeoisie.

Under the term "criticism" as practised in his own country, Perrotti denounces the prosaic activities which in reality are concerned with the development of reading skills. Here we should consider an attitude related to concrete and immediate educational concerns rather than an act of systematic reflection within a project of understanding and appreciating the text. Perrotti recalls that the first literary creations for children in Brazil date from the beginning of this century: "until then," he stresses, "there were only a small number of books translated and imported from Portugal for an equally limited number of readers" (57). This importation of books was accompanied by that of the ideas which dominated creative writing and criticism of children's literature in Europe. In this sense, the moral perspective, writes Perrotti, was the first evaluation criterion adopted. In 1904, the world-famous "Parnassian" poet Olavo Bilac wrote in his preface to his Poesias Infantis that he wanted his volume to be recognised "not as the work of an artist, but for the goodwill with which a Brazilian has wished to contribute to the moral education of the children of his country" (qtd. in Perotti 57). This attempt to produce a more moralistic readership held sway until the 1920-39 period, and was related to the traditional model of agrarian culture and exportation, the basis of the socio-economic structure, thus reinforcing, as Perrotti points out, "the principles of the existing social pact and making the passivity of children the implicit principle of education" (59). However, the perspective of industrialisation in the 1930s in Brazil called for new educational criteria which found expression in the principles of "the active school," with a vision of children considered as a dynamic force in the learning process. In this perspective, the opinions of Lourenço Filho in 1943, prefigured by those of Lobato as early as 1921, synthesised the first signs of an approach which was to be based primarily on the idea of the aesthetic autonomy of the reader. However, as in seventeenth-century France, the instrumental perception of children's literature was maintained in
Brazil where, according to Perroti, the current aesthetic claims were viewed as the rhetorical instrument of a defence of modernisation.

It should be noted that a fairly close parallel to this model of development is found in the outlook of Osazee Fayose in her study of children's literature in Nigeria, which has been dominated by the English language. The differences in culture in this case soon led to the appearance of novels written in Nigerian languages such as Yoruba from 1937, when the novel *Ogboju Ode ninu...*, was published by Fagunwa. This book corresponded to national aspirations and was used as school literature until around 1965. It was only in the early 1960s, following independence in 1960, that books were routinely written in the vernacular language. They were devoted to the collection of academic information, and were accompanied by some texts intended for amusement, consisting mainly of tales, ballads, and poems borrowed from the oral tradition which was considered to be the only authentic form of culture. Notably, texts by Mbari published in Ibadan in 1961 under the auspices of the Congress for Cultural Freedom. Oxford University Press — an important link in this transmission before the African University Press, Lagos, set up an African Library Series in 1964 in collaboration with Andre Deutsch of London — soon face competition from Thomas Nelson and Heinemann. The first national Nigerian publications date from 1964 when the Onibonoje Press was set up, and the creation of several other publishing houses after 1972, the International Year of the Book. The works published subsequently were dominated by discussions about decolonisation between 1966 and 1978 and by discussions of current affairs since 1980 such as problems of the environment, protection of children, of the family, and of marriage. Political and editorial attempts at persuasion therefore combine with the emergence of new pedagogical relationships to give an image of an autonomous reader, as in Quebec in Canada, prior to what has been called the "Golden Age" of children's literature between 1955 and 1965. There were many pleas for a "national" literature, highlighting the essential role of children's literature in forming national consciousness and the realization of what Paul Bouin called "a true understanding, on the basis of equality, between two races" (qtd. in Beckett 124).

Developments in Taiwan are also very interesting in this context. The utilitarian perspective dominates the market, but the need to export has lead to a radical change in publishing habits, as shown by Shan Li-Jiung in her research study *L'Édition des albums pour enfants à Taiwan (The Publication of Children's Picture-books in Taiwan)* (1993-94). Since 1988, surveys have been carried out for the Hsin-Yi Foundation by the Cultural Commission of the State Executive Council to investigate children's books. One survey carried out in 1990, the Hsin-Yi Survey of the situation of the consumption of books for very young children, reveals the primary requirements in the eyes of parents, who think that the purpose of children's books is primarily to increase knowledge,
give a taste for reading, provide healthy activities, teach the child to read, and enriches language. The idea of enjoyment of reading or even the concept of literature were not even mentioned. If we look at a few of these books we can see that the publishing landscape is dominated by sales techniques involving persuasion or bulk buying and by the belated increase of book stres which corresponds closely to this pragmatic "horizon of expectation."

However, in 1990 the Grimm Press (Eastern Publishing Co.) of Taipei was set up. This new publishing house set itself the initial goal of reaching an international market and opened its doors to a variety of styles in the text (Mérimée, Saki, Giono, Wilde, etc.), as in the illustration (Elzbieta Gaudasinska, Tomek Bogacki, Isabelle Forestier, etc.) and a happy encounter between tradition — as represented for instance by Chinese Fables of Lin Hai-yin and illustrated by Chang Shi-ming — and modernism. The stories of the company's editor-in-chief, Hao Kuang-tsai, illustrated by various artists, also reveal the dilemma of the change and the choices which arise in a culture governed by an international perspective codified by the latest advances in contemporary art and referring to recent concepts of the reader and to aesthetic positions defined by the outlook of ancient cultures. The combination of these traits in works unified by new projects reveals all the difference between an artificial adaptation of a borrowed aestheticism and the fresh outlook of national art. This dilemma is particularly obvious in the area of illustration, but also surfaces in the texts. The story The Candy House (1993) by Hao Kuang-tsai shows that the imagination and the pleasure principle of the child have come to the foreground in the editorial policy of Grimm Press through a defence of dreams and a representation of the pleasure of telling stories or reading. An interview given by the manager of this company to Shan Li-Jiu shows that this is a highly concerted policy based on a full understanding not only of market mechanisms and commercial exchanges at the Book Fairs held in Bologna or Frankfurt, but also on an excellent awareness of a world-wide children's literature and to what extent it would be acceptable to the Chinese public (see Shan Li-Jiu 36-38). A policy of defending and promoting a national culture through the conquest of the international market has thus been defined.

Similar phenomena have occurred in Spain, where the "mental revolution," which was long held back by Franco and by an under-developed economy, occurred after 1970 to 1980. In the words of Sylvie Salins-Pigeard, Spain was a "time bomb" which only then integrated national themes through the medium of translations, such as Clara, la niña que tenía una sombra de chico, the translation of a provocative work written in 1976 by Christian Brueel expressing androgynous ambiguity and that appeared four years after its French publication by Lumen de Barcelone (Salins-Pigeard 56). Similarly, an interest in the linguistic aspects in literature developed through the writings of the Catalan Miguel Obiols, in the tradition of the writing of Pef or of Gianni Rodari.
In a few countries, in addition to the phenomena which we have discussed above, there has also been the recent appearance of inter-active scenarios on CD-ROM. The United States and Japan are the obvious leaders in this field, with a whole range of products including Terminator, Ninja Turtles, etc. However, the new medium has been switched to the service of "literature" in some cases: the characters of The Surprise Town by Richard Scarry, the characters of Beatrix Potter, Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland, Cinderella, and even Aesop's characters in the Tortoise and the Hare have been animated to induce new types of reading and new forms of fiction. The young reader may be passive and contemplative or more obviously contribute to shaping and constructing the scenarios, and take to the pen, or rather the "mouse," to improvise free sequences which involve his or her personal imagination (Bobin 114-16). In France, most of these products have been imported and some of the stories marketed, such as La Poursuite infernale, stories very similar to the "books with yourself as the hero." However, we have reached the point of a pedagogical "salvage" of the pleasure of play aroused by these stories, as reflected in some articles collected by Lise Vierra and Sylvette Dagot in their book Culture de l'écrit, culture des écrans (1994).

These developments, their differences and their similarities, imply a relativistic approach to the universalist claims expressed in the various attempts to legitimise the editorial stance, but we will not adopt the standpoint of Perrotti who considers children's literature to be an inevitably "impure" form of art (60), i.e., an art with limited capacity for expression owing to constraints arising from the status of its readership. We know that every art has its own constraints. This is why the concept of the avant-garde and of a multifield may help us to escape from what seems to be a theoretical impasse by relativising definitions of "literariness."

4. Avant-garde: "Middle Art" and the "Effects of a Manifesto"

Curiously enough, the most obvious and current manifestos do not emanate from authors or cultural actors who are guided by political or ideological motivation. On the contrary, some degree of reticence dominates the profession and they appear to succumb to the difficulty of making any categorical affirmation even when targeting a specific group of readership. It would seem that writers have some difficulty in propagating values other than those suggested by a minimal Humanism. In contrast, it is representatives of the publishing industry who are promoting the debate concerning the position of prestige of literary production in the hierarchy of symbolic goods. Although their declarations are more concerned with form and "packaging" than of content, they still refer to an implicit reader who is summoned to provide retrospective justification for the success of the publishing industry.
In this context, we can also employ the notion of "middle-brow art" (art moyen), which producers of literature who want to achieve an impact or a "manifesto effect" (Charle 20), could contrast their work with. A good example of this category of art appears in the catalogue produced by the Milan publishers for the presentation of the Zanzibar collection in France (see Poslaniec). The parameters used here are eclecticism as the overall context, combining playfulness, adventure, humour, and other qualities which are thought to embody the spirit of childhood with the intention of triggering the act of reading. Similarly, the avant-garde is now shifting its position with regard to these general considerations, modifying those which it adopted in the aftermath of 1968. We should recall that at that time the avant-garde imposed new definitions of childhood suggested by the adoption of Freudian and libertarian ideas and by Women's Liberation. Then, the change corresponded to the systematic intervention of the writers of the nouveau roman or the school of the absurd (Duras, Ionesco, etc.), implying an obvious distance from changes in adult culture so that Surrealism, for example, reached young readers only about fifty years after it had been at its peak. In 1968-1975, these manifestos were produced by small publishers with a marginal distribution network (Perrot 1978, 47). Things are very different now when the avant garde, as we pointed out above, is emerging mainly from mainstream publishing because the "Revolution" which its messages carry is that of mass production promoted by television and audio-visual channels and extending its hegemony to the field of global quality publishing. What is involved now is a combination of the aesthetics of the image and the scientific field of knowledge, all influencing and shaping cultural production which in turn shapes readership and audience in general. The documentary, for instance, occupies now the leading position in a society which values the acquisition of effective knowledge. However, this is happening — despite the expected — without neglecting literary forms such as poetry or fiction, which, in turn, are devalued only in a strictly instrumentalist view of culture (see the Gallimard study discussed in Perrot 1995). The guidelines laid down by Pierre Marchand, head of the youth sector of Gallimard — for instance, the search for good pictures and exceptional layout with the format facilitated by new plastic materials crowning an editorial "adventure" controlled by intuition based on pragmatism and improvisation — refer to the mythology of youth based on the characteristics described by Renato Poggioli in his analysis of the avant-garde concept: the dialectic of movement, voluntaristic activism, the use of antagonism as a historical motor, an antagonistic paroxysm, anticipatory experimentalism, the cult of power and the use of the capital of prestige as a decisive argument of legitimisation are its distinctive features (65).

Less demonstrative, but equally assertive declarations show how everyone finds themselves obliged to define and justify themselves in the current system of fashion and distinction, a system limited in France by a law of 1949
governing publications for children and completed by 1954. Steering a course between the Scylla of legitimising mass production and the Charibdis of contesting the social status quo, the Sourire qui mord publisher Christian Bruel seems to be succeeding as a driving force behind bold experimentation, and he has chosen as his logo the smiling face of a child reminiscent of Doctor Hoffmann's Struwwelpeter. The typical features of this editorial policy, which is recognised by the translations in anti-establishment publishers in other countries, Spain for example, are the quest for new narrative forms and the use of the format of the books as much as on the story content related to the emergence of new media: thus La Mémoire des scorpions, a photo roman seemed to be guided by a reflection not only on the reversal of the stereotyped use of photography and film images within the established popular genre, the photo roman but also on the practice of TV games, of role playing and zapping, a form of transient attention which characterises habitual TV viewers and which can be related to the appearance of certain texts. There are also other genres of fiction and narrative forms manifesting originality while at the same time are characterized by an intertextual relationship with either television or computer tools (see Perrot 1993).

5. The Game of Criticism: "Surprises" and the Personalisation of Literature

It is obvious from the present study that the critic of children's books presents himself/herself as the delegate of the child reader in recognising or delegating the qualities of the avant garde. His/her judgement in this field implies not only a knowledge and appreciation of specific literary objects, but also a participation in the literary system which consists of a sharing of opinions and engagement at once. The critic of children's books, like the writer or illustrator in this sector, is not only "the childist" as suggested by Peter Hunt, but it also suggests a division between the outlook of the child and that of the adult. More, it suggests a person of excess and super-modernity, who has the illusion of guiding the course of history as it unfolds. Is an option for the avant-garde, a very "French" thing as it is called by John Weightman in his book, The Concept of the Avant-Garde, or is it rather a vigilant search for unique signs which are pointers in the direction of a future movement? One would have to be very bold to attempt to decide: the child reader is a mysterious being, often incapable of accounting for his/her choices or explaining the reasons for his/her enthusiasm and his/her rejections of interviewers. The child reader suggests at best an elusive Erwartungshorizont to the delight of creators who could be tempted to think that through the use of statistics they have a tool to reach their target using reliable processes: "creation involves risks," Hao Kuang-Tsai told Miss Shan Li-Jiun. The publisher of Grimm Press, transferring his observations from the aesthetic field to the financial field added: "No one can know whether a book will sell well. It
is rather like a casino; it is you who decide whether to play or not. However, often the winner may not be the one who has best calculated his strike" (Shan Li-Jiun 38).

Editorial and critical preoccupations therefore coincide: the success of art intended for children is defined in the very contradiction of texts which are able to find a public without making concessions to the tightly defined status of their implicit reader, and which are able to move them through "surprises" whilst still maintaining the unity and tone of individual writing. Genuine writing indeed always involves "surprises," as it is the expression of the ludic in life (see Perrot 1987). These criteria are, in brief, those of all true literature while at the same time it is the task of scholars to observe and to describe.

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1. Theoretical Postulates

In my previous work on literary canon formation I suggested the notion of catacaustics\(^1\) as one of the stronger factors in cumulative canon formation (1994a).\(^2\) Briefly, the notion involves a theoretically less problematized aspect of The Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature and Culture with regards to the questions and problematics of diachrony (see Schmidt; Rusch). Canon formation and within that the element of catacaustics are both obvious and important areas of the literary system with particular reference to the function of literature. What I would like to explore here is the question of specific systemic contact(s) between the four categories of the approach from a synchronic and diachronic point of view, namely between the text/producer, the processing of the text, its reception, and its post-production processing. In other words, catacaustics is defined as a specific type of "reflection" of the same specific literary activity (literarische Handlung in Schmidt’s terminology) from one systemic category to another in the synchronic situation and chronological continuity of the same or similar literary factor in the system in the diachronic situation.

Methodologically, my notion is similar to the tenet of the Konstanz School of literary reception, namely that literary history may be studied by focus on questions in synchrony but in diachronic sequence (see Rusch 14).

Similarly, Yves Chevrel calls attention to the importance of the study of synchrony and diachrony in the research of a "cultural system" as observable in the succession of literary systems (19-20) and he suggests, for example, that for a literary history "it would be a good idea to create a volume that would cover European literatures over a short span of time, a year for instance..." (20). The

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\(^1\) The notion and term of catacaustics, in a dictionary definition, reads: "1. noting a caustic surface or curve formed by the reflection of light"; 2. caustic surface = "Optics. the surface to which all rays emanating from a single point and reflected by a curved surface, as a concave mirror, are tangent" (Random House, 231 and 235).

\(^2\) For a similar approach, although not taxonomically defined and not including the notion of catacaustics as in my own theory of cumulative canon formation, see Segers (1994).
notion of *catacaustics*, however, is more specific, emanating from systemic and empirical postulates. Here, the suggestion is that a specific question about literature, may that be a textual one or one about the experience of literature (see Schram 239), or canon formation as the present objective, may be explored by studying certain points of reference in their reflections within and between categories of the literary system as prescribed by the framework. It may also be of importance that the notion of *catacaustics* — as is the systemic and empirical approach as a whole — may be applied successfully in a comparative context (see Tökösy 1994b).

Following my theoretical framework of *catacaustics*, in this article I will discuss synchronic and diachronic aspects of the function of literature with particular reference to the importance of literary magazine and journal publication in Hungary and in Canada. In this context, my discussion will involve the systemic factor of readership and cultural participation as these relate to canon formation.

As I demonstrated in a previous application of the notion of *catacaustics* (1994a) — when applied to Canadian literature — this resulted in some interesting findings with regards to canon formation, readership, and dichronicity. For example, the "fact and fiction" configuration — that is, a novel is proclaimed as a text composed from "facts" and fiction — in nineteenth-century English-Canadian novel literature and its "reflection" in contemporary aspects of readership as I demonstrated in my analysis of a readership survey (see Tökösy and Kreisel) — thus a synchronic linear and sequential diachronic interrelationship — includes components from the areas of the producer (the prefacer/author), the text (product) and reception (the readership). The interpretation of synchronic and diachronic processes of the "fact and fiction" configuration in nineteenth-century Canadian literature and in twentieth-century Canadian readership in three of the four systemic categories resulted in a number of findings such as a certain consistency of authorial strategies reflected in reader response (see Tökösy and Kreisel). These diachronic and synchronic aspects — synchronic in the nineteenth century and again synchronic in contemporary culture but thus representing a diachronic reflection process — suggests the applicability of *catacaustics* (see Tökösy 1993 and 1994a) and explains its diachronic aspect.

2. Application: *Catacaustics* in the Canadian and the Hungarian Literary Systems

It is commonplace that the *function* of literature in some European countries

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3 For an empirical study and analysis of the reading of Ethnic Minority Writing in Canada in the context of cultural participation, see Tökösy 1997.
constitutes a higher-level status than in North America, including Canada. This is the case in East Central European countries such as Hungary. The status and function of literature is not only different in Canada and Hungary, literature also "happens" and functions under different circumstances of government involvement, politics, ideology, and economics. In other words, canon formation occurs in a process of different parameters in the two countries although some basic similarities are relevant.

Mihály Szegedy-Maszák suggests that in general but in Hungary in particular, (diachronic) consistency of the literary canon rests on the existence, status, and permanence of cultural institutions (128). This is evident in studies of Hungarian literary canon formation (see, for example, Szegedy-Maszák; Lengyel). Thus, the catacaustics of the literary system suggests a high-level of institutional permanence which in turn will explain the relatively prominent function of literature as an institution in Hungary. These institutions may include all those organizational and administrative units which are to be found in the literary system: the institution of authorship, writers' organizations, libraries, government support, aspects of literary criticism, etc. Particular attention is accorded by Szegedy-Maszák to factors of the function of literature in the fourth category of the systemic and empirical approach, that of post-production processing, such as criticism, including the journalistic and critical promotion of literary texts, for example. According to Szegedy-Maszák, in contemporary Hungarian literature there appears to be a serious omission in the canon-formation process with regards to certain authors whose writing did not penetrate the country's general knowledge level because critics neglected to write about them during the era of Soviet colonialism and Communist rule (129).

In this process of canon formation another important factor is the status of authors in the cultural system. From a diachronic point of view, the status of Hungarian authors has been on a high level since the era of Romanticism and nationalism. This status, although established implicitly and intrinsically in the Hungarian cultural system, has been and still is fed by a variety of systemic mechanisms. András Lengyel, in a study of Hungarian authorial status in the period between the two World Wars explains the significance and structure of factors of canonization by reference to the codification of literary texts and authors. This codification and its mechanisms are apparent by and through the publication of literary lexica and literary magazines but more importantly by the

4 I would like to stress that this is not to mean to be a value judgement on literature. Rather, it is meant that the function of literature is accorded a higher status in one country when compared with the other in this case.
level of readership of such publications. Lengyel gauges the significance of readership in the process of canon formation through sales figures and through the form of publication. For instance, an important literary encyclopedia was published by a literary magazine whose popularity was evident in its sales figures (see Lengyel 82; Vásárhelyi). The popularity and consequently the reading of the magazine obviously ensured the reading of the literary lexicon (Lengyel 82).

In present-day Hungary, the status and perhaps also the function of authors of literature is clearly in a transition owing to the political and economic changes in their income structure which in turn has been caused by the serious diminishing of government funding since the demise of Communist rule in 1989. The findings of a recent sociological analysis of the Hungarian elite suggest that from the three main groups — the political, the economic, and the cultural elites — it is the cultural elite that underwent little or no change at all since 1989 (see Szikora). However, this analysis, while probably accurate, is in need of some clarification. While it is true that the literary elite did not change after 1989, that is, the personalities of the previous decade or so remained in place, what has changed is the "importance," that is, status of the pre-1989 elite. They did not any more have the same structural, organizational, and intellectual input into the literary system (i.e., who gets published, who gets critical acclaim, and consequently who receives literary prizes and funding, etc.) (Sándor Mészáros, personal communication). For example, Péter Nádas, one of the most important contemporary novelists in Hungary, was unable to publish his book, Emlékratok könyve (Book of Memoires), from its completion in 1985, except in a severely edited version in 1986 and in a limited number of copies which were immediately bought up and thus the book quickly, in a matter of two months, disappeared from circulation (see Pándi; Mészáros, personal communication). Only in 1994 did the book appear in its full and unabridged version. This situation is paradigmatic for the literary landscape of the period. Obviously, this observation not only suggests that a "new" elite of writers did not materialize after the changes of the political landscape but that the same elite remained in place, although in different parameters, that is, status. This structural change, as minimal it appears in a larger context, did affect an important change in the process of canonization and it also means that the parameters of canonization must also have changed. I argue that among other factors of the literary system, a change in Hungarian canon formation can be gauged by the situation of literary

5 Readership — a valid and useful factor demonstrating the applicability of catacaustics — has been explored and analyzed in Hungarian scholarship. However, in Canadian scholarship it is a remarkably unexplored area (see Tőtősy 1996).

6 Sándor Mészáros, associate editor of the literary and critical journal Alfold. Mészáros is member of the board of directors of the Hungarian National Cultural Foundation (Nemzeti Kulturalis Alap).
journals and magazines.

While in the pre-1989 period canon formation was seriously assisted or resisted along party and ideological lines, after 1989 many of the partyline editors of literary magazines, journals, as well as publishing houses disappeared and the until then "exiled" editors and critics gained access to act in the literary system. Concurrently, many new journals appeared on the scene (e.g., 2000, Holmi, Nappali ház, Pompeji, etc.). Obviously, the entry of previously exiled editors and critics into the literary system affected in many ways Hungary's highly developed literary magazine and journal culture: at present, there are approximately 240 such magazines and journals in the country. In the last competition for government funding by the Hungarian National Cultural Foundation in March 1995, there were 234 applications. The board of directors recommended the funding of 85 journals, a reduction by 40% of previous levels of funding (Meszaros, personal communication). The large number of potential outlet for literary products naturally allows for a high level of checks and balances as well as the recognition of literary products and their producers. At the same time it must be noted that the readership of these journals — old or new — is progressively diminishing. For example, while the magazine 2000 published twelve thousand copies in 1989, today it publishes only four to five thousand copies.7 This observation may counteract the argument for the maintenance and state subvention of magazine and journal production but it does not negate the argument that magazines and journals are an important measure of canon formation — even if eventually only about one hundred or so journals and magazines remain from the presently published 240.

It appears, then, that in Hungary cumulative canon formation can be observed, among other factors, by the high level of literary magazine and journal publication in addition to the large number of literary readings including radio and television, literary prizes, etc., and the societal and social status of authors. Importantly, these factors are all relatively constant and long-term, that is, both synchronic and diachronic of the literary system. At the same time, the function of literature in Hungary is slowly but markedly approximating the situation well known in North America and in Canada. This is the fragmented status and function of literature in the context of cultural participation and the production of literature. The situation is characterized by the limitations and compartmentalization of literary and critical products and perhaps even of the readership of literature. In Canada, despite marked literary historical differences when compared with Hungary, the literary system manifests similar parameters. There are strong differences, however. For instance, probably owing to a looser and more porous and fragmented state of the literary system — that is, the system

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7 I would like to diverge for a moment here. It may be of some importance that in Hungary, as in most European countries, there seems to develop a parallel culture that is very active, productive, and innovative but that is known to a limited and not as of yet recognized group. This parallel culture is "technoculture," produced mainly via the electronic landscape and means. It may be well worth to study the catacaustics of the two cultures: technoculture and teoculture.
self-regulates itself in a less homogeneous manner than in Hungary — all of the above enumerated examples of canon formation indicators exist, albeit within a different systemic mechanism. For instance, the literary author's social status is more closely delineated. In other words, an author of literary works finds exposure and recognition in a closer-knit and markedly defined community, which are also dispersed in the country to a very high level. In pre-1989 Hungary we can speak of Soviet colonialism and its extension in Communist rule, and in Canada we can speak of the influence of American cultural capital — voluntarily accepted by Canadians although economic capital in the case of publishing houses and an implicit and explicit authorial orientation towards the large American market and readership also play an important role. While it is true that akin to Hungarian national consciousness — and the aspect of history, Hungary one thousand years old, Canada a few hundred, is immaterial here — in Canada literature increasingly gained support "for writing, research and publication ... in part as a response to the cultural nationalism surrounding Canada's centennial year [1967]" (New 213), the function of literature as literature itself always was and remained more apart from the public debate than in Hungary. In Canada, it is scholars and academics who successfully "appropriate" the field of Canadian literature and criticism and that only in the last two decades (see Leeker, passim). With regard to the production of cultural factors such as literary magazines and journals, despite government support, Canada has a markedly lower rate of literary magazines and journals (see, for example, Chiose; Richler) and as Robert Leeker explains, "the literary industry had withdrawn from the public. And, as Fraser recognizes, 'it is the industry alone that makes possible a relation with the public' [156]" (93).

With reference to the importance of cultural production and literature, Ioan Davies argues that state subvention for magazine publishing "suggests the importance of focusing on magazines/journals as the points where thinking about and making culture interact, and seeing them as signifying vectors of a nascent culture" (16). This argument shows that magazine publishing is indeed recognized as an important factor of cultural and literary production and cultural participation. Thus, both in Hungary and in Canada magazine publishing acts for the function of literature even if following different paths. However, while in Hungary the function of literature has been significantly supported by literary magazines — and still is despite the political and consequent government structural and economic changes after 1989 — in Canada literary journal and magazine publishing is both limited (in a historical perspective) and is seriously challenged (see Davies), so to a higher extent than this is happening in present-day Hungary.

Patriotism in Québec on the other hand, created many support structures for Québécois literature, including support for a range of factors of cultural production (New 217). Overall, rapid technological change since 1970s resulted in the emergence of the proliferation of publishing houses and journals in Canada and "government and academic involvement in literature ... emphasises how broadly political cultural affairs had become" (New 227) and in this sense, the
institutional surroundings for canon formation are present. However, while in Hungary the prerequisites and the potential indicators of the canon formation are in place and part of the literary action sets, in Canada this does not appear to be the case. As I discussed in my analysis of contemporary English-Canadian readership, Canadian media and the general Canadian perception of the function of Canadian literature, including canon formation with reference to readership are either of non-interest to altogether negative (see Tökösy and Kreisel; Tökösy 1994a, 1997). Yet, my analysis of the readership survey suggests that the reading of literary texts is very much part of the canon formation and that this is so with specific literary texts such as emerging as well as established Canadian writers (Tökösy 1994a). In other words, my readership data suggests that, based on the high level of general magazine reading combined with the high level of literary reading would result in a high level of the reading of literary magazines. Therefore, federal and provincial support of magazines and journals does make sense for two reasons: literary magazines and journals act as factors of the function of literature and they are, at the same time, a factor of canon formation. The latter point is particularly significant for my argument that canon formation occurs to an important measure because of readership in general. In a larger context than here discussed with reference to the catacaustics of the factors of canon formation and literary magazines and journals, Davies calls for specific attention to the "interdependence of publishing and cultural action" and she states that "a comprehensive account ... has yet to be produced" (17). In my opinion, this is true, more, it is an obvious task of scholars in both countries discussed.

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Works Cited

Introduction

My article is about the relationship between cultural anthropology or ethnic studies and literary and cultural studies. It is not my intention, however, to ponder over general considerations and to delve way back into the development of the two disciplines. Instead, I will discuss of what Empirische Kulturforschung (Applied Cultural Studies) may be able to offer because we do not know each other's discipline very well and there is a good basis for interdisciplinary cooperation between us. Furthermore, I would like to discuss possibilities of the application of Applied Cultural Studies when literature, art, or media can be studied in the context of social and individual situations with regard to contemporary Eastern and Western Europe. With reference to post-socialist transformations in the region, I will look at differences and similarities in cultural participation (using art), and particularly at the questions as to how these differences and similarities arise and how they are to be evaluated. In this context I will point to some widespread, yet theoretically incoherent and politically dangerous views.

2. The "Magic Word": Culture

As Ali Baba stood before the rock, he whispered a word and the mountain opened and helped him to unexpected riches. If he were to seek success in the 1990s, and if he were to be an overworked professor in a literary studies, then the word which would make Ali Baba happy, and the outwitted band of thieves, in other words the modern ministries of culture, poorer, would not be "sesame" but "culture." (Precht 29; my translation).

This is how Richard D. Precht began his recent article in Die Zeit entitled "Ein Plädoyer gegen die kulturelle Belanglosigkeit der Kulturwissenschaften." The author describes several distinct processes in the current development of literary studies in Germany, pinpointing as the most important characteristic of the new situation the fact that — in line with the American or French models — the arts, including the study of literature, are becoming cultural studies. Nevertheless, the processes in the development of the studies which Precht deals with in his text
do not simply illustrate a transformation of literary studies and arts into cultural studies since cultural studies may remain entangled in the problem of the canon debate. Such concepts, where culture is understood primarily as an intellectual phenomenon, are known not only from the history of the discipline but are also existent in diverse forms today. As I see it, however, a new way of thinking, a paradigmatic change, may be implemented when the study of arts as cultural studies become social studies.

Programs of social orientation in the humanities were drawn up at the beginning of the 1970s both for literature studies and, in Germany for instance, for German ethnic studies (Volkskunde). And that is, in my opinion, the decisive point where the two otherwise different and independent disciplines of cultural anthropology and literature studies do indeed meet. In the study of literature this view is the central one. The point is made, for example, in the recent volume, *Empirische Literaturwissenschaft in der Diskussion*: "Starting from a pragmatic theory of communicative interplay, the Empirical Theory of Literature conceives 'literature' not only as a linguistic-textual and psychological text, but rather as a social phenomenon," which means that "Texts are not literary on account of certain immanent properties and structures. Rather, under certain circumstances and under certain conditions texts are considered to be literary" (Barsch, Rusch and Viehoff 83; my translation).

In the early 1970s, a change in the direction of social empirical studies also took place within the discipline of ethnic studies in Germany. An important impulse came with Hermann Bausinger's 1961 book *Volkskultur in der technischen Welt* (1986). There were similar movements in other European countries and in North America. In Germany, the change was expressed outwardly in the demonstrative renaming of several institutes for Volkskunde, beginning in 1971: for example, at the University of Tübingen the previous department of Volkskunde was renamed to "Empirische Kulturwissenschaft" (Institute for Empirical Cultural Studies), in Marburg the new designation was "Europäische Ethnologie" (Institute for European Ethnology), and in Frankfurt the new name of the department became "Kulturanthropologie und Europäische Ethnologie" (Institute for Cultural Anthropology and European Ethnology. The new objectives and subject range of study and research were formulated, for example, in the curriculum of the discipline of "Empirische Kulturwissenschaft" (Applied Cultural Studies or Empirical Cultural Studies). For instance, at the University of Tübingen, in 1971, the objectives of study and research in the curriculum description followed the following perspective: "'Culture' is the 'other side' of society: social relationships and cultural values — both dependent on economic structures — are at the same time mutually dependent ... Empirical cultural study is thus predominantly experience-oriented, emphasising the cultural aspect of society, analyzing the present and its historical background and thus identifying prevailing phenomenon as being transient, and concentrating by virtue..."
of its problem-orientation above all on the culture of the masses, on the popular culture moulded to a large extent today by the culture industry, and in many cases also on differentiated sub-cultures — in other words a social study" (Jeggle, Kaschuba, et al. 358; my translation).

By the late 1970s and 80s, then, the basic demands which research set down for itself were:

— to study not only traditional, rural culture but also modern, urban, industrial culture (media for example);
— not to study isolated facts or objects, but always to examine the social context;
— to view events not statically but as elements of transformation, i.e. historically and procedurally;
— not to describe the objects per se but to study their social components and functions (functional/operational approach);
— to overcome the meaningless separation of "material culture" and "intellectual culture";
— to aim research at important problems from social practice. (see Bausinger et al.)

Decisive for the re-orientation of study and research was the attempt to formulate culture as ways of life, as a strategy of viable overcoming obstacles in life as in Ortega y Gasset's terms "rescuing with movements of one's arms" (see Tschernokoshewa 1993a). This was one way to overcome the ontological-romantic and normative-static idea of "a culture," to defeat the positivistic approach and to turn to a functional approach. This general change in thinking and approach came at a moment when people as concrete and active individuals differentiated by historical, social, age, gender, etc., properties were placed at the focus of cultural research.

In the following decades, various research projects were carried out which bore witness to a paradigmatic re-orientation. Since then, Applied or Empirical Cultural Studies have learned a great deal not about what culture is but about how cultural phenomena work, what their functions are or can be for people in general and for particular people under specific circumstances. From today's point of view certain inconsistencies and weaknesses of the program must also be noted, particularly with regard to the theoretical coherence and conclusions of the new discipline. I believe, however, that some inconsistencies were at the beginning deliberate in order to prevent discussions on the meta-theoretical level as well as to avoid internal conflicts over an all-embracing theory from occupying too much room, and thus to maintain interest in empirical details and publicly effective discourse. To avoid, so to speak, a mere search for models with which to underpin an already mature metatheory. Currently, however, it is becoming ever clearer that a comprehensive and integral theory is needed, not to replace the detailed and empirical research, but to focus it and to provide an operative basis of the same.

In the current discussions within the discipline some new ideas are emerging
Elka Tschemokoshewa

(see, for example, Bausinger 1992; Köstlin 1994; Kaschuba 1995a,b; Schiffauer; Kramer). Especially the constructivist approach is under way, although a conclusive and differentiated theory in the field of ethnicity or in the field of popular culture has not been arrived at yet. Nevertheless, the discussion has started and by the 1990s some significant views have been formulated. It is not my intention to evaluate the whole process here, but I will offer by way of example an early work of Clifford Geertz, whose ideas are meaningful in the anthropological and "kulturwissenschaftliche" discourse of today:

culture is seen not as complex of concrete behaviour patterns — customs, usages, traditions, habit clusters — as has, by and large, been the case up to now, but as a set of control mechanisms — plans, recipes, rules, instructions (what computer engineers call 'programs') — for the governing of behaviour. The second idea is that man is precisely the animal most desperately dependent upon such extragenetic, outside-the-skin control mechanisms, such cultural programs, for ordering his behaviour. (44)

A brief insight into the development of Applied Cultural Studies and the Empirical Study of Literature (see, for example, Schmidt; Tótósy 1994; Viehoff) reveals symmetries which, despite diversity in terminology at the level of abstraction or in the manner of argumentation, still provide a sufficient basis for interdisciplinary cooperation. I believe that such an approach between two different but related disciplines may turn out to be more fruitful in the study of concrete problems than long-standing disputes within each of the disciplines.

3. Cultural "Misunderstanding"

The problem of cultural "misunderstanding" is an area that recently raised much interest in the world of scholarship (see, for example, Yue and Le Pichon). To elucidate the problem, I will tell here a story. Anthropologists like to tell stories and this is our manner of argumentation, our attempt to say something, to construct something. I will start with a love story.

In Milan Kundera's novel, The Unbearable Lightness of Being, there is a part entitled "Words Misunderstood." With a short "Dictionary of Misunderstood Words," Kundera describes the romantic relationship between Sabina and Franz. One of these words is music. I think, that the problems described by the example of music are equally relevant for the participation in literature, and so I will try to reconstruct briefly the situation constructed by Kundera. Sabina and Franz are listening to music together. But the act of listening to music, the participation in music, however, is of completely different significance to each of them. Music functions differently in their lives:

For Franz music was the art that came closest to Dionysian beauty in the sense of intoxication. No one can get really drunk on a novel or a painting, but who can help
getting drunk on Beethoven's Ninth, Bartók's Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion, or the Beatles' White Album? Franz made no distinction between "classical" music and "pop." He found the distinction old-fashioned and hypocritical. He loved rock as much as Mozart. He considered music a liberating force: it liberated him from loneliness, introversion, the dust of the library; it opened the door of his body and allowed his soul to step out into the world to make friends." (92–93)

For Sabina, the same music, or — to be more precise — the listening to this music, is something quite different. For her music is "a vicious circle," it is "like a pack of hounds that had been sick on her ... the first symptom of total ugliness." Sabina does not like music. She discovered that

the transformation of music into noise was a planetary process by which mankind was entering the historical phase of total ugliness. The total ugliness to come had made itself felt first as omnipresent acoustical ugliness: cars, motorcycles, electric guitars, drills, loudspeakers, sirens. The omnipresence of visual ugliness would soon follow. (93–94)

For the time being I will leave aside the fact that this is a novel, i.e., an artistic fictional construction. However, a similar case could also be modeled theoretically and scientifically. For our discussion this is an interesting case because it illustrates very clearly that music can have totally different meanings, that music can do, and does function in different ways. And that these functions do not arise from the music itself, i.e., not from the music as text. The various functions of participation in music are also not to be derived simply from the reception situation because the two are listening to the music together. The differences are to be found in the different life-stories of the two lovers, whereby individual-psychological, group-cultural, and socio-structural factors have a part to play in these life-stories. Kundera's Franz is a university professor from Geneva (maybe in the humanities); he has a solid middle-class background, is now professionally established, good-looking, and happily married; and he does nothing else but speaking, writing, and giving lectures. Sabina is an artist, she is divorced, emigrated to Switzerland from Prague following the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968. She grew up in a small town in Bohemia, her father was strict, narrow-minded and puritanical, but her grandfather was once a mayor; she left her home town and came to Prague to study art, later fled from the dilemmas of art under the conditions of socialist society to Geneva, where she met Franz. She is not looking for bonds, but seeks unknown and spontaneous beauty; she also leaves Geneva to move on to Paris and later to New York.

I have simplified the story here, but even such a rough sketch of Franz and Sabina's lives shows clearly that the diversity in their approach to music is related to many other differences, and that these are founded both individually and supra-individually. Kundera's dictionary of misunderstood words names further differences in the understanding of such matters as Woman, Fidelity and Betrayal, Light and Darkness, Parades, the Beauty of New York, Sabina's
Country, Cemetery, the Old Church in Amsterdam, Strength, Living in Truth, etc. (79-129). All these phenomena are significant parameters of the structure of people’s lives in modernity. Between Franz and Sabina there are not only misunderstood words. There are significant similarities too. The "Bowler hat" is one of their uniting words and it is connected to the word "love," for example. And this is the systemic and poetical notion in Kundera’s view: "Perhaps if they had stayed together longer, Sabina and Franz would have begun to understand the words they used. Gradually, timorously, their vocabularies would have come together, like bashful lovers, and the music of one would have begun to intersect with the music of the other" (124).

My brief exposition of Kundera’s work serves as a suggestion that in his work we may locate the notion of a coherent poetical and logical system which we have been asking for in our discipline. In other words, I have given a description of this "non-scientific," yet "empirical" example because we are lacking theoretical studies about using music, literature, or other arts comparatively with regard to the contemporary situation of Eastern and Western Europe. But let us go back to theory. In recent years a variety of using art and media has been discussed in general cultural studies, but difficulties still arise when taking into account the various levels of conditions at hand. We know the difficulties in the discussion of the emergence of aesthetic and polyvalence conventions. An important step was taken when the question of context was incorporated into the theoretical framework (see, for example, McRobbie). But the question of context alone is insufficient for the construction of an integral model on the using of art. The concept of context, furthermore, cannot distance itself from the text model: context suggests, as it were, that there is a text ("the work per se") and that the context is the situation surrounding this work. The work (the text) thus remains the focus of the model. In my view, it is important to shift the accent even further and to construct the model from the context. In this case, when we leave the text model, the notion of "context" becomes the more relevant.

My proposal would mean to make the concrete and complex communication situation the subject of research. These concrete and complex communication situations, however, are at the same time life situations. It is still difficult to model these concrete and complex life situations in a cultural theory, however and the introduction of the category of everyday life can perhaps help us. Thus, everyday life is a point of intersection. The notion of "everyday live" implies the objective state or situation of a society at a certain time, but also how this state or situation is experienced and evaluated by the individual. Everyday life is the point of intersection between the subjective and the objective, between micro- and macro-levels. In the categories of system theory this would be the "life sphere" (Lebenswelt) as the point of intersection between the system world and individual conditions. By modelling and theorizing everyday life, its conditions can be illustrated how individual striving and standardization constraints collide,
how the "personal meaning" of life is constructed. Such studies should approach the acting subject, the actant as to his/her everyday life environment, the extent of his/her interaction radius, the constitution of his/her ranges of communication and perception, his/her processes of identification and consciousness. Such an approach and theoretical model could reveal how meaningful references are indeed formed even in this apparently impersonal and coincidental world. On the topic of everyday life we can construct the connection between the individual-psychological, the group-culture as well as systemic structures and cultural conventions.

It is in the above described theoretical point of departure where the real task of Applied or Empirical Cultural Studies may be located. I would like to emphasize this especially for the present, because the more complex the structures of a society and the greater the functional differentiation, the more necessary it becomes where we base the cultural situation of the individual. After all, the micro-level is not merely a reflection of the macro-level. On the contrary, it contains contingent qualities not to be found on the macro-level of society. On the other hand, certain processes on the macro-level extend only partially, if at all, into the micro-level. Furthermore, the current, contradictory processes of the differentiation or individualization of lifestyles and homogenization or globalization must be taken into account.

In the present discourses of cultural participation there are important views about the relation between cultural competence and social and economic background. Well-known is, for example, Pierre Bourdieu's contribution of the theory of "fine distinction." The next step, however, would be to connect the theory of vertical differences and similarities with the theory of horizontal differences and similarities. On this point I want to stress that it means not to replace one theory with the other, but to combine one coherent theory of the social, economic etc., with the comparatistic and systemic approach.

4. Post-Socialist Transformation Processes

Following my above introduced basic theoretical model, now I will connect my premises to a practical and political topic, that of the process of post-socialist changes in Europe. The situation of the region in all its complexity and urgency may provide an area of research and study where my model could be best put to use. In my opinion, comparative research on Eastern and Western Europe, or between post-socialist societies and the societies of Western democracy is urgently necessary. Comparison could overcome a significant deficit in research to date, namely that topics about Eastern and Western Europe are treated with different theoretical concepts and with different scientific methods in the humanities as well as the social sciences. From the point of view of system theory I have so far found hardly any discussion on the structure of socialist
societies or on the current processes of post-socialist transformation. This conceptional gap leaves room for certain views which are theoretically incoherent and politically dangerous. I would like to present three such views.

4.1 Systemism

I see one danger in drawing direct conclusions on the everyday realities in the life of the people in Eastern Europe from alleged or actual features of the political system. There are plenty of examples for such "systemism" to be found at various levels of social discourse and I have already attempted to tackle this topic elsewhere (Tschernokoschewa 1993b). Here I would just like to underline, that, also when studying culture and everyday life in Eastern Europe, we should not forget what we have learned — at the latest with system theory. Namely, that the relationship between systemic levels (politics, economics, etc.) and life-sphere levels should not be exhausted in mere determinism. Thus, here too, we cannot view for example the State or the media as the "great, all-embracing manipulator." In Eastern Europe, too, people were not passive reflections from the system structures. Here, too, there were compendia of everyday behaviour and everyday conditions, webs of human relationships, and searches for meaning and identity. Here, too, there were very different individual answers to the prevailing conditions and systemic structures, different live spheres, and live stories. Today, socialism is often described as a society of "niches." But these "niches" had to be created first. Cultural research could show how this creation functioned in under socialist rule, and how it functions today in the post-socialist situation. And the processes and function of the arts, literature, and media would be of particular significance in the explication of the situation.

4.2 Othering

The second danger is the tendency to evaluate Eastern Europe as "foreign" or "alien," as it is indeed more often than not the region is perceived in the social and scholarly discourse of the West. Please do not misunderstand me. I see the discussion on cultural differences as an important step in the development of cultural studies of any designation. But the doctrine was also encouraged to pick out, emphasize, and connote positively only the socio-cultural differences, while at the same time circumnavigating and denying the common ground, the transcultural constants and which were interpreted merely as negative consequences of the globalization process. This differentialistic relativism closes our eyes to many things. But it becomes especially dangerous when the formerly socialist and now post-socialist societies are conceived exclusively as "foreign" or "other." This incoherent viewpoint is generally accompanied by an inappropriate homogenization of the cultures and environments in these regions, by generalization and the concealing of essential differences within these cultures. This "othering" of the whole Eastern "bloc" also represents the occupation of certain positive values exclusively for Western civilization: "the West and the Rest," as
The Western media, for instance, provides daily examples of this "othering": the "East" is characterized predominantly through pictures of refugees, emigrants, and criminals. There is generally no reflection on normality and Western scholarly discourse rarely does anything in reply. The incorporation of particular cultural and practical competencies of the citizens in post-socialist countries could become essential to the search for new forms of global democracy — provided it is not conceived as a simple modification of Western democracy. In my opinion, systemic and empirical literary and cultural studies could make here a positive contribution.

4.3 Folklorism

The third danger, which is very closely linked with what I have already described, is the tendency to ethnicise or folklorise Eastern Europe. Ethnicising takes place when social conflicts are reduced to their ethnic component, when they are evaluated only as ethnic conflicts. This can be noted both in daily Western discussions as well as in the media and in politics, and frequently even in scholarly discussions. Reports on ex-Yugoslavia, on the Balkan cultures, or on the Sorbs in Germany provide regular examples. Such ethnicising goes hand in hand with a subordination of these regions, i.e., they are treated as generally underdeveloped. Real or alleged social inequalities are thus mystified as natural conditions. The assignment of the people in such regions is based in such concepts not on attainable but exclusively on ascribed, that is, upon transmission and genetics-directed criteria. Such concepts are thus theoretically incoherent, although politically they legitimize certain claims to power and superiority. A similar process is to be noted in the approach to the problems of immigrants and minorities. In my opinion, comparative research could here make the acts of cultural hegemony and the new colonialisation of life spheres more transparent.

5. Conclusion

The constructivist, systemic, and empirical approach in the study of culture offers a meaningful theoretical and applicable framework for the situation of East Europe. I would like to stress that literature in the context of ethnology as a theoretical model has both been instrumental in constructing national identity, ethnos, and borders, in the invitation of tradition, national myth, and national symbols. Literature and ethnology were integral elements in the process of the construction of nations and national states in Europe and even more prominently in Eastern Europe. As an example I only want to remind us of the function of German literature in the Romantic period, or of German Volkskunde at the end of the nineteenth and in the beginning of the twentieth century, or during the national-socialist period. We know something about some of these constructions and perhaps we now need to work together on their deconstruction. But more
than this, I believe, we need to work together to model theoretically the
differences and changes, the new communities, and the new "borders," the new
(inter)dependencies, and the new alliances and elbow rooms at present. Perhaps
a view toward a post-national era and a rethinking of Europe would be facilitated
with the approach I propose in my article.

The Bautzen Institute of Sorbian Studies

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1. Aims of the Study

One of the results of a television audience questionnaire — conducted at the University of Halle-Wittenberg in the Summer of 1996 — was that the German viewers’ responses to the question, "which television crime series do you consider 'typical'?," showed remarkable congruences with reference to German crime series such as Derrick and Tatort and American crime series such as Magnum PI or Miami Vice.1

The cultural studies and media and communication studies inspired move toward re-definitions of traditional concepts such as "text" and "literature," resulted — among others — in the transfer of many theoretical concepts from the field of literary studies to film and television studies. However, while the canon concept has been applied in film studies (see, for example, Netenjakob; Zimmermann), its application in television studies has been neglected.

Why should one study television crime series and the applicability of the canon concept?2 From a historiographical perspective, one could argue against the application of the canon concept to crime series because television history may still be too short for the emergence of a canon in comparison with such in literature or film. In my opinion, such a traditional and a strictly aesthetic perception of the canon concept is untenable. The dominant role of television in everyday life alone suggests that television is a powerful cultural factor, be that

1 Funding for this study was provided by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft for the project, "Das Kriminalsujet im ost-, west-und gesamtdeutschen Fernsehen: Die Programmgeschichte des deutschen Fernsehkrimis" (No. 50105229) to be conducted at the University of Halle-Wittenberg, 1 January 1994 to 12 December 1998. I would like to thank Katja Brombach (University of Halle-Wittenberg) for her cooperation in the design and implementation of the analysis as well as for her assistance in the interpretation of the results of the analysis presented in the present article. For critical comments on the research design I would also like to thank Ingrid Brück, Andrea Guder, Eberhard Keller, and Reinhold Viehoff (all at Halle-Wittenberg), and Andrea Menn (Fachhochschule Wilhelmshaven). The present article appeared previously in a different version in Wehn (1997).

2 As an analogue genre designation of the German "Krimiserie," "Krimireihe," or Fernsehkrimi," the term "crime series" is employed here as an umbrella term for "cop," "police," "detective," etc., shows.

The Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature and Culture as Theory and Application
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in the context of cultural participation or cultural production. One could also argue that in contrast to printed media, television products may not be suitable for canonization because of their "fleeting" character: the very next minute after they have been broadcast, they are lost to further reception unless they have been video recorded and viewed again. However, within television as a whole, crime series may be among those genres likely to penetrate the collective memory of a culture, owing to factors such as their weekly or daily broadcast schedule, the popularity of certain actors, the continuity of protagonists and their communicative function in everyday discourse, etc.

In order to argue that the canon concept may be applicable to television in general and to crime series in particular, I will present a comparative analysis of American and German scholarly discourse on crime series. The data and analysis of this discourse will show how a canon of crime series is structured. My focus on American and German studies of television has been determined by the well-known fact that ever since the beginning of German television, German scholars have discussed the "Americanization" of German television and television series (see, for example, Schneider). Thus, by reconstructing which prototypical television programs — with particular attention to crime series — German scholars reflect upon, it is possible to deduce the "frame of reference" of the German scholarly discourse on crime series. A comparative analysis of German and American scholarly discourse about crime series thus provides empirical evidence about the emergence of canon formation in television.

2. A Systemic Model of Canon Formation in Television

My point of departure is a working definition of a canon of crime series including basic questions such as what does a canon of crime series consist of and which persons and factors contribute to its formation? Whether one presupposes the existence of several canons (see, for example, Fokkema) or whether one proposes to study canon formation as a "cumulative process" (see Tötösy 1994 and in this volume), both frameworks are based on the assumption that canonization processes do not result solely from the inherent qualities of the product but rather by the participation of and intervention by several groups of producers, processing, receivers, and post-production processors. The theoretical background of such approaches is found in the framework of the Empirical Study of Literature (see, for example, Schmidt 1991). The application of the approach to television can be found, for example, in Schmidt's general model of the "television system" (see 1994). This application to television is based on Schmidt's and his colleagues' general theory of social and communicative action. In other words, the communicative relations between the "text" — here meaning the television show — and its various participants act, participate, and intervene in the four systemic categories mentioned above. The theory of action roles was originally established for the "literary system" as introduced above (see also, for
example, Hauptmeier and Schmidt). Whereas in the "literary system" the action roles of production and processing are quite clear-cut, in the television system they cannot be strictly separated for several reasons such as the production of programs depend on the technical prerequisites available — which is a processing aspect — and production and processing actions take place in the same institution and are to some extent implemented by the same participants of production (see Schmidt 1994, 20-21).

However, a careful modification of the systemic approach to television will allow for the description of how individuals, groups, and institutions in the American and German television system — a subsystem of the system of cultural production and participation — are participating and intervening with regard to the canon formation of crime series. The four systemic categories, here modified for the television system, are briefly as follows.

2.1 "Production"

At large, in both the US and in Germany, it is the creator — with the his/her crew including scriptwriter(s) — who is in charge of fundamental aesthetic decisions such as the conception of a series, its setting, the shaping of the characters, and, possibly, also the basic storyline of the individual show and the series. The executive producer predominantly administers the financial and legal aspects of production and the casting of a series, and he/she also controls whether other production personnel adhere to the pre-established formula of the series. All decisions are directed toward the anticipated needs of a desired audience and the success of the show determined by ratings. Both the director and the executive producer focus on the decision-making processes such as what kind of character constellations would have worked in previous shows, which leading actor would attract large audiences, and to what extent artistic or other experiments could be tried out on the audience. Canonization with respect to the action role "production" concerns mainly the adherence to certain aesthetic and stylistic norms that are likely to win the audience.

2.2 "Processing"

With regard to the systemic category of the "processing" of a crime series, it is the representatives of the television networks who hold the role of gatekeeper by deciding which pilots are bought, their consent to finance a series after the transmission of the pilot, its temporal scheduling, and its scheduling of re-runs. By employing certain programming strategies, certain audience target groups are favoured while others are excluded. Canonization with respect to the action role "processing" can be described in terms of a selection of media offers to be broadcast and the quasi-selection of potential groups.

3 For the designation of "creator" in film and television, see Mayerle.
2.3 "Reception"

Regarding the reception and audience response of a crime series, the audience rewards a favoured program by scheduled viewing of each and following episode. It should be made clear, that "audience" is not understood as a unified whole, but that it is divided in many sub-groups who can be differentiated according to socio-demographical variables such as age, gender, education etc., and with differing preferences. As is well known, the actual or the anticipated ratings of a particular series decide not only about its time slot but about the life and death of a series. However, it is not only the large number of viewers that make a show memorable and the interesting argument has been made that "a series will last longer with low ratings than a show without quality" (Williams 141). With increasing competition among channels and thus more fragmented audiences, it is both the commercial industry's and the network's aim to no longer attract a mass audience, but rather to carry out "narrow-marketing" (Williams 152), that is to reach smaller, but attractive segments of the audience such as young, urban consumers, etc.

2.4 "Post-Production Processing"

Considerable significance for canonization can be assigned to all those who participate in "post-production processing"; that is, all communicative actions that follow the reception of a program, such as a critic writing a review in the daily newspapers and magazines, the shape and contents of a TV Guide, internal industry and network reports, the ratings, scholarly articles, etc. Interventions of discussing, praising, or condemning some series and ignoring others are a crucial factor on canon formation. Similarly to the literary system, in television a "text" has to pass all three subsequent types of post-production-processes the daily, monthly, and academic critical stages before it can penetrate the canon and remain in it (Viehoff 83).

2.5 The Cumulative Nature of Systemic Categories of Cultural Production and Participation

It is a proliferate and multi-levelled task — in the context of cumulative canon formation — to evaluate and to describe how the acting patterns of the various actants involved in the collective processes of production, processing, reception, and post-production-processing of television products work together, how they influence or intertextualize each other, how their preferences and value systems overlap and coincide, and how the intricate relations between them as they all contribute to the process results in whether a program becomes memorable or not; in other words whether it undergoes canonization or not. If we assume that canonization is a matter of cultural memory, other contexts within and beyond the television system have to be taken into account as well. For instance, aspects of general television history (e.g., the contemporary competition between the
large number of programs is likely to have made it more difficult for individual programs to be remembered or marketing (e.g., increasingly, movies and television series, for instance the dinosaur movie *Jurassic Park* or the crime series *Kommissar Rex* were accompanied — and thus marketed — by a flood of products such as toys, books, t-shirts, caps, calendars, etc.) are important factors. In addition, this also raises the question whether it is the popularity of a film or television show with large numbers of viewers or the merchandising strategies of the industry are which promote its popularity.

3. Method

With the theoretical background as established by Schmidt (1991, 1994), my analysis is based on a methodological framework for the study of literary canon developed the Karl Erik Rosengren. Within the context of an interdisciplinary research program describing cultural indicators in different domains of society, Rosengren analyzed different aspects of the Swedish "literary milieu." Based on the assumption that it is one of the main functions of literary criticism to decide who is included in and who is excluded from the literary system, Rosengren applied quantitative content analysis to literary reviews: He counted so-called "mentions," that is all instances that "reviewers refer to or allude to other writers than the one under review" (36). The number of mentions a writer obtains can be interpreted as an indicator of the "topicality" of that writer.4

For the study of German and American canonization processes of television crime series on the post-processing level, a sample was constructed from German and American scholarly studies. Ingrid Brück’s 1996 bibliography on German crime series and Katja Brombach et al.’s bibliography on British and American crime series provided all necessary references. For the selection of texts the following criteria were applied: For pragmatic reasons the sample texts were to be no longer than thirty-five pages. All essays were to be published in books or scholarly journals. Since this text type contains the most recent scholarly discourse, it was assumed that they contribute to canon formation processes. The relevant material was arranged in decades and used in the proportion of 1:2 (of fourteen German texts seven were chosen for the analysis). Accordingly, the structure of the sample reflects the increasing scholarly interest in television. For instance, in the German text group there is only one text from the 1960s, but seven texts from the 1970s and sixteen texts from the 1980s. Thus, the sample for the study consists of twenty-five German and twenty-two American scholarly articles.

Initial browsing through the material resulted in the impression that scholars reflecting on crime series employ a wide range of references. While in the

4 For a critical discussion of Rosenberg’s methodology see Gaiser.
literary system reference can mainly be characterized in terms of references to authors and their oeuvres, these reference points are insufficient to describe the references to the crime series on television and its context. With television, explicit references on crime series range from series titles, episode titles, fictional characters such as officers and detectives, minor characters, predecessors of the genre, other media and people involved in the production process, for instance, script writers, directors, producers, actors, etc. Consequently, I widened Rosengren's definition of "mention" for my purposes to all instances where scholars refer to or allude to proper names in order to include the aforementioned such as series titles, names of characters, etc.

Because of this inductive approach, it was possible to regard a larger section of the frame of reference of individual authors and to detect other forms of reference. Both in English and in German proper names are spelled with capital letters. They can be easily traced by scanning the texts and editing them with the help of computer programs. Consequently, this modified version of the mention technique also allows for easy implementation.

First, a random sample survey was carried out. Five coders were given the task to find out all mentions in two texts and to categorize them according to content-related and functional criteria. After discussing their results, the coders established categories and arranged them in more general spheres. A second random sample survey was then carried out in order to test the applicability of the categories. At this stage, the categories were still modified several times. This resulted in the final distribution of the categories as follows:

1) German crime series titles; American series titles; British series titles; series titles from other countries; episode titles; other TV genres;
2) Other media offers such as radio plays; film; print literature;
3) Production (actor, director/producer, script writer, print author)
4) Fictional characters (protagonist[s], minor character[s])
5) Post-production processing (scholars and critics)
6) Further and other factors

After the above procedure, all German and American texts of the sample were coded and classified by three coders. Usually, the context of the mention would provide the necessary information as to which category a certain mention would belong or in which function a certain mention occurred, for example, whether Kojak was quoted as a character or as a series title. Television guides such as The Complete Directory to Prime Time Network and Cable TV Shows (Brooks and Marsh) for American television and the publications by the Deutsche Rundfunkarchiv (1984, 1991a, 1991b, 1992, 1993, 1994) on German television and handbooks on crime series such as The Boxtree Encyclopedia of TV Detectives (Tibbals) were used if a name of a script writer, for instance, was not familiar to the coders. With the exception of two cases, all names could be traced. The intercoder-reliability (correlation coefficient .84) was regarded as
sufficient. All occurrences of proper names and their frequency were counted. However, personal pronouns and other cohesive devices were not considered. The mentions established in this manner were collected in a German and an American file and arranged in two different ways: First, all different mentions of each text were counted as one occurrence. For example, if *Columbo* was mentioned twenty times in one text, it was nevertheless counted only once so that individual style and focus in theme would not falsify the result. However, if *Columbo* was mentioned in three different texts it would count as three mention, no matter how often it was quoted. This was the basis for setting up the top ten of the most frequently quoted mentions for both the German and American sample, for instance, the most frequently quoted films and series, writers, etc. I was led by the assumption that the more frequently a certain mention *x* in a given number of (different) texts is quoted, the stronger it will participate in the canon formation.

Secondly, all mentions were measured regarding their frequency: If *Columbo* was mentioned twenty times in one text and three times in another, it would be counted twenty-three times. This resulted in pie charts illustrating the distribution of the various categories in both the German and American sample. The pie charts and the top ten for the American and German text groups were then compared with each other regarding parallels and differences.

4. Results and Discussion

In the following, a selection of the most important results will be presented. The focus will be on how scholars refer to crime series and which other spheres they use as points of reference. This will be complemented by which crime series American and German scholars and critics refer to. The pie charts illustrate that both German and American scholars mainly refer to crime series by quoting the spheres of fictional characters, series titles, and production in declining order (see Appendices 1 and 2). The similar distribution of these spheres in both samples indicate that crime series are canonized through these aspects. Other media offers do not play a significant role for the frame of reference. The rather large share of references to the specific post-production processing subcategory of references to other scholar's work was neglected since they are a consequence of the conventions of the text type "scholarly texts" than an actual constituent of the frame of reference in question. The small share of the sphere rest (American 2.3%; German 3.2 %) — also ignored — confirms that the categories were chosen adequately to cover all fields of reference.

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5 Scholars quote their colleagues for various reasons such as to support or contradict arguments, to show their adherence to a certain school of thought, to seek favours with colleagues higher up in ranking, etc. (see Cohen).
With more than a third of the mentions in both the German and the American textgroup, fictional characters, especially protagonists, seem to embody a major potential for identification and reference (American 35.5%; German 36.9%). The cited protagonists are officers and detectives (see also below). German scholars quote the detectives Schimanski (nine texts), Kressin (eight texts), and Haferkamp (six texts) from the long-standing crime series Tatort. They also quote the American detectives Kojak (eight texts) and Columbo (five texts), and the literary figures Sherlock Holmes (seven texts) and Maigret (five texts). American scholars quote a good number of characters from Hill Street Blues in top positions, e.g., Frank Furillo, Philip Esterhaus (see also Appendix 4). The larger share in the category of minor characters (American 4.5%; German 13.3%) in the case of German scholars may be interpreted as an indicator that Germans scholars talk more about individual episodes than American scholars.

References to the sphere of fictional characters in both the German and the American textgroup are followed by references to the sphere series. American scholars refer almost exclusively to American series titles. This is not surprising, since with the exception of English-language shows, foreign television series are usually not shown in the US. In contrast, German scholars refer to almost equal shares to German series titles (11.8%) and to American series titles (10.1%). They also refer to a smaller extent to British series titles (1.3%), thus reflecting the large share of foreign series on German television. The category "other television genres" has absolutely no significance. The high share of references to the category American series titles is a clear indicator for the important role German scholars ascribe to American series on television and it may be interpreted as empirical proof that American series have penetrated the German television canon.

Which criminal series do scholars quote? German scholars and critics refer mostly to long-standing West German crime series that were running in the 1970s such as Der Kommissar (eleven texts) or that have been running since then such as Tatort (seventeen texts), and Derrick (thirteen texts). The most frequently mentioned American crime series are Columbo (seven texts), The Streets of San Francisco (six texts), Mannix (six texts), and Kojak (five texts). However, although German scholars refer — in terms of percentage — to the same extent to American series as to German ones, there is considerably less concentration on individual programs. This suggests that American shows in general are clearly perceived as part of the German canon of crime series, but also that it becomes somewhat more blurry, when it comes to concrete examples.

6 All frequently quoted mentions can be verified in the top ten of mentions by German scholars (see Appendix 5) and in the top ten of mentions by American scholars (see Appendix 6).
American scholars mention both early forms of the genre such as the early realistic series *Dragnet* from the 1950s (nine texts), episodic shows that were launched in the late 1960s and 1970s such as *Columbo* (ten texts), *Kojak* (nine texts), *Hawaii-Five-0*, *McMillan & Wife* (eight texts), *McCloud* and *Ironside* (seven texts). However, the most emphasis is put on more recent and innovative shows such as the open-ended serial *Hill Street Blues* (fourteen texts) and the semi-documentary *Police Story* (eleven texts). Thus, there is both partial congruence and also partial incongruity between the most popular shows quoted by German and American scholars. Overlaps in the canon can be found with American shows such as *Columbo* and *Kojak*, but it is interesting to see that the two — in the American textgroup most frequently cited American series *Hill Street Blues* (fourteen texts) and *Police Story* (eleven texts) — are not part of the German canon at all. Neither of these shows is mentioned once. The absence of *Police Story* is easily explained as it was never shown on German television. *Hill Street Blues*, however, was shown on prime time. Of course, it has to be taken into account that American shows are usually broadcast in Germany at a much later date. For example, *Hill Street Blues* was launched in the US in 1981 (Brooks and Marsh 463) and it was not until 1985 that it was shown in Germany by the public channel ZDF (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv 1991b, 287). Nevertheless, there have also been several re-runs of *Hill Street Blues* by both public and commercial channels, so that it could have been mentioned in a number of articles that are investigated here.

The identical number of references to the various categories of the sphere production (American 20.4%; German 20.4%) reflect that both German and American scholars conceive crime series on television as collectively produced products. However, the different distributions of the categories indicate that German and American scholars emphasize different action roles in the production process. American scholars appear to ascribe a much more central role to directors/producers than do German scholars (American 9.2%; German 3.2%). However, it is interesting here, that American film director Alfred Hitchcock is the most frequently quoted director with the Germans (seven texts), but he is not quoted at all in the American texts. Actors score high with both American and German scholars, which has probably got to do with their potential for identification. The actors mentioned here correspond closely to the most frequently quoted protagonists (see Appendix 4).

Two interpretations can be offered for the relatively high share of the category print author in the German texts (6.4%), which is not paralleled by the American texts (2.2%). First, German scholars appear to regard print authors (and their oeuvres) as forbearers of crime series. Second, it might also be rooted in German academic history: In Germany, a considerable branch of media studies derived from literary studies. With respect to the category print author both German and American scholars refer to representatives of the hard-boiled tradition such as
Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler, Joseph Wambaugh, Mickey Spillane. Whereas American scholars refer exclusively to this tradition, German scholars also refer to the tradition of the classic detective story represented by writers such as Poe, Conan Doyle, and Agatha Christie.

With respect to the category script writer an interesting observation can be made: Although this category scores in both text groups altogether considerably less than the category print author, it is notable that Herbert Reinecker — the script writer of all episodes of the German series Derrick and Der Kommissar — is mentioned in twelve of the German texts.

None of the three categories in the sphere other media offers is very significant. Radio plays (American 0.8%; German 0.1%) are negligible, while print literature scores only somewhat higher (American 0.8%; German 1.6%). It is interesting that references to the category film are only of minor importance, too (American 1.7%; German 2.3%), thus indicating that television may emerge as a distinct cultural system as I suggested above.

The observation made above that crime series are mainly referred to by quoting the spheres of protagonists, series, and production is further validated by the fact that in the top ten of mention in both text groups the most frequently quoted crime series correspond to the most frequently mentioned protagonists, actors, script writers, and producers/directors (see Appendix 4 for an illustration with the American scholars’ most prominently mentioned crime series Hill Street Blues).

5. Conclusion

The application of the above introduced methodology provides some quantitative evidence that there is a canon of crime series for both German and American scholars and how it is made up. The similar distributions of the spheres in the German and American samples reveal that scholars canonize not only titles of crime series but also protagonists, producers, and actors. Referential differences between the American and the German texts occur predominantly on the level of individual categories. Most notable is the strong position of literary authors with German scholars and the more dominant position of directors/producers with American scholars. Moreover, in the German texts, the application of the methodology provides empirical proof that American crime series have entered the German canon. Interestingly, to some extent the American series quoted do not correspond to the ones mentioned in the American texts.

The above data and analysis is merely a starting point for further analysis of scholarly discourse with regard to the canonization process of television crime series. By expanding the sample of texts and analyzing them diachronically, the historical change of the canon of television series could be pointed out. However, while the methodology tells us what and — in a limited fashion — how is
canonized at a certain time, it does not tell us about the why. It does not provide any reasons as to why scholars canonize certain series and whether this is because they are typical, innovative, long-lasting, etc.

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Appendix 1

Distribution of Spheres in the German Texts

Appendix 2

Distribution of Spheres in the US-American texts
Appendix 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Series titles</th>
<th>Protagonist</th>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Script Writer</th>
<th>Producer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hill Street Blues</td>
<td>Frank Furillo</td>
<td>Daniel J. Travani</td>
<td>Steven Bochco</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phil Estenhaus</td>
<td>Michael Conrad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joyce Davenport</td>
<td>Veronica Hamel</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Henry Goldblume</td>
<td>Ed Marinaro</td>
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<td>Taureau Blacque</td>
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<td>Renko</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Mick Belker</td>
<td>Buddy Ebsen</td>
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* quoted in x different texts

Appendix 5

Top Ten of German academics on crime series

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Print Author</th>
<th>Script Writer</th>
<th>Director</th>
<th>Actor</th>
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<td>Agatha Christie (4)</td>
<td>Herbert Lichtenfeld (3)</td>
<td>Rüdiger Humpert (2)</td>
<td>Götz George (3)</td>
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<td>Dashiell Hammett (3)</td>
<td>Wolfgang Staudte (2)</td>
<td>Wolfgang Petersen (2)</td>
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<td>Oliver Storz (2)</td>
<td>Peter Schulze-Rohr (2)</td>
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<td>Peter Stripp (2)</td>
<td>Gunter Witte (2)</td>
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US-Series-Title

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<td>Der Alte (8)</td>
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<td>Kommissar Keller (7)</td>
<td>Straßen von San Francisco</td>
<td>Das Kriminalmuseum erzählt (5)</td>
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<td>Sherlock Holmes (7)</td>
<td>Mannix (6)</td>
<td>Ein Fall für zwei (5)</td>
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<td>Aktenzeichen xy (4)</td>
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Appendix 6

Top Ten of US-American academics on crime series

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<th>Print author</th>
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<td>Daniel J. Travanti (5)</td>
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<td>Phil Esterhaus (7)</td>
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<td>Michael Warren (4)</td>
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<td>Raymond Burr (4)</td>
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<td>Ed Marinaro (4)</td>
<td>Bobby Hill (5)</td>
<td>Dragnet (9)</td>
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<td>David Janssen (4)</td>
<td>Henry Goldblume (5)</td>
<td>Hawaii-Five-0 (8)</td>
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<td>Veronica Hamel (4)</td>
<td>Ironside (5)</td>
<td>McMillan and Wife (8)</td>
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<td>Renko (5)</td>
<td>McCloud (7)</td>
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<td>Mick Belker (4)</td>
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<td>Joe Coffey (4)</td>
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<td>Frank Cannon (4)</td>
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<td>Sonny Crockett (4)</td>
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<td>Joe Friday (4)</td>
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<td>Mike Hammer (4)</td>
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<td>Cagney and Lacey (6)</td>
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<td>Ricardo Tubbs (4)</td>
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<td>Eftrem Zimbalist Jr. (4)</td>
<td>77 Sunset Strip (5)</td>
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APPLICATION

2. Literature and Reading
1. Introduction

This article presents the preliminary results of a study concerning young German readers of popular/commercial literature. The German "fiction magazines" or "booklets" normally have 64 pages, are printed on cheap paper, have a colored cover, and are sold for about DM 2.50.00 per piece. While in form the German booklets have smaller pages numbers than their North American equivalents, in content they resemble the Harlequin romance. Historically, German "fiction magazines" have two sources. First, their topics and their periodical form of publication go back to "Kolportageliteratur" of the nineteenth century. The second source is romance literature as popular literature beginning with Eugenie Marlitt (F. John, 1825-1887) who published several romances in the periodical Die Gartenlaube. Today, the thematic spectrum of this type of writing includes romances of all sorts, e.g., about love and destiny, doctors, nurses, and hospitals, adventure, mountains and country (Heimatroman), but also Gothic novels, fantasy, crime, Western, war, and science fiction (recently, the "trucker" came up as a new item). In Germany, more than 200 million booklets are published each year. They are sold in bookstores, railway stations, tobacco stores, newsstands, kiosks, etc.

2. Project Design

Randomly chosen readers aged between 14 and 29 years of age were interviewed and the interviews were subsequently transcribed. The age limit was introduced in order to connect the project, for further analysis, with a social-psychological

1 The project received funding from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft ("Heftroman," Grant 515/547 94). I would like to thank Brigitte Kaczerowski for her assistance with this study and I would like to thank Wolfram K. Kock for his help in the translation of my article into English.

2 In German literary history, popular/commercial fiction is categorized under the umbrella term Unterhaltungsliteratur or, with a negative touch, Trivialliteratur. However, the genre has several subcategories, one of which is Heftroman ("novel booklet").
research project at Siegen University. On the bases of the Empirical Study of Literature, we are interested to study the knowledge about, dispositions toward, and readers response to popular/commercial fiction. Thus, the objective was not to investigate aspects of direct reader reception. First, the project group elaborated and tested a guideline for the interviews, followed by the actual interviews. Altogether we conducted and subsequently transcribed more than 60 structured interviews with up to 2 hours each (for the interview questions, see Appendix).

In its structure and objectives, the present study is not a statistically representative one; it is a case study. This approach had implications for the random selection of subjects. We recruited our interviewees in the following ways: we approached them at flea markets and in stores, we asked teachers at different types of schools, and we distributed leaflets. Despite of a high proportion of students, the interviewees comprise an acceptably wide range of age and profession. They range, for example, from 14 year old students to a 27 year old pharmacy assistant, from a handicapped student to a graduated economist, from a nurse to a store owner. With this range of individuals we also ascertained a great variety of social and demographic environments and representation.

3. Guidelines for the Interviews

In order to avoid the problem of "guiding" common to questionnaire type research the study was designed to conduct personal interviews with subjects (see, for example, Nutz and Schögell). Some of our ideas for the design of the interviews were borrowed from Janice Radway’s study, Reading the Romance. Furthermore, from the point of view of the Empirical Study of Literature, we were also interested in the concepts of literature held by the interviewees and whether in this situation we are dealing with "literary behavior" or not. In the interviews we first ascertained whether the subject does or does not read popular/commercial fiction, followed by questions about the subject’s personal biography with regard to the reading of literature. That is, we inquired about the subject’s first contact with popular/commercial literature through his/her history of reading. Amounts of reading were noted as well as other media and leisure preferences. Family background was discussed, too. Further elements of the interviews were the procurement of reading material as well as criteria of their selection, the subjects’ process and habits of reading itself with particular attention to form and content, the subjects’ general knowledge about literature including their personal evaluation of the reading material and their subjective

3 J. Berntzen and J. Zinnecker, "Modernisierung von Kindheit im inter- und intra-generative Vergleich."
preferences, and their personal social environment such as their contacts with other readers inside or outside their family.

4. Selected Results

4.1 Types of Readers

In the first instance, our study suggested that, despite the limited range of the subjects, there is no one "typical" reader of popular/commercial fiction. The differing intensities and modalities of reading themselves contradict such an assumption. Some of the subjects are regular readers, some of them read several booklets every day, while others read a certain number of booklets every week or every month. Then there are casual readers who, for instance, in bed during illness or when on holiday. Still others read only if there is nothing else to do, e.g., on the bus or train, when time cannot be usefully filled otherwise, etc. Some of the readers stick to their favorite type of series or themes for years. Others speak of times in which they reduced or even stopped reading booklets. Some of the subjects at the time of the interview read less than in former times while others stated the opposite, namely that they now read more than ever before. Our data also show that the readers of commercial fiction booklets do not belong to the group of "one-track" readers, i.e., their reading is not limited to popular/commercial fiction booklets. In addition to their favorite series, they read non-fiction and literary texts. For example, there was mention of Stephen King, Stanislaw Lem, H.P. Lovecraft, Thomas Keneally, and Max Frisch, etc. In most cases we also noted differentiated reading based on thematic connections, e.g., North American Indians, natural sciences, technology, and science fiction.

In our study, we came across the type of the "hunter-gatherer." Some of these readers collect and catalogue their stock of booklets, and they search for and buy lacking items in their series. Here is one example from an interview:

In the beginning, some time ago, I wrote down all the titles in a book. In the course of time, the titles increased. But then there appeared reference-books. So I only marked the titles I own and noted the good or bad condition of the novel in order to be able to exchange it for a better copy. I noted if it was a collection of novels, i.e., three novels often had been bound together as rejects and so I separated them again. Such copies I replaced by better ones in order to increase the value of the collection. The novels are sorted according to titles, titles of series like ghost crimes, John Sinclair and so on, partly also according to authors. And the whole lot is stored in many bookshelves, partly in boxes on three floors. Special copies, precious copies, have a protecting cover. ... Most of my cherished copies are first editions, they are valuable, and they have a high idealistic value for me, too, that I want to conserve. In order to keep this value, smoking is not allowed in these rooms. Besides, the novels are protected against the sun with curtains; they are protected against dust by sheets of paper. That's just my way of collecting.
Of interest in this example, in particular, is that the apparent passion of collecting and preserving the booklets of commercial fiction suggests bibliomania normally expected only in the area of canonized and highbrow literature.

4.2 Popular/Commercial Fiction and "Literary" Behavior

One problem we were in particular interested in our study of the readership of popular fiction is the question whether it is possible to speak of literary behavior and if yes, of what kind of literary behavior?

We assumed that the readers of popular/commercial fiction would not be able to differentiate between the "yellow press" and these fiction booklets. But that was not the case at all. In our study we did not find a single case in which the reference to canonized literature, the "yellow press," or the booklets in question was confused. Further, the subjects in our study consciously separated fiction and reality: "[the story in the booklet] is always something invented, thus not reality; I always separated those things" (IP 7, 4). In a further example, in the case of a subject reading North American Indian stories, the subject describes her reading as "the facts including historical data are quite right if the data are mentioned at all. Obviously the surrounding story is invented. However, the plot is rather realistic" (IP 31, 1). This reader is very much aware that she is dealing with a product of fantasy, although she is able to test the described historical frame of the story for its authenticity and historical correctness.

Another reader, fond of the popular science fiction series Perry Rhodan, answers the question concerning the reference to reality in this way: "That is more a second world, I would say, as this story is more or less a universe of its own. The story is set several thousand years in the future. ... So, you cannot speak of reality in a strict sense or of real people. Because, in general, that is a totally different world, you really can say that" (IP 6, 8). In addition, for many of the readers from the text there is no direct relation to their personal way of life. A woman reading Cora books, a Harlequin product, comments as follows. "Actually, I think this is a totally different world. As my life is, at present, I'm not able to compare myself with those characters. They are fully engaged in their profession, and they are so rich; therefore, by and large, this is in reality a different world for me. But it is not the case that I absolutely dream myself into it, that I wish to be like them. I take it for granted that I live my way and that they live their fictitious lives, and that's all. Actually, I have no problems at all to come to terms with that" (IP 1, 7).

Apart from the demonstrated consciousness of the fictionality of their reading, further evidence for the "literary" behavior of readers of booklets is that they appear to negate the fact convention. According to Siegfried J. Schmidt, the fact convention implies that news, information, and non-fiction texts are dealt with

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4 IP refers to the transcript files.
according to criteria such as true or false and useful or useless (1982). Texts taken to be literary-fictional do not obey this convention. Several subjects of our study commented specifically that criteria of truth and facts are not crucial for reading popular/commercial fiction. For example:

the booklets are simply easy following of a story. Just to be caught by the story and not to think about whether it is realistic or not. If the ship capsizes and one person survives and the rest doesn't, this is very unrealistic. But that is not important at that moment, if the story needs this character. Then you are happy that nothing happened to him. That is the nice thing with the booklet. (IP 31, 12)

This attitude concerning the fact convention, can also be found with a reader of the already mentioned science fiction series *Perry Rhodan*: "insofar, the series has no relationship to reality. Nor is this relationship intended. I think that would be too much for such a series produced for entertainment. From the point of view of the natural sciences some of the facts cannot function the way described in the stories" (IP 44, 11). Apart from the denial of the fact convention, we have examples for the adherence to the aesthetic convention, thus demonstrating the readers' pronounced sense of literary behavior. First, readers are conscious of the mode of narrative and thematic construction, of the simple structure and the repetitive elements such as the happy ending of love stories. Nevertheless, they are able to make complex and differentiated judgements. They strictly divide good and bad, well-done, and failed novels. Further, for some of the readers the cover design is very important, others prefer fast action, while most of them dislike long descriptive passages.

Together with clear aesthetic preferences, our data reveal evidence for the adherence to the polyvalence convention. The polyvalence convention means that readers can end up with different reading results without a breakdown of communication (see Groeben and Schreier). We found two contexts of the polyvalence convention. First, the repeated reading of a text may lead to new impressions. For instance, a reader of *Perry Rhodan* describes the following experience:

Or I can pull out certain things interesting to me, and I realize that novels which were boring to me earlier are suddenly very interesting ... and I discover elements which I didn't see the first time ... and I have the impression and I say to myself, "Just a moment, the author all at once has written something totally different than what I read in the booklet before." I also discover that these authors have political opinions, too, sometimes left wing, sometimes right wing. For example, ten authors will not have one type of ideology and so I have ten different political opinions, much of it taken from everyday life. And most of it I only become aware of on the second or third reading, for instance, that there appears to be ideological battles between the authors. (IP 59)
With regard to the second aspect of the polyvalence convention — the different perceptions of different readers of the same text — a sixteen year old nursing student, for example, commented on different readings of a booklet by herself, her aunt, and her mother: "I don’t know if it can be called a struggle of opinions [in interpretation], but I sometimes see the story totally different than they do. Sometimes this is very funny, we read the same story, but each of us understands the story in a different way" (IP 52, 2). The comment that the different reading of the same story is "funny" shows that the difference in interpretation does not escalate into a serious difference of opinion and that the differentiation is not questioned by either readers, thus demonstrating a certain type of "literary" behavior with regard to the polyvalence convention. Conversely, a young couple reported different evaluations of actions of figures in the story they read. The man disliked the unrealistic end, i.e., that the stories always have a good or happy ending, while the response of the woman was: "That’s the way it has to be and that’s it" (IP 12, 15), thus manifesting a divergent opinion about the narrative.

Apart from the above evidence of readers’ responses to literary conventions, there is also evidence for literary behavior concerning the process of reading. Most of the interviewed subjects reported that the act of reading itself is of crucial importance. This means that the involvement in the story comes first, and not a reader-response elaboration on a specific result or results of the reading. In other words, for most readers the engagement with the text ends with reading. They do not spend time thinking about the text afterwards and do not relate the story to their personal situation. However, this was not the case with all subjects of the study. Some of them continue the story on their own or design extensions of the story or the characters as in personal variants. Here are two examples: The first subject’s comment indicates that readers may sympathize or identify with the fiction figures during reading:

Sometimes I cry while reading. Sometimes I fall into convulsive laughter reading something very funny. I am in a fever with the figures sometimes, too. From time to time I’m weeping, well, I have really deep emotions. And booklets I read differently than real books; I am able to read a real book at more of a distance. In that case, I turn back the pages and look what he said earlier: Then it is more important to read exactly and to consider what the author intended to say. Reading booklets is easier to sympathize like just to be swept away by the story. (IP 31, 16)

[After reading], I am back in my life and with my feet on the ground. That is, the reading does not produce real-life consequences. Well, from time to time you invent a story of your own. There are cases when you are saying, actually the story could have been a little bit different, could have had another ending. But not in the way that you are thinking about afterwards. When you are thinking that was as it usually is in novels. When you sometimes stop reading considering parts just read. With the booklets this is different for me. And that is so with full intention. Reading such things means that I don’t want to
read something to think about for hours later on. I mean I want to read something that can be read straight through. I want to have a simple structure of action, easy to follow, where you finally can say: that's it. And there is nothing left behind or to follow up. (IP 31, 14f)

Both of the above examples of comments appear to stress strategies of greater involvement while reading. This suggests that some of our subjects acted according to a further aspect of literary behavior, that of story-driven reading (see Vipond and Hunt). Story- or point-driven reading means that readers are engaged with the reading material after its reading (see also Vorderer). According to the concept, some readers' involvement with the plot, the narrative, and reading itself is often linked with the catchword "dreamworld": "therefore, I read to come into a kind of dreamworld ... I read these stories because they are not like reality and because everything leads to a good ending" (IP 15, 3) and "I'm quite satisfied if I see: Yeah, they have come together, finally, and it happened despite the odds. As in real life, this never happens like in these booklets. That's more like a dreamworld where you can wish, Yeah, this actually could have happened to you and this is rather important for me" (IP 54, 5). Readers can dive into this dreamworld and can forget their real life for a couple of hours: "My reading means only to be intoxicated for two hours, to defile oneself or to be lulled to sleep or however you would like to describe it, this really is to take yourself away and not to say afterwards: Good gracious, what a problem again but instead simply: nice! It's just nice!" (IP 61, 15).

4.3 Reader Gratification

The question of if and what type of gratification these readings offer their readers was the final aspect of our study. The subjects' comments revealed variously different perspectives of reading gratification. Most importantly, the expectation that escapism may be the common perspective proved to be unsubstantiated. While escapism is mentioned as in the wish to get into a good, nice or even an erotic mood, to fill time wasted otherwise, the desire to relax and unwind, to shut out everyday life, thrill, fun, and entertainment. However, in some comments we found that our subjects looked for support of various type as the following examples demonstrate:

Yes, you feel fine, and after the reading you are in a good mood. But then, there is something else. Then it's not like in the booklets. Then you have to read a new one, and then you feel better again. If you think about it from time to time, it will help you" (IP 14, 7).

If I'm really sad sometimes or if a boyfriend left or if something went wrong in the family, and if I'm in a totally bad mood, then I read these booklets. Then I take them occasionally and I read them again, but I have to be in the right mood. If I feel fine the whole time I don't need them. Then I don't read them; only if I'm depressed in a way, then I read some of them" (IP 54, 3).
[the booklets] have always been very relaxing. I was always able to switch off very well. That was my spare time that I used or intended to use for these booklets. And that I could dream a little bit. (IP 44, 6)

You are able to withdraw yourself for one, two hours; something totally different but in a way very familiar. I mean the story goes on and on; in the meantime, you have known the figures of the stories for years ... you can simply relax for a while, just not reflect something, just have a little relaxation while reading. (IP 50, 6f)

while reading, the gag is that you're offered a very simple world which is strictly separate from real life. Thus I guess the appeal largely depends on the offer of this simple pattern, that you do not have to reflect on. Are the good ones always good, the bad ones always bad? I think that's the reason for the attraction offered by a simple world in which it is quite clear-cut who is on which side: So I believe that is one of the major attractions of such writing. (IP 49, 5)

Escape from real life where you perhaps want to be someone you are not. Or where you wish to go through something which is no longer in existence today. It's like a little bit to look for adventure when life is boring. (IP 31, 13)

The above examples suggest that the reasons for reading popular/commercial literature as well as the readers' perception of reading may be more sophisticated and multi-layered than the simplistic explanation of escapism. In the comments we can see that they have two principal features in common which are related to each other. On the one hand, we can speak about the relief from cognitive burdens: no necessity to reflect, simple patterns, a simply structured world, a world divided into good and bad, etc. The complementary element of this is the desire for emotional arousal: the highs and lows of the story characters are re-lived, their adventures are shared closely as are the love affairs. Both of these elements go hand in hand during the process of reading and reader response. Consequently, the stereotypical patterns of the booklets do not mirror the ideological positions of a specific social or readers' group. Rather, this type of literature and its internal thematic and narrative structure cause the reader to pass through low and high levels of emotional states. Obviously, personal thematic and emotional preferences decide what kind of reading will fit. This pattern becomes clear by the importance of repeated reading, a frequent trait of many of the subjects of this study. Repeated reading is a conscious act and is not a result owing to problems of understanding in the original reading. One aspect of second readings, certainly, is the renewed and consciously sought after involvement with characters the reader felt emotionally connected to. The relatively high occurrence of repeated reading was an unexpected result with regard to the reading of popular/commercial literature.
5. Conclusion

The principal result of the study is the confirmation that is not possible to compute cognitive elaborations of readers on the basis of the texts alone, even in the case of formula literature such as the type of popular/commercial writing studied. The results show that the different ways and kinds of reading depend on particular reading interests. Further, the results of the study suggest that the reading of popular/commercial fiction is different from the reading of canonized literature or of bestsellers. In turn, the study revealed that readers of popular/commercial fiction manifest specific forms of literary behavior.

Siegen University

Works Cited

Appendix
Interview Questionnaire
(Original in German)

0. Presentation of Project and Research Objectives
You have agreed to be interviewed, so let me present myself and the project. We want
to find out what and why people read. We are especially interested in the reading of
popular/commercial fiction booklets. It is, therefore, most important for us that you tell
us what you think about them. Please do not worry about what we might want to hear as
an answer. We do not want to hear anything specific from you nor are we going to
evaluate your answer in any particular way. We do not want to examine your knowledge;
all that interests us is your own personal view of popular/commercial fiction
booklets. Everything you tell us — and, consequently, everything we record on tape so
as not to waste time writing it down — will remain strictly confidential and will only be
used for scientific purposes. All the data we collect will be kept strictly anonymous, so
your name will not appear anywhere.

There are many ways of referring to these fiction booklets. What do you call them?
(Please stick to expression you used).

1. Access and Usage
1.1 What are you reading at the moment? What was the last text you read? Do you have
a favorite series?
1.2 Do you receive from someone or do you buy your favorite series regularly?
1.3 Where do you obtain your fiction booklets (FBs)? Do you have fixed habits? For
instance, do you always buy them in the same place?
1.4 Do you also buy and read booklets other than your favorite ones? How do you then
orient yourself, how do you decide if you do not really know what you want to buy?
Do you go by title, pictures, publisher, the look of a series (e.g. its color), a quick read,
the first page, advice, etc.?
1.5 Are there FBs you do not like at all?
1.6 What do you do with FBs you have finished with? (Do you collect them? How many
do you have? Do you give them away or throw them out? Do you sell them? Or do
you exchange FBs?)

2. Literary Reading Socialization
2.1 Who are the people with whom you exchange FBs? Do you do other things together?
Do you have hobbies in common?
2.2 Do you talk about the FBs with your exchange partners? Do you talk about the FBs
with others? Is this the only interest you share with these people?
2.3 If you talk about FBs you have read or about some FB series with someone, what do
you talk about in particular? Do your opinions differ very much? And if, what are the
differences?
2.4 Of course, there are people who look down upon these FBs and think they are
worthless rubbish. Have you come across such people? And how do you react to such
an opinion?
2.5 Are there people whom you would rather not tell about your reading of FBs?
3. The Reading Process. Formal Modalities

3.1 Where do you usually read your FBs? At home, on the road, in bed, etc.? Are there situations or feelings which you prefer for reading FBs or which you consider especially suitable?

3.2 Do such occasions or feelings for reading FBs occur repeatedly?

3.3 Do you sometimes yourself create a special atmosphere for reading such FBs, e.g., with music, candlelight, alcohol, a bath, etc.? Do you have certain habits (e.g., locking the door when reading a crime story etc.)?

3.4 How do you go about reading your booklet? Do you sometimes read the ending first? Why do you do this? And why not?

3.5 Do you sometimes feel you know what is going to happen, how the story will continue, and how all the puzzles will be solved? If yes, do you find this thrilling or boring?

3.6 What do you do more often: read an FB in one go from beginning to end or read a number of pages from time to time?

3.7 Have you ever read an FB twice or more often? Which FB was it, what was it about? What was fascinating about it that made you reread it?

3.7.1 Was the rereading of the FB just as much fun as the first time? Or were you disappointed the second time or were you more excited?

3.7.2 Are there parts of stories which you keep reading over and over again? Can you tell us about any?

3.7.3 Do you sometimes skip certain parts? Which parts? And why?

3.8 What do you do if, after the first few pages, a story does not appeal to you at all? Can you remember such FBs? And what did you not like about them?

4. Knowledge about and Evaluation of Fiction Booklets

4.1 What in your opinion is typical of FBs?

4.2 Are they different from books?

4.2.1 In what respects are FBs better than other books?

4.2.2 In what respects are they not as good?

4.3 Are all FBs the same for you? If not, what are the differences?

4.4 What events and plots keep turning up again and again in your FBs? And which of them are important to you, and why?

4.5 Can you think of events in other books that never occur in FBs? Do you think they ought to?

4.6 Is your favorite series absolutely super or do you object to certain things?

4.7 What qualities must the principal characters in your favorite series definitely show?

5. Cognitive and Emotive Aspects of Reading

5.1 Do you sometimes go on thinking about the principal characters in an FB? Do you imagine stories with them, or different story endings? Do you sometimes play an active part in a story yourself?

5.2 Have you ever put yourself in the position of one of your fictional characters?

5.3 Have fictional characters ever helped you to experience new things?
5.4 What do you think is particularly realistic or life-like about your favorite series or your favorite themes? What is completely removed from real life? And what do you prefer?

5.5 Does what you read have anything to do with your own personal life? Does it stimulate you, lend you ideas or support in certain circumstances, suggest ways and means to deal with conflicts and problems, or is it a completely different and totally strange world? Do you read FBs because they are so life-like or because they have nothing to do with your life whatever?

5.6 Does it happen that you are filled with fear while reading, or that you are overwhelmed by other emotions (even against your own will)? Can you describe such a situation?

5.7 As a reader, one is certainly often torn between conflicting emotions, for instance, one feels fear or is moved to tears, but in the end all turns out well. What are your feelings after finishing an FB?

5.8 And what do you feel like after reading an FB? Does anything stick? Does anything enter your daily life (e.g., the world of the FB or the sensations and emotions you experienced)?

5.9 Finally, why do you read FBs?

6. Media Use and Leisure Habits

6.1 Apart from FBs, what else do you read? Do you read books only if they deal with topics similar to those of your FBs, or also other books with completely different content? Can you name a book that made a great impression on you recently?

6.2 Novels are available as hardbound or paperback copies, but also as fiction booklets or fiction magazines. Does this influence you? (A thriller or a romance may be published as a book, a booklet or a magazine. Do you distinguish between these?)

6.3 Which television programmes do you like best? And which do you not like at all?

6.4 Do you have video equipment to record from television? What do you record? Do you also borrow videos? Which do you prefer?

6.5 Do you have a hobby, a special interest, a passion for something, or for collecting something? Are you a fan of somebody or something? Are you actively engaged in some cause? Have you ever written to a newspaper?

6.6 Do you play computer or video games? Which?

6.7 How much time do you spend on reading (general and FBs) compared with your other leisure activities?

7. Media and Literary Biography

7.1 When did you begin to read for fun (not just for school)? What do you now read most? FBs, books, specialist literature, newspapers, (illustrated) magazines?

7.2 Did you read more than today or less, when you were younger?

7.3 When did you start reading FBs?

7.4 Do other members of your family read (FBs, books)? Do your parents have books?

7.5 What does your family do in their spare time? (cinema, museums, theatre, etc.)?

7.6 Can you remember your favorite books and booklets or particular reading experiences when you were a child? Which of these experiences have proved unforgettable?
7.7 Thinking of television, films, music, magazines, or theatre, have you had special experiences? Has something stuck and remained important and meaningful to this very day to you?

8. Socio-Demographic Data
Gender; Age; Education; Income (do you have sufficient money to buy the FBs you want?); Types of media owned (TV, video, camera, etc.)
The Understanding of Metaphor by Elementary School Students

1. Introduction

The analysis presented in this article is based on a survey designed for measuring the level of understanding of literal and metaphorical meaning of proverbs and idioms of Slovene elementary school students, conducted in June 1996 (for a previous survey and analysis of literary comprehension, see Blažič 1996). The administration of the selected proverbs and idioms in the experiment was performed in English (or the same English and Slovene proverbs in Slovene translation). The survey comprised 80 students (36 female and 44 male respondents) aged seven to ten years. They subjects were of the first to fourth elementary school grades, twenty students per each grade in Ljubljana. The objective of my study was to gauge how do young students understand and use metaphors? The problem is not an often researched question, especially with emphasis on differences in literal and metaphorical meaning. For understanding metaphors, we need highly developed language and cognitive skills. Metaphorical relations do not exist in reality but in discourse (see Gnamuš-Kunst 138). If we aim at students of an early stage to understand metaphors we need to develop not only the basic language skills (Steen 86) but we also need to develop strategies and methods to teach divergent thinking.

The principal aim of the survey was to present the understanding, processing, and acceptance of the metaphor as an abstract expression for similarity, discipline, love, freedom, satisfaction, poverty, happiness, ugliness, etc.

2. Method

The survey was designed in three stages. First, how do students understand proverbs and idioms such as "The apple never falls far from the tree," "clothes make the man," "love is blind," "when the cat is away, the mice will play," "never look a gift horse in the mouth," "as poor as a church mouse," "to be like a fish out of water," "like an ostrich," "in (the) seventh heaven," and "an ugly
duckling," etc.\(^1\) In the second stage, the drawing method of visual comparative contrast was administered with the aim of emphasising the opposition between the literal and metaphorical meaning. During this experiment, the students drew two drawings for every proverb and idiom. In the third stage they were asked to write compositions and to use metaphorical meanings by using proverbs and idioms. In this experiment, first grade students did not participate as they do not have enough literacy ability for the task.

Literary development takes place in phases and is determined by the students' age (see Blažić 1996). The following phases can be distinguished in the lower elementary period (7-10 or 11 years). Students in the first and second grades are still in the "fairy tale" stage. Characteristics of this stage are the personification of toys, animals, nature, and objects. Students' literary appreciation starts changing around the age of 9 to 10 years, when they develop and open up to the real world and the realistic style. During this stage, students' interests gradually takes precedence over their interests for the fairy tale fantasy world (see Kordigel 1990a, 5-42, 1990b, 21; Blažić 1992, 35-40).

3. Results of the Survey

3.1 Understanding the Meaning of Metaphor

The subjects' comprehension of metaphorical meaning of the above introduced proverbs and idioms was very good. They were offered multiple choice tests of proverbs and idioms while the subjects in the second grade understood 90% of the proverbs and idioms. The third grade subjects understood 88% of the proverbs and idioms while the fourth grade subjects understood 93% of the proverbs and idioms. The distribution of the subjects' understanding can be seen in Table 1 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proverb/Idiom</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>Σ</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The apple never falls far from the tree</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the cat's away, the mice will play</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothes make the man</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never look a gift horse in the mouth</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love is blind</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As poor as a church mouse</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 The proverbs were chosen from Ferguson; Simpson and the idioms were chosen from Gulland; Hinds-Howell.
3.2 The Drawing of Literal and Metaphorical Meaning of Proverbs and Idioms

In the category of drawing the literal and metaphorical meaning, the subjects had two spaces for each proverb and idiom. The following results emerged: The same drawings appeared when they drew both literal and metaphorical meanings of the proverb, "The apple never falls far from the tree." For this proverb, they usually drew an apple and a tree for its literal meaning while for the metaphorical meaning they often used gender stereotypes such as a "like father, like son" or "like mother, like daughter." They understood the meaning of the proverb in the context of returning to one's original home or roots. For literal meaning of "When the cat's away, mice will play," they drew a small furry mouse with a long tail dancing and a few symbols of the idea of partying: noisy music, radio, and TV. Similarly to the metaphor above, here too, they drew family scenes for the metaphorical meaning of the proverb.

First and second grade students had problems understanding the metaphorical meaning of the proverb "Never look a gift horse in the mouth." Their drawings of the metaphorical meaning resulted in such as "never look people in the mouth because people have ugly mouths," "it is not polite to look in someone's mouth," or "you have to take horse to the veterinary physician." Based on the drawings, the correct metaphorical message of the proverb was understood by 50% of the subjects. The literal meaning was drawn realistically as in a horse with big mouth. For the literal meaning of "Love is blind," all subjects drew a heart with glasses and explained that "you see only your love" or "if you are in love you cannot see the other's faults." In the literal visualisation of the idiom "As poor
as a church mouse," they drew a mouse, small, wet, and crying. They understood the idiom to represent a very poor person. For the metaphorical meaning, they drew pictures of a person — there was a 100 percent male representation of the notion of "poor" — with similar features as the mouse: wet, small, crying, and like a beggar without food or money.

Most of first grade students drew the literal meaning of "To be in (the) seventh heaven" with nine heavens or clouds — in Slovene, this idiom is used as "in the ninth heaven" — sometimes as a home of angels (female or male, both with wings). They understood the metaphorical meaning correctly, as in to be happy, merry, rich, to be in love, or to get good marks in school. The literal meaning of "To be like a fish out of water" was again drawn realistically while metaphorically they visualised a person in bed, ill, sad, in a bad mood. The idiom "An ugly duckling" resulted in very interesting drawings. Most of the students identified themselves with this idiom, because they felt very close to it. Their feelings appeared to be similar to that of Andersen's fairy tale, which they are familiar with. However, after they projected their wishes, they extended these into a scenario where after the state of being like an ugly duckling and suffering much ridicule, they would grow into a beautiful swan or adult. As young people, they presented themselves ugly, weak, little, and poor and in contrast to grown-ups. In other words, they projected everything pleasant, attractive, and powerful into adulthood. They visualised adulthood as an attractive, promising, and admirable period, with big — usually male — person in the centre, strong, and rich. A few of them drew pictures indicating that when you are 10 years old you are ugly as an ugly duckling but when you will be 20 you will be lovely as a swan.

I anticipated that they would not understand the idiom "Like an ostrich." However, surprisingly, 95 percent of the subject understood the metaphorical meaning of the idiom and 30 percent used it the composition part of the experiment. Their answers' varied, first and second grade explained that it means you do not listen your parents or you do not listen to the truth. The third and especially the fourth grades described the idiom - as intentionally not listening to the truth, because it is unpleasant, awful, real. We interpret this good comprehension with familiarity with situation in their pre-adolescent period and interest in social events, with similar behaviour in rebellion against authority. They understand that this is someone who wilfully conceals the truth from himself, and at the same time refuses to face unpleasant reality. Student's drawings reflected their belief that when they behave like an ostrich they generally believe that if they cannot see the danger, it no longer exists.

3.3 The Application of Proverbs and Idioms in Composition

In the third stage of the survey, the students — except the first graders — were asked to write a brief composition with the task to include as many
proverbs and idioms as many they are able to. The compositions included mostly
"In seventh heaven" (48%), "When the cat's away, the mice will play" (45%),
and "As poor as a church mouse" (43%). The most used proverb, "When the
cat's away, the mice will play," was used in the context of their concrete
experiences of being home alone and without parents, thus being free and
watching TV as much as they like, etc.

The second grade students applied in their compositions two proverbs —
"when the cat's away, the mice will play" and the "Ugly duckling" — ten times
as the title of the composition. The same two proverbs were used also ten times
as a didactic and/or poetic conclusions. They wrote more imaginative than
realistic compositions. In one group of the subjects, they used composed mostly
fairy-tales while in another they composed more realistic ones, where their stories
took place at home or at school. The main character of their compositions tended
to be a peer — female or male but mostly without a name — in stories about
family relations or school.

In the third grade, the boundary between the fairy-tale period and realistic
period is clear. In this group, students used the five proverbs for titles and six
proverbs for conclusions. Half of the compositions included imaginative and half
realistic themes and places. The main characters in their compositions have first
names and they have an equal number of themes about home and free time.

The fourth graders demonstrated even more diversity in the type of com­
positions; these included imaginative, science-fiction, adventure, and detective
stories. They emphasised the realistic period with the key word for this adventure
period, travelling, in both reality or in imagination. They used eight proverbs as
a title and a large number of them in their conclusions. Some of the subjects
added the another proverb, "My home is my castle," and one student redefined
the proverb, "Clothes make the man," into "Feathers make the bird" in an
innovative composition. Surprisingly, some subjects in the fourth grade composed
retrospective stories or a story inside the story. Three subjects wrote com­
positions from the point of view of an adult or older person. A further difference
between the second, third, and fourth graders was that the latter often wrote
compositions in the first person singular.

4. Discussion

In the statistical analysis of the survey results, the third grade students used the
most proverbs and idioms in their composition (121), while second graders and
fourth graders used them 48 times, respectively. The reason for this may be the
following: First, third graders are in the transitional period between the concrete
and the abstract levels of intellectual development. Second, they are at the height
of creativity and divergent thinking of the elementary school age. In contrast,
fourth grade students are at the stage of creative crisis and they have divergent
literary interests including the more realistic types of adventure, detective,
humorous, and science fiction genres. Thus, the proverbs did not motivate them to write a modern type of composition.

In the fairy tale period, first and second graders need concrete or personal experience that is connected with the meaning of the metaphorical expression to understand it. Metaphors help them to make the connection between known and familiar to the new and unfamiliar. The metaphors extend their knowledge and help them to restructure what they know and add to a new viewpoint (see Walter). Students from the third and fourth grades are in the realistic stage. Their curiosity is directed towards the real world surrounding them. They prefer literature where place and time are exactly defined. The main character of the story preferred at this stage is a peer with whom the student can identify, for instance, a student who can cope with all possible situations, because he is clever, skilful, and inventive. These students’ curiosity is especially directed towards the present but which can sometimes tie in with the past and the future. An additional characteristic of this stage is the beginning of the pre-adolescent period with rebellion toward authority and this characteristic may explain the surprising result of the understanding of the idiom "As an ostrich."

5. Pedagogical Implications

Based on my previous studies and on the results of the present study, I submit that the teaching of metaphorical learning in elementary schools may be most meaningful. We could begin with the teaching of metaphorical meaning starting with the simile or comparison, followed by idioms, proverbs, fables, and fairy tales, and ending the elementary curriculum with other literary texts. At the same time, we could develop curricula with two main objectives: the development of basic metaphorical understanding and the development students’ own metaphorical creativity. The task and exercise of writing composition may serve as testing their comprehension. As students understand and apply proverbs and idioms, these will help them to interpret their personal experiences rationally. As well, the learned application of metaphors will help students to understand figurative language. A wider application of proverbs and idioms may also introduce students to other cultures beside their own.

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Works Cited


1. Introduction

Members of ethnic minorities are sometimes stigmatised as a "reading-threatened" group, a perception attributable to their educational background, their incomplete command of Dutch and their specific cultural backgrounds. In order to gain an objective picture of their reading attitude, however, it is important to examine the various aspects of the reading behaviour of ethnic minority children and to compare this behaviour with that of their indigenous peers. This will enable any obstacles to reading to be identified.

Several studies have shown that members of ethnic minorities occupy a weak position educationally. Many ethnic minority children are faced with difficulties as early as in the primary school system: the Royal Commission on Migrants Policy reported in 1989 that 89% of indigenous children pass through a normal school career, compared with only 60% of ethnic minority students who complete their primary education on schedule. In concrete terms this means that around one in three children from im/migrant families has to repeat a school year at least once. The transition from primary to secondary education is also anything but smooth. Onward movement to general academic education is weak and many children end up in vocational education. Roughly speaking, three reasons are usually put forward to explain the educational shortfall of members of ethnic minorities, with an interplay between individual student characteristics, environmental characteristics and the characteristics of the school itself (see De Jong, Kerkhoff and Hilpscher). Although the school career and performance of deprived indigenous students and deprived ethnic minority children generally run more or less parallel, the latter experience an additional handicap owing to the language barriers and the cultural differences at school.

Ethnic minority children whose mother tongue is not Dutch are presented with only a limited amount of language in Dutch in their immediate environment. This leads to a reduction in both their language acquisition and production in Dutch: ethnic minority children come into contact with Dutch in fewer places and less regularly. Moreover, the acquisition and production of Dutch is limited to horizontal relationships; if im/migrant children learn any Dutch at all at home...
and in the family circle, it is at best deficient Dutch; they hear Dutch most frequently from their colleagues. In addition, the Dutch which is employed at school often demands interpretative skills which the students do not possess. This is the case, for example, in factual subjects such as geography, history, etc., in which the language used tends to be abstract and "academic" in a more or less context-free way. This "cognitive academic language" differs according to Cummins greatly from the everyday spoken language and is geared mainly to written language skills in school learning situations. The abrupt transition from oral language skills in everyday contexts, or BICS (basic interpersonal communicative skills) to CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency) is a problem for many ethnic minority children since they have no opportunity to practice the school language use in an out-of-school context. This has implications for reading instruction. Students with a relatively low command of Dutch experience much more difficulty in acquiring reading and writing skills. It is not unthinkable that these students fall into a negative spiral: they find reading difficult, are less motivated and read less, and thus fall even further behind in their reading ability (see Nuttall 167-68).

Other elements besides linguistic factors can cause a lack of enthusiasm for reading. The immediate environment in which the child grows up, in particular the family unit, plays an important role in providing reading stimuli. Several researchers have reached the conclusion that children who grow up in a "book-friendly" climate more readily develop into intensive readers than children from families where there is little interest in books (see, for example, Gerlach; Bamberger et al.; Whitehead; Steinborn; Van Lierop). The family unit is normally the first social setting in which children are confronted with literature.

According to Van Peer four factors can be cited which promote the reading climate within the family: material facilities, the encouragement of reading by the parents, the attitudes and views of the parents with respect to reading and literature, and the interactions between parents and children. A harmonious combination of all these factors combined with a favourable affective family climate, leads to a positive reading climate (Van Peer 28-32). Bamberger et al. show a strong correlation between the reading climate in a family and the social milieu. They assume that intellectual skills such as reading generally enjoy more esteem in higher socio-economic settings; an assumed less favourable reading climate in families from lower social groups is explained on the basis of the lower level of education of the parents and their weaker occupational position. These claims are contradicted in another study, however: Steinborg and Franzmann show that the discrepancy between higher and lower social groups is extremely small and that a high regard for books can also exist in lower social milieus (163-70).

Research data on the reading culture in ethnic minority families in Flanders and the Netherlands are not plentiful, but indicate that the majority of first-generation im/migrants have little or no familiarity with the Flemish and Dutch
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reading infrastructure. The reading of newspapers and magazines, normally highly popular among Turkish, Moroccan, and Italian im/migrants, focuses strongly on the country of origin, as demonstrated by the fact that newspapers and magazines are most often read in the reader's own language. Only the better-educated also read a Dutch newspaper from time to time. For instance, Brassé and Verhoeven report on the popularity of reading newspapers and magazines among minority groups in the Netherlands while Schakenbos and Marsman treat the same issue in a broader European context. Books can count on much less success, however. Cammaert and Pels argue that the most acculturative influence comes from television. A TV screen acts as an important mediator between the known world and the "unknown" Western world. For Berber women living in Belgium, who are often wholly or partly illiterate, the television makes up for the limitations which they experience in their im/migrant situation. The television occupies an important place in their leisure time and offers them a mirror of the society in which they live. Books are absent in the majority of Turkish and Moroccan im/migrant families, a direct reflection of the high level of illiteracy among the mothers.

It must be remembered here that children's and youth literature is a very recent phenomenon in Morocco and Turkey, whose influence outside the urban agglomerations is very limited. People living in traditional Mediterranean regions such as rural areas of Morocco or Turkey also have a more traditional view of children, with different views on learning and play. Children are brought more quickly into the adult world. The lack of children's books is partially compensated for by a rich oral tradition; storytelling is a family event in which both adults and children participate.

2. The Object of the Present Study

In the introduction we outlined a number of factors which could offer a possible explanation for the fact that ethnic minority children are readily designated as a "reading-threatened" group. The aim of this study is to investigate whether this claim matches reality.1 To this end a number of aspects of the reading behaviour of ethnic minority children and indigenous children from a similar social milieu are compared. The influence on children's reading behaviour of external factors such as personal or environmental characteristics or characteristics of the reading material itself is also examined. The central theme running throughout the study is the question: How differently do ethnic minority children read? In this article we shall focus attention mainly on the reading frequency of books and on the reading motivation among ethnic minority children.

1 The present article is based on a study conducted by Ghesquiere and Ramaut.
2.1 The Sample

Before the study was under way, a number of choices were made regarding the composition of the study group. The upper and lower age limits were set at eight and fourteen years. The lower limit of eight was chosen on the basis of the assumption that students from the third year of primary school onwards possess the necessary reading skills to be able to read a book independently. We worked with Turkish, Moroccan, and Italian children because, with the exception of residents originating from the Netherlands, these ethnic groups are the best represented in Flanders in terms of numbers: of the 270,000 foreigners living in Flanders 16% are of Turkish origin, 16% of Moroccan origin and 9% of Italian origin (1993 Population Statistics). The Flemish informants who took part in the study were recruited from a comparable social milieu. This makes it possible to look for socio-cultural and linguistic elements influencing the reading behaviour in isolation from all socio-economic determinants. Naturally, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that the Flemish group studied is not representative for the entire young population, but represents the socio-economically less favoured group of indigenous residents.

The study was carried out in a classroom setting using a questionnaire and a language test. Schools were selected using a stratified sample based on an exhaustive list of all schools covered by the Priority Education Policy.² Fourteen primary and six secondary schools from the regions Ghent, Antwerp, and Genk took part in the study.

2.2 The Procedure

A written questionnaire was used in the second and third year of the primary schools and the first year of the secondary schools. Instructions were given to the whole class, following which the pupils answered each of the questions individually. The closed response categories of the questionnaire were used to measure various aspects of reading behaviour (reading in free time, reading frequency, reasons for reading, reading channels, genre preferences, etc.). In

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² The Priority Education Policy (Onderwijsvoorrangsbeleid) is part of a new education policy which was introduced at the start of the 1991/92 school year and in which attention was focused on reducing the educational shortfall of specific deprived pupils (ethnic minority and working-class children). Schools with a minimum number of target group pupils (10% of all pupils or twenty pupils) are allocated extra lesson periods with the aim of reducing the learning and development difficulties of these pupils. In the 1991/92 school year 30 primary schools and 52 secondary schools were involved in the Priority Education Policy.
order to assess their language ability in Dutch, the informants were also given a global, indirect language test (editing test).3

2.3 The Subjects
A total of 844 pupils took part in the study, of whom 272 were of Flemish origin, 237 Turkish, 223 Moroccan, and 112 Italian. Their average age at the time of the study was eleven years. All subjects came from families with a lower social status and were either born in Belgium or immigrated before the age of seven.4 The distribution between girls and boys was proportionate.

2.4 Language Ability
On average, ethnic minority students showed lower language ability in Dutch than indigenous students and scored below the group average across the board; the Turkish subjects achieved the lowest scores. Using Scheffé’s technique, the average scores in the language test were compared with each other in pairs. This showed that the ethnic minority students in the youngest and oldest age groups behaved as a single group, attaining significantly lower scores in the language test than the indigenous students. The differences between the Turkish students and the other ethnic minority students in the ten to twelve age group were also statistically significant.

2.5 Domestic Reading Culture
Based on four indicators (possession of books, reading behaviour of the parents, library membership of the parents, and reading aloud by the parents) a picture — admittedly fragmentary — indicated reading culture in the family. This showed that a distinction has to be made between Turkish and Moroccan families on the one hand and Flemish and Italian families on the other. In contrast to Flemish and Italian children, Turkish and Moroccan children generally grow up in an environment where reading stimuli are limited. The number of books present in a Turkish or Moroccan family is smaller than in an average Flemish family. The majority of Turkish and Moroccan parents rarely take part in activities to promote reading. The differences are most apparent among the

3 A separate language test was compiled for each age group. For this editing test we used a reading text taken from a school magazine aimed at Dutch-language pupils in the relevant age group. In each text, after a certain arbitrary number of words a word from a different text was added. The informants were asked to delete superfluous words so as to make the text legible once again. A reliability analysis showed the language test to be reliable for each age group: the central measure of internal consistency, the Cronbach’s alpha, amounted to 0.90, 0.93 and 0.95, respectively.

4 On the basis of the occupational prestige scale devised by Sixma and Ultee a division was made into three different socio-economic levels. This was measured on the basis of the occupation of both parents, with the highest score per family being used as the indicator for socio-economic status. Only pupils originated from a lower socio-economic milieu were included in our study.
mothers: 72% of all Moroccan mothers and 44% of all Turkish mothers never read a book or magazine (compared with 22% of all Italian and 13% of all Flemish mothers). Only 2% of all Moroccan mothers and 9% of all Turkish mothers visit the public library. Italian families are situated across the board between the indigenous and ethnic minority families.

While Turkish and Moroccan parents are unfamiliar with the Flemish reading culture, they have a marked feeling for their own oral tradition: storytelling occupies a much more important place in Turkish and Moroccan families than in indigenous families. We can thus assume that ethnic minority children receive few incentives to read from their home setting and come into contact with books via other channels.

3. Results: Quantitative Aspects of Reading Behaviour

3.1 Reading Frequency

Our findings show that eight to fourteen year-olds read a relatively large amount, although sport and audiovisual media occupy a more important place in their leisure time. Around 40% of children read one or more than one book per week, a norm which few adults manage. Comic strips are more successful than books, with 60% of all subjects reading one or more per week. The reading frequency of comic strips and books is little affected by ethnic determinants. A three-way variance analysis was performed on the reading frequency of both books and comic strips using three background variables (age, sex, and ethnic origin).

The results show that the reading intensity of books varies with age and sex. In line with earlier reading research we observe that girls read more books than boys. We also observe that the reading frequency of books falls off once children begin at secondary school. This is probably due to the increased pressure of school work, causing books to lose their attraction. Ethnic minority children read as many books as their indigenous contemporaries, and there is thus remarkably no direct correlation between the reading frequency of books and the ethnic origins of the subjects. In contrast to books, comic strips are not equally popular in every ethnic group; the variance analysis shows that Turkish children are considerably less familiar with this medium than Flemish, Italian and Moroccan children. This is probably owing to the relative unfamiliarity of the

5 The reading of books has been described as a sex-related phenomenon in the studies of Bamberger; Saxter; Steinborn and Franzmann; Tellegen and Catsburg; Köcher; Ghesquière.

6 The effect of age is tempered by the small interaction effect between age and origin. This is largely related to the low representativeness of the Italian group, which produced different responses to this question than expected.
comic strip medium in Turkey or the low availability of comic strips in the children's immediate environment.

As regards the reading of books, therefore, we can state that the reading behaviour of ethnic minority children does not deviate in quantitative terms from that of indigenous children from a similar social milieu. Both groups contain both non-readers and intensive readers. The reading of books is much more an age and gender related phenomenon.

3.2 The Correlation between Reading Frequency and Language Ability

Nuttall describes the reading process as a circular movement in which reading enjoyment, reading ability, and reading intensity are in constant interaction. People who read a lot read better and faster. They make progress in reading ability and encounter fewer problems of understanding. This generates more enjoyment from reading, which can act as a new stimulus to read, and so on (167-68). In our study, however, the prediction value of language ability proved lower than expected.

A statistically significant correlation between average language ability and reading frequency of books was found only in the group of children aged between eight and ten (see Ghesquiere and Ramaut 71-74). This could be related to the fact that these children are still in the midst of the learning-to-read phase; their reading competence is limited in comparison with older students and still has to be developed. Children with a high language ability in Dutch pass through the learning-to-read phase smoothly, have less difficulty with reading and read more. By reading a lot they develop new reading strategies and their general language ability is improved.

The results show that the correlation between reading frequency and language ability is only statistically significant among students with a low language ability,7 and is not found in children whose language ability has passed a certain threshold. This suggests that reading books progresses a good deal more smoothly where the children start from a certain language ability level.8 Once the Dutch language has been reasonably well mastered, the number of books read proves to be no longer dependent on the language ability which the reader has attained.

7 The division between "low language ability" and "high language ability" was made on the basis of the median. This is therefore a relative score which is only meaningful within our study.

8 In interpreting the results allowance must also be made for a possible test construct. It is possible that the language test as compiled by us offers few growth opportunities to high language-ability students, so that less linguistically able students rapidly reach the level of high language-ability students.
3.3 The Correlation between Reading Frequency and Domestic Reading Culture

As mentioned already, former research showed that children who grow up in a book-friendly climate develop more readily into intensive readers than children from families where there is little interest in books. Building on our findings, however, we can only state that the role of the parents in the reading advancement of their children is more limited than expected. The correlation between the individual reading-promoting elements in the family and the reading frequency of children is usually weak and only applies for one specific group. This is probably attributable to the socio-economic situation of the subjects.

It is striking that the mother, who is usually the central figure in providing reading stimuli in the family, is unable to play the role of mediator in Turkish and Moroccan families. This is probably owing to the fact that many first-generation im/migrant women are wholly or partly illiterate and have a poor command of Dutch. They do not possess the wherewithal to bring their children into contact with books. In Flemish and Italian families, by contrast, the reading behaviour of the mother has a positive influence on the reading frequency of their children ($X^2 = 13.48^{**}$) and there is a significant correlation between the library visiting behaviour of the mothers and that of their sons or daughters ($X^2 = 12.88^{**}$). It is also apparent that children whose parents read to them a lot in the past more readily develop into intensive readers than children whose parents read to them little or not at all. This correlation does not occur in Turkish and Moroccan families, where oral storytelling is a more frequent activity than reading aloud. However, storytelling has no direct influence on reading behaviour.

It must be borne in mind that the above findings apply only for children aged between eight and ten. From the age of ten onwards children appear less open to influence by the domestic reading climate and the teacher or peers will often continue the task of reading mediator. The following section looks in more depth at the factors which encourage children to read.

3.4 Motivational Aspects of Reading Behaviour

It is clear from the above that ethnic minority children also read, but the question remains as to why they read, as to who or what stimulates them to start reading. People read for a wide variety of reasons, ranging from the satisfaction given by the acquisition of information to emotional satisfaction owing to the removal of unpleasant feelings. Such forms of personal reading satisfaction are referred to under the title "primary reading motivation" (Tellegen and Catsburg 55-68). Motivated readers have a rich and varied needs pattern and, consequently, experience the urge to read much more often than readers with little motivation, who are often unaware of the possibilities offered by reading. And yet, reading activity does not arise purely as a response to personal needs; it can also be stimulated by exogenous elements. External book characteristics, such as the
cover or illustrations, can invite/challenge young readers to read. The child’s immediate environment (peers, parents, teachers) can also play a stimulating role in promoting reading.

In discussing reading motivations we are interested in the extent to which low language-ability students respond differently from students with a high language ability. On the basis of earlier research, it appears that students with low language ability become more rapidly demotivated from reading (Nuttall 167-68; Vermeer and Van de Gauchte 7-10). Ethnic minority children often have an incomplete command of Dutch because the amount of Dutch language presented to them is much reduced in terms of place and time and is also "impoverished." It is therefore quite possible that language barriers will cause these students to become more quickly discouraged with respect to reading.

3.5 Personal Reading Satisfaction

Following Steinborn and Franzmann and Saxer et al., our findings show that the subjects associate books in the first place with the acquisition of knowledge. They regard a book as a serious medium which has a primarily informative and didactic function. Reading in order to learn is an extension of the cognitive objectives at school. This perception often reduces personal reading satisfaction and emotional pleasure. Learning something new and learning a language are more important reading motivations for low language-ability children than for those with a high language ability. This confirms the findings of Saxer et al. and of Tellegen and Catsburg which show that slow learners are more familiar with reading for information than with intrinsic reading satisfaction. Low language-ability students read chiefly when they have an urgent need for information about a favourite hobby or a topic which interests them — and this brings us into the realm of external reading impulses — or for homework. One positive element is that low language-ability students are aware of the importance of reading as a language-acquisition stimulus or as a means of gathering information.

At the same time, however, there is a suspicion that many students with language ability problems do not really experience reading books as a relaxing and pleasurable leisure exercise, but much more as a school activity (see Ghesquiere and Ramaut 99). This suspicion is reinforced by the data relating to emotional/intrinsic reading satisfaction. It is clear that low language-ability students read less for relaxation. Girls with a high language ability emerge as the subgroup which most often derives pleasure from reading books, while low language-ability boys adopt the most negative attitude to books; they are less inclined to pick up a book in order to fill empty hours, being more interested in sport and games at such times. Intrinsic reading motivations are much more closely correlated with gender than language ability. In general, girls have a more positive attitude to reading than boys.
3.6 External Reading Impulses

According to Chambers, reading is by definition a social act: it is a communication process in which people enter into dialogue with one another (1991, 9-15, 1993, 16-25). Adult mediators such as teachers, parents, and librarians or friends form an indispensable link in the chain of the reading process. The opinion of third parties is an important criterion in the selection or evaluation of books. For example, a reader who has enjoyed a given book will want to pass on his/her reading experiences to friends and talk about the book he/she has read.

The findings show that the subjects often read a book because it is imposed upon them by school. This once again emphasises the fact that, for our study population, reading is an activity which is very strongly embedded in education. Compulsory reading can act as an encouragement to discover new genres and new authors, but it can equally well have the reverse effect. It is possible that a positive experience of reading and spontaneous reading behaviour is something which escapes many students and that they see reading as a boring, tedious task. The chance of this being the case is greater among low language-ability children than among students with high language ability. As regards the other forms of exogenous reading impulses, too, we found that low language-ability students are more sensitive to external influences than their high language-ability counterparts. Consequently, low language-ability students consistently achieve lower scores than high language-ability students. However, the differences are not always statistically significant. Children with language problems thus clearly have a greater need for supervision in the selection, reading and evaluation of books. The recommendations of the teacher, parents, or friends are not insignificant for these pupils. The stimulating role of these intermediaries is especially important for linguistically weak children aged between eight and ten; thereafter the influence of the teacher and parents declines and, remarkably enough, is not replaced by peer influence. Good readers probably find their own way to the library or bookshop, but there is a high probability that, without good supervision, children with reading difficulties will give up and gradually read less and less.

Finally, it appears that films and television series do not necessarily rule out the reading of books, but in some cases can actually stimulate the reading of a specific title. The concrete visualisation is an aid to reading for low language-ability students in particular. External book characteristics such as illustrations can also play a supporting role of reading. Drawings clarify and visualize the content of a story and create a certain atmosphere. Once again, mostly students with low language ability attach importance to this. The title and a brief list of contents are factors which have a very strong influence on eight to fourteen year-olds in the selection of a book. It should be noted here that, as regards the internal book characteristics, the responses to the questionnaire were determined not so much by the student’s language ability but much rather by the gender of the subjects. Girls prove to make much more conscious and deliberate book choices than boys.
4. Conclusion

On the basis of our study findings we cannot simply make the unqualified statement that children from ethnic minorities are more "reading-threatened" than Flemish working-class children. Ethnic minority children enjoy reading just as much and read on average as many books as their indigenous classmates from a similar social milieu. Seen quantitatively, the reading behaviour is thus virtually unaffected by ethnic determinants. Socio-economic factors such as low education level of the parents, the limited material possibilities of the families, and the less pronounced interest in reading on the part of the parents probably lie at the basis of the strongly similar reading frequency of indigenous and ethnic minority children.

Nevertheless, Turkish and Moroccan children usually grow up in a less favourable reading culture than Italian and Flemish working-class children. It follows, therefore, that many Turkish and Moroccan children develop different reading strategies. They first learn to deal with texts in a systematic way outside the family environment. The school — for Islamic children also the mosque — functions as an important depository of books and it is the teacher who in the first place offers children of low language ability a stimulus to read. This implies that reading is often seen as an extension of cognitive and educational objectives. "Reading to learn" is a prime reading incentive for many low language-ability children.

The fact that ethnic minority children read and that do not read in different parameters from their indigenous peers is in itself a positive fact. However, the data regarding the motivations for reading temper our initial optimism somewhat. For these children reading remains first and foremost a school activity. It is a significant hypothesis, however, that ethnic minority students, who, because of their incomplete command of the main-stream language (Dutch), develop spontaneous reading behaviour less readily, nonetheless should be encouraged to develop a permanent interest in reading. There is an important task here for schools and for educational politicians. Only reading instruction which goes further than the acquisition of knowledge and language and which is consciously aimed at developing reading pleasure will be capable of achieving this. In addition, external factors such as encouragement by third parties, the filming of a book or illustrations can help to foster independent reading.

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Remembering Who Said What in Short Stories

Multiple agents are constructed when a reader deeply comprehends a novel or short story. Each agent has human qualities in the sense that the agent is capable of speaking, perceiving, believing, knowing, wanting, acting, and experiencing emotions. There is a society of character agents, those within the space of the storyworld. These character agents include the protagonists, the antagonists, minor characters, and characters that are functionally props. There normally is one agent for each character in the storyworld, although it is possible in principle for multiple agents in the mind to be attached to a single character referent. For example, Superman and Clark Kent are conceptually two separate agents but the same referent. A novel about a person with multiple personalities (Sibyl or The Three Faces of Eve) would have one character in flesh and blood but functionally several agents in the reader’s mind. When a character radically changes in a literary narrative, a reader might construct functionally separate agents, as in the case of the child being different than the adult in an autobiography or the case of a character being inflicted with amnesia and ending up fundamentally transformed. However, these complex and fuzzy instances of agency are not the concern of this article. There was only one agent per character in the storyworlds associated with the literary short stories that we investigated.

In addition to the society of character agents, there is a second ensemble of agents that we will call pragmatic agents. The pragmatic agents include the narrator, narratee, writer, imaginary reader, and actual reader. The narrator communicates to the narratee. The writer uses the communication between the narrator and the narratee as a vehicle for communicating to actual and imaginary readers. Some pragmatic agents may be very salient, such as when the narrator explicitly introduces itself (e.g., “Today I will tell you a story about a disturbed husband”). However, some pragmatic agents may be invisible to most readers who have not been trained on the subtleties of literature, as we will discuss later.

The agents are not always distinct from one another. Sometimes there are collections of character agents, such that individual agents lose their separateness. This occurs when there are alliances, families, and organizations. When reading
the sentence, "The Smiths always hated the McPhearsons," for example, there is no guarantee that every Smith hated every McPhearson; readers may lose track of who hates whom. When reading "The Smiths told the McPhearsons to stay away from their land," exactly which Smith (or collection of Smiths) did the talking and which McPhearsons did the listening? When reading "The United States insisted that Japan lower their taxes on imports," exactly what agents are doing the speaking and what agents are doing the listening? Answers to such questions will prove indeterminate.

Sometimes pragmatic agents are amalgamated with character agents. This can be illustrated when contrasting the first-, second-, and third-person narrator.

First-person narrator: I went to work on Tuesday and I found out I lost my job.
Second-person narrator: You go to work on Tuesday and find out you lost your job.
Third-person narrator: He went to work on Thursday and found out he lost his job.

The narrator agent is a totally separate agent from the character agent in the case of third-person narration. This separation of agents perhaps explains why third-person narration is the most popular form. The readers can keep the agents separated in their minds. Sometimes the third-person narrator is "omniscient." That is, the third-person narrator has a privileged access to the mental states of all of the characters as this omniscient narrator tells the story to the narratee.

In the case of first-person narration, the narrator agent is amalgamated with a character agent. Sometimes this character is the protagonist or some other important character in the storyworld. This allows the reader to see the world and experience consciousness from the point of view of the important character. However, the writer may want to create an objective stance or a biased view by telling the story from the point of view of a neutral character (such as a newspaper reporter who is trying to solve a crime) or an unusual character (such as the story being told from the point of view of the dog). When the narrator agent is amalgamated with the character agent, the narrator relinquishes any direct access to the mental states of the other characters.

In the case of second-person narration, there is an amalgamation of several agents: narrator, narratee, character, and reader. This form may be used by the writer to increase reader involvement. The reader is swept up and seduced into the storyworld. The reader presumably loses sight of the boundaries among the separate forms of agency.

Our multiagent view of literature, communication, and discourse is hardly a novel invention. It is endorsed explicitly or implicitly by virtually all scholars in narratology, film, literature, and literary criticism (see, e.g., Bakhtin; Banfield; Chafe; Chatman; Fludernik; Leech and Short; Prince; Van Peer and Maat). These scholars have identified the different types of agents (although they may not call them agents), voices, levels of communication between agents, structures of embedded communication, and unusual configurations of agents. The multiagent
view is not confined to the provinces of literature, but extends to contemporary theories of oral discourse (Clark; Schober), learning (Rogoff), and artificial intelligence (Franklin and Graesser; Minsky). Indeed, some of us believe that the 1990s is the decade of understanding multiagent systems.

Although multiagent theories have been around for centuries but it is only recently that psychologists have attempted to understand how readers comprehend text and discourse as a multiagent system. Herbert Clark has explored how utterances in conversations are carefully constructed in a fashion that caters to the knowledge and attitudes of the speaker, addressee, bystanders, and onhearsers. The speaker does not merely transmit messages to the addressee and then the addressee decodes them; instead, the addressee (and other agents) helps the speaker construct utterances by giving back-channel feedback ("uh-huhm," head nod), repairing speaker slips, filling in words, and providing memory cues. Experimental psychologists have composed experimenter-generated texts and artificial scenarios for in order to test specific claims about the reader's ability to take the point of view of different agents (Albrecht, O'Brien, Mason, and Myers; Gerrig; Keysar; Özyürek and Trabasso; De Vega, Diaz, and Leon). Only a few psychological studies have explored the construction of multiagent representations when the materials involves bona fide literature (Duchan, Bruder, and Hewitt; Graesser, Bowers, Bayen, and Hu; Graesser, Swamer, and Hu; Noice and Noice; Sanders).

We have recently been exploring how well readers keep track of the various agents when they comprehend literary short stories (Graesser, Bowers, Bayen and Hu; Graesser, Swamer, and Hu). One of the central assumptions of the multiagent framework is that each agent is capable of speaking, perceiving, believing, knowing, wanting, acting, and experiencing emotions. Therefore, if readers are perfect in tracking the agents, then they should be able to accurately track what each agent does, says, wants, feels, perceives, knows, believes, etc. They should track this knowledge both during comprehension and after comprehension is achieved. At this point, our studies have examined agent tracking after comprehension is finished. We hope to dissect agent tracking during on-line comprehension in future research.

Our approach to assessing how well readers track agents is rather straightforward. Readers first read a literary short story at their own pace for enjoyment. A few minutes after they finish the story, we test whether the readers can remember how particular agents apprehend particular propositions about the storyworld. That is, are readers able to keep track of who said what, who knows what, who saw what, who likes what, and so on. For example, suppose that one of the characters expresses a proposition "P" (e.g., "Jack lost his job"). Can the reader remember or accurately judge whether each character in the storyworld said, knew, saw, liked, and wanted a P?
From a computational perspective, an accurate tracking of agents would be a very difficult achievement. Suppose there were 10 cognitive expressions or "propositional attitudes" associated with an expression: X said P, X like P, X want P, X knew P, X saw P, X heard P, etc. Suppose further that there were 10 agents in the storyworld and 1000 propositions about the storyworld. There would be 10 x 10 x 1000 = 100,000 expressions to evaluate. There would indeed be a combinatorial explosion problem when viewed from this computational perspective. However, there might be ways to circumvent the combinatorial explosion. Perhaps the reader only stores explicit expressions and derives particular inferences as they are needed. Perhaps there are a set of inference rules (i.e., meaning postulates) that assist the reader in generating some expressions inferentially (e.g., IF X said P, THEN X knows P). Perhaps packages of familiar world knowledge in long-term memory assist the reader in rapidly filling in many of the expressions inferentially. Our own investigations of inference generation during narrative comprehension suggested this (Graesser, Millis, and Zwaan; Graesser, Singer, and Trabasso), but this body of research has not examined inferences about the propagation of knowledge among multiple agents in a storyworld.

The present study investigated how well readers are able to remember "who said what?" after they read literary short stories. We selected a sample of speech acts that were expressed in the story by either the narrator or characters in the story. At test time, we presented the readers test statements (referring to speech acts) and asked them to decide who expressed the statements. There were four options: the narrator, character A, character B, or neither (the statement was a false claim and never expressed by any agent). We essentially applied a "source memory" paradigm to these narrative materials (Johnson, Hashtroudi, and Lindsay; Riefer, Hu, and Batchelder). This paradigm permitted us to use a mathematical model which extracts three classes of parameters; each parameter has a value that ranges from 0 to 1.

1) Sentence detection. This parameter measures the extent to which the reader is able to remember whether proposition P is a true or a false proposition about the storyworld. The symbol for this parameter is t, which stands for truth.

2) Source discrimination. This parameter measures the extent to which the reader can remember which agent said P. The symbol for this parameter is d.

3) Guess bias. Parameters estimate the extent to which the reader correctly guesses that P is true or that an agent said P.

A new level of methodological rigor is achieved in our mathematical modeling of the collected on "Who said what?" Our analysis of agent tracking is not based on our literary intuitions, the lofty claims by literary scholars, or the qualitative impressions of a sample of readers. Such claims are frequently incorrect or misleading when they are articulated as facts about the mental states of readers. Instead, our methods are based on a precise measurement of memory and a
mathematically sophisticated analysis of the data. Moreover, we can apply these methods to bona fide literary texts (not experimenter-generated "textoids") under normal reading conditions.

When examining the source discrimination parameters, we were particularly interested in comparisons between the narrator agents and the character agents. This comparison is interesting because different predictions are offered by alternative theoretical positions. According to one theoretical position, a third-person narrator is invisible to the reader unless there are obvious explicit features in the text that point to the existence of the narrator (see Banfield; Duchan, Bruder, and Hewitt; Gerrig). The third-person narrator is not constructed as an agent that is tracked by the reader. Instead, the reader gets lost in understanding the events in the storyworld and does realize there are acts of communication between a narrator and narratee. This invisible third-person narrator hypothesis generates the following prediction on the values of the source discrimination parameters: \( d \) (character) > \( d \) (third-person narrator) = 0.

There is an alternative structural prominence hypothesis that makes quite different predictions about the status of third-person narrators compared to character agents. According to this position, the communication between the narrator and narratee is at a structurally higher level than the communication between one character agent and another character agent. The structural analysis is depicted below.

**TOP LEVEL:** tell (narrator, narratee, BOTTOM LEVEL)
**BOTTOM LEVEL:** tell (character A, character B, proposition P)

The narrator agent is at a higher level structurally so it should be more salient to the reader. The resulting prediction would be: \( d \) (character) < \( d \) (third-person narrator).

What about the status of the first-person narrator? The first-person narrator would presumably have some advantages in source discrimination according to a multiagent position. The first-person narrator is an amalgamation of a character agent and a narrator agent. This amalgamation should enhance salience, conceptual richness, and multiple memory retrieval paths. It would be difficult to imagine a theoretical position that would place the first-person narrator at a disadvantage compared to character agents and third-person narrator agents. Thus, the predictions are: \( d \) (character) < \( d \) (first-person narrator); and \( d \) (third-person narrator) < \( d \) (first-person narrator).

It is possible that instructions and experience with the test might influence the patterns of source discrimination data. For example, if readers are instructed to pay attention to "who said what," because they will be tested on this later (an intentional comprehension condition), then they may be more attuned to the agents than when they are not told how they would be tested (an incidental comprehension condition). In order to assess this possibility empirically, half the
readers were randomly assigned to an Intentional condition and half to an Incidental condition. Similarly, readers might behave differently after they have had experience with the source discrimination test. The readers read and were tested on two stories, such that they knew what the test was like before they read and were tested on the second story. Source discrimination scores might radically improve after the readers have had experience with the test.

Methods of Testing Who Said What

Stories
The two literary stories that were selected were written by famous authors. The story written in first-person narration was "Almost Her," by Bridget Mazur. This nine-page short story involved a sexual-romantic intrigue with three main characters: Vicky (the narrator), David (Vicky’s husband), and Jim (David’s brother). Vicky was married to David, but there was a mutual attraction between Vicky and Jim. The episodes in the story involved conversations among characters in various settings, such as a bar and a living room. Speech act sentences were extracted from these conversations and the conscious experiences of Vicky when we prepared the test sentences.

The story in third-person narration was "The Conscience of the Cop," by William Fay. This fourteen-page story begins with a police officer killing a robber while the robber was robbing a clerk in a store. The conscience of the police officer suffered, so he had a series of conversations with the robber’s relatives and friends in an effort to learn more about the robber. The police officer finds out that the robber was an exceptionally good person and citizen, for most of the story, but at the end it is revealed that the robber was truly a scoundrel. The three agents of interest were the third-person narrator, the police officer, and a good friend of the robber. Once again, speech act sentences were extracted from these conversations and assertions by the narrator.

Test Sentences
We selected 72 speech act sentences from each of the two stories. The narrator was the speaker for 24 sentences, character A was the speaker for 24 sentences, and character B was the narrator for 24 sentences. Each of these selected sentences could have been spoken by any of the three agents. This constraint eliminated the potential criticism that readers could easily guess who said what on the basis of the intrinsic meaning of the test sentence and the general story context. Some example test items are presented below in the context of "Almost Her":

Who said that if forced to choose someone else to sleep with, Vicky would choose Jim?
Who said that earlier in their lives, Vicky read the poems that Jim had written to Michel(l?e)?
Who said that Jim had a girlfriend in Boston while he was in a relationship with Michel?e?

There were four options available to the readers when they answered each of these questions: Vicky (the narrator), David (character A), Jim (character B), and Neither (none of the three agents said it because it was not a true statement about the storyworld).

The "Neither" sentences were systematically generated by transforming the original 72 sentences in each story. For each original sentence, there was a yoked false sentence. The yoked false sentence had the same wording as the original sentence except for a word or phrases that changed the meaning and made the statement false. The word or phrase that was substituted was mentioned elsewhere in the story, so there were never any words the reader encountered in the story. This is an important control; we did not want to have readers mark the "Neither" alternative simply because there was a lexical item that did not occur in the story. The yoked sentence for the first example original sentence above would be: "Who said that if forced to choose someone else to sleep with, David would choose Michele?"

Four different versions of the test booklet were prepared for each story. The different versions were needed in order to distribute the false items. In any given version of the test booklet, there were 18 original sentences spoken by the narrator, 18 original sentences spoken by character A, 18 original sentences spoken by character B, and 18 yoked false sentences (i.e., 6 transformed sentences from the narrator, character A, and character B). We counterbalanced the assignment of false sentences among the four versions so that the correct answer in any one booklet would be 25% each for the narrator, character A, character B, and neither.

Procedure

The readers were 32 college students who were enrolled in an introductory psychology class at the University of Memphis. They received course credit for their participation in the study. Half of the readers were assigned to the Incidental comprehension condition and half to the Intentional comprehension condition. The readers in the Incidental condition were instructed to read the story carefully and slowly enough to enjoy the story, and that they would be asked questions about the story later. The readers in the Intentional condition were also told to pay careful attention to "Who said what?" because they would be tested on this later; these readers were also given a definition of the narrator and were encouraged to keep track of whether statements were expressed by the narrator.

After each reader was given the instructions, they read the first story at their own pace. Half of the readers within each condition were given "Almost Her" first and half were given "Conscience of the Cop" first. The readers kept track
of their reading times by recording the times for when they started and finished reading the story. After they were finished reading the first story, they were given the source memory test. For each of the 72 items in the response booklet, they marked which of the four response options was correct (narrator, character A, character B, versus neither). The readers were reminded about the identity of each of the three agents, including the first-person or third-person narrators.

The readers were given the second story after they completed the reading and testing of the first story. If they read "Almost Her first," then they read the "Cop" story second, and vice versa. It should be noted that the readers knew how they were being tested before they read the second story. Therefore, the second reading is analogous to an intentional comprehension situation in both the Incidental and Intentional conditions. It is only the first story of the Incidental comprehension condition in which the readers were totally unaware of how they would be tested; this cell is most representative of natural reading conditions.

Results of the Testing of Who Said What

The most obvious measure of performance is the probability of making a correct response. Specifically, what is the likelihood that readers made the correct decision about who said what? Table 1 presents these probability scores as a function of the four types of items (narrator, character A, character B, and neither). These scores are segregated for the two stories, the two instruction conditions (Incidental versus Intentional), and the two readings (first versus second story read). It should be noted that chance performance is .25 because there were four options to select from.

Table 1
Probability of Readers' Giving Correct Decisions on Who Said What

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who Actually Said What?</th>
<th>Narrator</th>
<th>Character A</th>
<th>Character B</th>
<th>Neither</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Almost Her&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(first-person narration)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incidental Comprehension</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read First</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read Second</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentional Comprehension</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read First</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read Second</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The pattern of scores in Table 1 supports the invisible third-person narrator hypothesis rather than the structural prominence hypothesis. The mean score was .51 for the third-person narrator in the "Cop" story when averaging over the two learning conditions and the two readings. This score is lower than the corresponding mean scores for characters A and B (.62). There are 8 pairwise comparisons when comparing this third person narrator to characters A and B in the four rows associated with the "Cop" story. Six out of 8 of these comparisons are in the predicted direction, whereas there is 1 tie and 1 comparison that is opposite to the prediction of the invisible third-person narrator hypothesis; this was almost, but not quite significant according to a sign test (p < .06).

The pattern of scores in Table 1 also supports the claim that the first-person narrator is more salient than character narrators. The mean of the scores across the rows for "Almost Her" indicated the probability of a correct response was .65 for the first-person narrator and .57 for the character agents. A sign test showed a significant difference because 7 out of 8 pairwise comparisons were in the predicted direction (p < .05).

There were a few differences between the Incidental Learning and Intentional Learning conditions, and between the first and second readings. For example, there apparently was some fatigue because scores were higher in the first reading than the second reading, .62 versus .53, respectively; this is significant according to a sign test. Performance in the Incidental Learning condition was a bit higher, but not significantly higher, in the Incidental comprehension condition than the Intentional comprehension condition, .58 versus .56, respectively. Therefore, the probability of making correct decisions on who said what did not improve when readers were explicitly told to focus on who said what. Comprehension mechanisms are apparently so robust that such instructions have little impact on the readers.

The data in Table 1 present a clear picture of the relative salience of the three classes of agents. The ordering of salience is first-person narrator > characters > third-person narrator. Unfortunately, however, the probability of making a correct decision is not a pure measure of how well readers can remember who said what. The scores in Table 1 are not a pure measure of source discrimination because they are contaminated by components such as sentence detection (i.e., whether the sentence is true or false) and guessing biases. Therefore, it is critical to formulate a mathematical model that segregates the different components that
I
Arthur C. Graesser, Cheryl Bowers, Brent Olde, and Mary Chen

contribute to correct responding (the processing tree model developed by Riefer, Hu, and Batchelder was adopted for this purpose).

The processing tree model segregates three classes of parameters, all of which have values ranging from 0 to 1. The sentence detect parameters assess the extent to which a sentence is judged to be true or false with respect to the story. There is one parameter for each source: \( t_n \), \( t_A \), and \( t_B \) for the narrator, character A, and character B, respectively. The source discrimination parameters measure memory for who said what, given that the sentence was detected as a true statement about the story world. There is a parameter associated with each of the three sources: \( d_n \), \( d_A \), and \( d_B \). There are multiple parameters that reflect different types of guessing. The parameter \( b \) is the likelihood of guessing that a test sentence was true, given that the reader never accessed the sentence from memory. The parameter \( a_n \) is the likelihood of guessing that the narrator spoke, given that the reader did successfully access the sentence from memory but forgot who spoke. There is an analogous parameter for character A (namely \( a_A \)), whereas the value of the parameter for character B is derived as \( (1-a_A) \). Similarly, the likelihood of guessing the narrator, character A, and character B when there is no memory for anything is \( g_n \), \( g_A \), and \( (1-g_A) \), respectively. There is a total of 11 free parameters in this mathematical model when it is applied to our data.

With these parameters, it is possible to compute the likelihood of readers' making various types of correct decisions, as well as their likelihood of making incorrect decisions. For example, the measured likelihood of correctly responding that the narrator spoke, given that the narrator actually did speak, is computed as is as follows: \( p(\text{decide narrator} | \text{narrator actually spoke}) = t_n[d_n + (1-d_n)a_n] + (1-t_n)bg_n \). It is beyond the scope of this article to specify completely how such a formula would be derived; it is based on a stochastic processing tree model that was developed by Riefer, Hu, and Batchelder. One branch of the tree evaluates whether the sentence was detected from memory. If the sentence is successfully fetched from memory, then the next branch evaluates who spoke the sentence; if that decision is correct, then a correct decision is made. However, whenever there is a breakdown in remembering the sentence or the source, then particular types of guessing occur.

The mathematical model simulates frequency data in a 4x4 decision matrix. Table 2 presents the decision matrix for the "Cop" story when the story is read for the first time in the Incidental comprehension condition. This is an interesting set of data to look at for two reasons. First, this is the situation in which the reader has received no instructions about who said what and has not yet been tested. This is most akin to normal reading conditions. Second, this involves the row of data from Table 1 in which the predictions of the invisible third-person narrator hypothesis were violated; all other rows had data that were perfectly compatible with this hypothesis. In addition to the frequency matrix, Table 2 presents the best-fit values for all 11 parameters when the processing tree model
was used to simulate the frequencies. This set of 11 parameter values optimally fits the data; that is, there is a minimum discrepancy between the simulated frequencies and the objected frequencies.

The processing tree model provided an excellent fit to the frequencies in the decision matrix presented in Table 2. In fact, the simulated data did not significantly differ from the obtained data, chi-square (1) = 2.23, p > .10, so the model fit like a glove. As indicated in Table 2, the third-person narrator was entirely invisible to the reader because the source discrimination parameter was 0 for the narrator. The reader was entirely unable to remember whether the narrator spoke and could only manage guesses. However, there was excellent source discrimination for the two character agents (.84 and .78 for characters A and B). The source discrimination parameter was significantly lower for the narrator than for the characters in a statistical test that compared the source discrimination parameters, chi-square (2) = 15.17, p < .05. These results provide very strong support for the invisible third-person narrator hypothesis.

Table 2
Decision Matrix for the First Reading of the "Cop" Story in the Incidental Comprehension Condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Readers' Decisions about Who Said What</th>
<th>Narrator</th>
<th>Character A</th>
<th>Character B</th>
<th>Neither</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who Actually Said What</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character A</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character B</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parameter Values

Source Discrimination:  
\[d_n = .00, \quad d_A = .84, \quad d_B = .78\]

Sentence detection:  
\[t_n = .70, \quad t_A = .60, \quad t_B = .68\]

Guessing:  
\[a_n = .81, \quad a_A = .86, \quad b = .43\]
\[g_n = .38, \quad g_A = .76\]

The finding that there was no source discrimination memory for the third-person narrator was replicated when we performed the same analyses on the second reading of the story in the Incidental comprehension condition. This is an entirely different group of readers than the readers who contributed to the data in Table 2. The source discrimination parameters were .00, .78, and .86 for the
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narrator, character A, and character B, respectively. Support for the invisible third-person narrator hypothesis is apparently quite reliable.

The poor source discrimination for sentences spoken by the third-person narrator cannot be explained by the notion that we selected narrator sentences that were intrinsically difficult. The three sentence detection parameters in Table 2 are very similar quantitatively and do not significantly differ. They also did not significantly differ for the second reading of the "Cop" story in the incidental comprehension condition, .66, .70, and .77 for the narrator, character A, and character B, respectively.

The processing tree model was next used to simulate the data for "Almost Her" in the two incidental comprehension conditions. Once again, this story had a first-person narrator, which was expected to be a very salient agent compared to the character agents. The model adequately fit the data in both the first and the second readings of "Almost Her." The source discrimination parameters were higher for the third-person narrator (.84 and .85) than the characters (.12, .83, .55, and .53); the differences in agents were statistically significant, chi-square (4) = 18.49, p < .05. Therefore, the first-person narrators are the most salient agents of all because they have the highest source discrimination.

The parameters in the intentional comprehension condition showed above-zero discrimination for the third-person narrator, but otherwise the pattern of data was quite similar to that of the incidental comprehension condition. There was a significant deviation between the model and the data when all four cells were included in the analysis (2 stories x 2 testing orders, chi-square (4) = 15.18, p < .05. However, the mean source discrimination parameter values had the expected trends. In "Almost Her," the first-person narrators (.78) were higher than the character agents (.58). In the "Cop" story, the third-person narrators (.48) were lower than the character agents (.73).

Discussion

The results of this empirical study are clear-cut and support a number of conclusions. One conclusion is that college student readers, under normal reading conditions, do not construct agents that correspond to impersonal, omniscient, and third-person narrators. This outcome is compatible with claims in literary criticism (Banfield) and psychonarratology (Duchan, Bruder, and Hewett; Gerrig) that the reader gets lost in the storyworld and does not imagine a communication between a narrator and narratee. Of course, a third-person narrator is constructed when the text has salient cues that manifest the existence of the narrator (e.g., "Let me tell you the story about..."). When this occurs, there is a "deictic shift" to the communicative exchange, perhaps at the expense of fleshing out some of the details of the storyworld.

Our results supported a second conclusion about the third-person narrator. The reader constructs a third-person narrator when instructed to do so. We found that
the third-person narrator was indeed constructed in the Intentional comprehension condition, where the narrator was defined and the reader was instructed to keep track of what the narrator said. Therefore, there may be noticeable benefits in training individuals about literature and the various agents that lurk behind the pages. Literary training may make the invisible agents more visible. Additional evidence for this claim exists in the field of education. Students comprehend expository text at a much deeper level when they are trained to imagine the writer of the text and to critically evaluate the merits of what the writer is communicating. However, there are limits to this approach when applied to literary narrative. Imagine a student reading Mark Twain or Shakespeare and critically challenging the authors and narrators. What would happen to the time-honored "willing suspension of disbelief"?

The third conclusion is that first-person narrators are more salient than normal character agents. One explanation of this is that two agents are attached to a first-person narrator: the narrator agent and the character agent. Thus, multiple functions are served and richer elaborations are constructed. If it is true that salience increases as a function of the number of agents that are attached to a referent, then we would expect second-person narrators to be particularly salient. Second-person narrators consist of an amalgamation of four agents: character, narrator, narratee, and reader. This explanation predicts the following gradient in salience: second-person narrator > first-person narrator > character agent > third-person narrator. Additional research is needed to test this predicted gradient of salience on a larger sample of stories.

A fourth conclusion is that the source memory paradigm has provided a rigorous method of systematically investigating the construction of agents during comprehension. The method allows us to assess how well readers track agents that are visible in the text and those that are possibly invisible. The mathematical model provides a rigorous and precise tracking of the agents. In our view, this is a landmark improvement over the normal state of affairs in the field, where researchers base their claims on intuitions, on the grand proclamations of literary "experts," and on qualitative impressions of a sample of readers. Our methodology helps to move the enterprise from a soft, qualitative, scholarly activity to a rigorous science based on empirical and testable evidence.

In the future, we hope to explore how readers track and remember other properties of agents, such as knowing, seeing, wanting, and liking. We have already made some progress on the tracking of "Who knows what?" (Graesser, Bowers, Bayen, and Hu; Graesser, Swamer, and Hu). Suppose, for example, that Vicky tells Jim that she is pregnant. In this example, Vicky is the speaker and Jim is the addressee. As a consequence of this speech act, both the speaker and addressee would presumably know proposition P (Vicky is pregnant). But what other agents in the storyworld would end up knowing this, after the news has had a chance to propagate? Would a bystander end up knowing, such as a waitress near the conversation? Would an overhearer end up knowing, such as an
eavesdropper at an adjacent table? How about a friend of Vicky who is not anywhere near the conversation? What about a stranger in the neighborhood? The society of agents in normal conversation and in social reality may go some distance in guiding our understanding of the dissemination of knowledge in a literary storyworld. On the other hand, perhaps not. Answers to such questions await future research.

University of Memphis

Works Cited


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1. Introduction

This study continues our investigation of the nature of expertise in literary processing (see Graves 1996; Graves and Frederiksen; Graves and Renaud) with the goal of contributing to the development of an empirically-based cognitive theory of literary reading. Specifically, it presents a descriptive profile of literary scholars' reading activity in order to examine the influence of domain-specific knowledge and more generic literary knowledge on text descriptions and reasoning strategies. Drawing on cognitive science investigations of expert performance (see Ericsson and Smith), this research into literary expertise adheres to the view put forward by Ericsson and Charness, namely, that expertise develops over many years of practice in conjunction with specific training in a domain of specialization. In addition, it distinguishes between domain-specific expertise associated with a specialized subject matter and the more general, generic expertise associated with a field of practice (see Patel and Groen). This approach does not assume that there is a causal relationship between the training of literary scholars and their text descriptions but rather that it is possible to provide a descriptive account of some of the similarities and differences among members socialized into a specific community of practice.

Theorists of literature who address the relation between author, reader, and text (e.g., Currie; Eco; Rosenblatt) conceptualize literary reading as a dynamic transaction in which many interconnected factors contribute to a reader's response and that the reading response is always in relation to a text and guided by textual clues. Currie, for instance, suggests that the way in which these components contribute to the reader's response depend on the reader's assumptions about the author's intentions; Eco argues that the notion of unlimited semiosis does not lead to the conclusion that interpretation has no criteria thus suggesting in turn that textual coherence controls the reading process and acceptable interpretation is a matter supported by internal textual evidence. This paper explores some of the interpretive criteria as demonstrated in the text descriptions of literary experts and addresses the following questions:
1) What types of knowledge and strategies are brought into play when a domain specialist applies her/his knowledge of specific periods, authors, styles, and genres to describe a literary text in her/his area of expertise?

2) How does this compare with the more general knowledge and strategies of generic expertise which draws on a wide range of literary conventions and analytical tools to describe a literary text outside of one's specialty area?

3) How does domain-specific knowledge become abstracted and applied to the analysis of a literary text outside of the reader's area of specialization?

So that the distinctions between domain-specific and generic expertise have a context within which they should be understood, this paper will begin with background information which reviews briefly some of our findings which characterize literary reading generally, as well as the role of generic literary expertise in text description. This will be followed by a description of the method used in the study and a presentation of selected results.

2. Background

2.1 A Model of Literary Reading

To investigate subject-matter and generic expertise associated with describing a literary text, a cognitive model of literary reading (see Graves 1995) was applied to readers' text descriptions to identify: 1) The multiple representational levels of text descriptions generated by readers, that is, linguistic, propositional, and conceptual frame structures (descriptive, narrative, dialogue, and problem frames) as well as the discourse perspective for each description (text, author, and reader) and 2) The patterns of readers' reasoning to determine the text's structure, coherence, and scope. The analysis of reasoning identifies claims, hypotheses, analogies, expectations, questions, evaluations, and meta-statements and the manner in which they are linked by relations of condition, elaboration, or reiteration. This allows the researcher to examine the coherence of readers' reasoning. In addition, the reasoning operations and links between them are situated at one of three levels: the fact level which is text-specific, the local level which involves some inferential processing but is still very much linked to the text base, and the global level which is the most abstract and includes broad integrative inferences. From an examination of the reasoning levels, it is possible to investigate the scope of readers' reasoning strategies.

2.2 Literary Reading: The General Case

Our results suggest that aspects of literary reading in general pertain to the construction of a situation model and a coherent argument structure for literary experts and as well as for less experienced students of literature (see Graves). The findings are based on the similarities in the text descriptions and reasoning patterns found when different groups of readers — who are clearly defined with
respect to their knowledge of, and experience with, literature — perform the same task with the same texts.

*The situation model.* In our previous investigations of the representational aspects of readers’ text descriptions, that is, the linguistic, propositional and conceptual frame levels, we found that all readers regardless of expertise provided many more descriptions of the conceptual frames than of either linguistic or propositional information (see Graves). These findings have led us to conclude that, in general, the literary reader’s initial focus is on the construction of a situation model of the text. Basically, the reader’s first task is to make sense of what is going on in the text.

*A coherent argument structure.* In addition, our analysis of the reasoning patterns of readers also suggested reasoning activities which reflect some general properties of literary reasoning. All readers applied textual evidence in conjunction with their prior knowledge to confirm or refute their reasoning operations, that is their claims, hypotheses, analogies, expectations, and evaluations pertaining to the text. The elaboration and reiteration of many of these reasoning operations resulted in a coherent structure of argumentation.

2.3. Literary Reading: The Case of Generic Expertise

The following findings — pertaining to expert readers only — reflect the role of generic literary expertise since the literary experts were reading texts not in their areas of specialization and were reading the texts for the first time. Here, I will describe two dimensions where expert readers differed from student readers.

*The communicative context.* The first difference comes from an analysis of the discourse perspectives which reveals the number of readers’ descriptions which were generated from the text perspective only (e.g., "the syntax is complex") or with reference to a model of the author (e.g., "here the author’s use of syntax...") or with reference to a model of the reader (e.g., "the syntax is difficult for the reader"). The results show that expert readers constructed a communicative context for their reading which included a model of the author and the reader and that this was the case regardless of the text read. Support for this latter conclusion comes from having the same expert readers perform an identical reading task with different texts. Figures 1 and 2 (see Appendix) present findings from a comparison of the text descriptions of the expert readers for *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker and *The English Patient* by Michael Ondaatje and that distinguishes the contribution of text characteristics from readers’ knowledge and experience.

Figure 1 illustrates the discourse perspectives constructed by the generic experts for the same two texts and showed no differences by expertise in the construction of the text, author, and reader models. As Figure 1 reveals, for both texts most descriptions were from the text perspective. More interesting,
however, is the finding that literary experts did not differ in the amounts of information from the author and reader perspectives for the different texts. This result suggests that the construction of an author and reader model is an expert literary strategy applicable over texts.

In contrast, Figure 2 (see Appendix) shows that the experts’ linguistic descriptions for The Color Purple were more than three times greater than linguistic descriptions generated for The English Patient. In addition there were more conceptual frame descriptions for The English Patient than for The Color Purple. These results are taken as support for the differential effects of text properties.

The scope of the structure of argumentation. The second dimension pertains to the range of expert reasoning strategies which is apparent from an examination of the reasoning levels. Figure 3 (see Appendix) provides a schematic representation of the reasoning path of a literary academic after reading the first thirteen sentences of The English Patient. Operations at the global level often resulted from local statements which had been combined to provide evidence for more general statements which drew on readers’ literary and world knowledge. Reasoning operations at the global level accounted for ten percent of the experts’ text descriptions.

3. Method

In trying to understand the reasoning processes of literary experts working within specific domains of expertise, the distinction between domain-specific and generic expertise allows for a more detailed examination of how literary experts engage in the process of literary reading since we can compare similarities and differences in the two conditions.

Participants. The discussion will focus on three scholars of literature from McGill University and the University of Toronto and who were part of a larger study on literary expertise. One of these experts is a Milton scholar, while the other specializes in eighteenth-century rationalism. These two experts have been included to demonstrate generic literary expertise since they are both describing a text outside of their own areas of specialization. The third expert is a postmodern specialist who is representative of domain-specific expertise since she is describing a postmodern text.

Text. The literary text used in this research was Michael Ondaatje’s The English Patient.

Procedure. Beginning with the opening sentence of the novel, eighty-nine sentences were presented one sentence at a time on a micro-computer with sentences accumulating on the screen. Readers controlled the rate of presentation and were able to scroll back in the text at any time.
Task. Readers were instructed to provide a description of the text as they read it, and their verbal descriptions were audio-recorded, transcribed, subsequently and analyzed.

Before presenting the results I would like to identify a confounding variable in this research. The literary postmodern specialist was not only an expert on postmodern literature but she had also read the Ondaatje text previously and had written a review of it. This is not an unexpected situation as it is very hard to find a literary specialist who has not read an important text in her area of expertise. It does, however, constitute a design problem and presents an interesting challenge in research: how to distinguish — perhaps "to speculate" is more appropriate — between the condition of multiple readings and domain-specific expertise. My argument for the present is that the multiple-reading effects will show up in terms of representational levels of text description and reading strategies, while the domain-specific effects will be revealed with respect to the thematic content of the global reasoning level (a level only found in expert protocols). With that in mind, I would like to turn to the results beginning with a focus on multiple-readings versus the first-reading of literary experts.

4. Selected Results

4.1 Multiple Readings versus First Reading by Expert Literary Readers

Levels of text description. Figure 4 (see Appendix) shows the percentage of linguistic, propositional and frame descriptions by reading condition within type of expertise. As the figure illustrates, the overall configuration of text descriptions appears the same for all three experts. As I suggested above, this pattern of results has been identified to suggest that literary readers in their initial reading of a text spend much of their effort on constructing a situation model. It would seem, however, that this explanation is inadequate for the case of the domain-specialist since she has already read the text and presumably has already constructed a situation model. What then accounts for the equal number of text descriptions at the conceptual frame level? To answer this and to get some sense of the difference between the reading strategies of first and successive readings, we need to examine the specific frame categories by type of expertise.

Specific frame levels. Figure 5 (see Appendix) displays the percentage of specific frame descriptions by reading condition within type of expertise. Here we can see the differential effects of for the two reading conditions. Whereas the generic experts early in a first reading of the text focused their descriptions almost exclusively on the descriptive frame followed by the narrative frame, the postmodern expert did the same but to a lesser degree and also included descriptions of the problem frame and the general conceptual frame. The general conceptual frame includes any frame-level description where no specific type of conceptual structure is identified. For example, the conceptual frame would...
include references to the novel as a whole. The problem frame identifies the goals and plans of the characters as well as the themes of a text and has previously been identified as an important component of the text descriptions of generic literary experts (see Graves 1996). In contrast to the multiple-readings condition, its importance for generic experts is not realized until later in the reading since the generic experts engaged in a first reading of the text do not as yet have sufficient textual information to warrant claims about the themes.

**Communicative context.** Figure 6 (see Appendix) displays the percentage of discourse perspectives by reading condition within type of expertise. When we compare the patterns of descriptions generated by these experts for the three discourse perspectives, there is a striking difference between the first reading and the multiple-readings conditions. As the figure shows, all three experts constructed a model of the author and the reader and this has already been identified as a characteristic of literary expertise. There is, however, an important difference which pertains to the amount of description generated from the text perspective. To date all of our investigations of literary reading have revealed that all readers on a first reading task provide most of their descriptions from the text perspective. This is clearly not the case for the postmodern expert who generates her descriptions predominantly from the author and reader perspectives. In some respects this corroborates the strategy identified with respect to the conceptual frames. Namely, that this reader is not as dependent on the text for making sense of what is going on. While her descriptions of the passage still remain linked to the text-base, her descriptions of the multiple levels of the text are incorporated into a well-established understanding of the author and how his choices affect the reader. In conclusion, we can see the differential effects of multiple readings in comparison with a first reading in terms of the specific conceptual frames described and in terms of the discourse perspectives for those descriptions.

### 4.2 Problem Construction and Literary Themes

In order to investigate the influence of domain-specific expertise, we can turn our attention to the thematic content of reasoning operations. The analysis of informal reasoning of the three experts revealed the use of textual evidence to support their reasoning and this accounted for a large amount of content overlap in the reasoning operations at the fact and local levels. In contrast, the overlap of content did not appear at the global level of reasoning where the content of the reasoning operations was unique to each literary expert. I would like to elaborate this discussion by presenting the thematic content of reasoning operations for each of the experts.

**Expert in eighteenth-century rationalism.** Here is the portion of the text read followed by this expert's description: "She stands up in the garden where she has been working and looks into the distance. She has sensed a shift in the weather."
There is another gust of wind, a buckle of noise in the air, and the tall cypresses sway. She turns and moves uphill towards the house, climbing over a low wall, feeling the first drops of rain on her bare arms" (The English Patient, sentences 1-4).

Although it starts as a third person narration with she rather than I, when I get to the part that says "feeling the first drop of rain on her bare arms," and there's a sort of description of some central experience that she's having, and then I begin to wonder if, although it's syntactically third person, whether there isn't really the narrator entering the consciousness, the central experience of the character called she. So that's my first critical reaction to this. That's the first sort of hint I have of what might be going on and what I should look out for in the rest of it. (Expert protocol)

After reading the first four sentences of the text, this expert, using his generic expertise, constructed a problem for himself. At this early stage in the reading he identified a potential discrepancy in the narrative technique which led him to construct an initial hypothesis about the narrative voice. Once established, this hypothesis was elaborated into a dominant theme throughout the reading. This reader was interested in exploring whether the characters of the novel had been created with distinct sensibilities or if it was the sensibility of the narrator that was expressed through the various characters of the woman, the nurse, and the man. He tested and updated the hypothesis periodically throughout the reading until he had accrued sufficient text information to establish a definite claim. This strategy of "constructing a problem" is one he adopts for other texts outside his area of specialization. At the outset of reading another text, The Color Purple, he once again constructed an early hypothesis, this time pertaining to the role of dialect in the passage, and proceeded to accumulate evidence to test the hypothesis.

The Milton expert. A similar initial strategy of problem construction is also present in the text description of the Milton expert after reading the first sentence of the novel. But unlike the previous expert, she identified a strategic behavior required of the reader engaged with this text.

Well again you know the beginning is obviously sort of designed to grab your attention by a kind of disorientation. You don't know who the hell this "she" is, where the garden is, what she's doing. And one of the jobs that you're going to have to do, is figure it all out as the text unfolds: the relationships between these different elements and the background. (Expert protocol)

This scholar began her text description with a complex global claim which included both the author and reader perspectives. She identified a general feature of the text, the beginning, and explicitly constructed the communicative context by setting out an authorial strategy and its goal with respect to the reader. She then provided evidence for this claim specifying why the reader would be
disoriented. This description is particularly interesting since much psychological text research has privileged text features over other variables and in this instance the expert reader was identifying what was not present in the text. This was a common strategy of expert literary reasoning and suggests that a text gets described not only on its own merits but by comparisons, explicit or implicit, to other texts and writers.

In addition, the Milton expert drew on her own specialty expertise to make links to the Ondaatje text. After reading sentences 7 and 8 of The English Patient — "She turns into the room which is another garden — this one made up of trees and bowers painted over its walls and ceiling. The man lies on the bed, his body exposed to the breeze, and he turns his head slowly towards her as she enters" — she commented: "And at the center of this garden is another human, a man and what we'll want to know immediately because there's a man and a woman, it's a kind of twentieth-century Adam and Eve, I'm a Miltonist, is what's the relationship between the two of them and where's the snake?" (Expert protocol). With this description, she provides an illustration of how she transferred her specialty knowledge to construct a set of potential themes for The English Patient. She went on to expand on her topic of the meaning of relationships and which she applied to a number of different contexts. In her subsequent text descriptions she included many hypothetical statements which were either confirmed or discarded as the reading progressed. Surprisingly, very little was discarded.

As Graesser and Kreuz have pointed out, readers perform in accordance with how they construe the task. For both of the generic experts in my study, the task of text description appears as an exploration beginning with the construction of a problem. In each case the readers drew on specific literary knowledge to set out their hypotheses about the Ondaatje text. The problem spaces constructed by the generic experts had a "multi-purpose" quality about them comparable to a universal camera lens which fits, and works with many camera models but is missing certain specific features.

The postmodern expert. In contrast to the two the generic experts above, the domain-specific expert described the text in a confirmatory mode, looking for specific instantiations of what she expected given the style of the author and her familiarity with the text. After reading sentence 3 of the text, "There is another gust of wind, a buckle of noise in the air, and the tall cypresses sway," she remarked: "One of the things Ondaatje always is for me is a poet ... he's also someone with a very strong visual imagination and therefore when I read his work I not only read it as poetry but I read it as setting up very strong visual images" (Expert protocol). How this translates into practice is evident in her remarks made after reading sentences 7 and 8 cited above: "I love this scene. This is again where the visual imagination is so strong. The beginning of what in the novel as a whole is going to be used of painting, not just paintings on
walls but paintings generally as a kind of metaphor for the artistic process in the novel" (Expert protocol).

While the themes she constructs are broad, that is, "paintings generally as a kind of metaphor for the artistic process in the novel," they are at the same time more specific to the particular text and writer. The content of her discussion at the global level of reasoning was focused directly on Ondaatje, the novelist and poet, and was often considered within the context of his previous writings. In this sense the thematic problem space constructed by the domain-specific expert was more constrained by her knowledge.

4.3 Combined Influence of Multiple Readings and Domain-Specific Knowledge

I would now like to present extracts from the text description of the domain-specific expert in order to consider the combined influence of domain-specific knowledge and multiple readings expressed in her metacognitive awareness. The model of informal reasoning applied in this study identifies meta-statement as one of the reasoning operations. Meta-statements include statements made by readers commenting on their own thought processes, performance, or negative state of knowledge. While all of the expert readers included meta-statements in their text descriptions, the task of re-visited the text prompted the postmodern domain specialist to comment more often on her processing and differently from the other experts. As she says, "Reading it a second time, knowing...." She also made numerous references to her first reading of this text and provided recollections of how she responded at that time: "And I remember thinking, 'Okay, Ondaatje is going to do it to me again'." In addition, she often used past information to make confirmatory statements about future events. After reading the first sentence of the novel she commented: "looking into the distance from whence are going to come all the characters to fill out the rest of the novel.

In her meta-statements she included reflections on how she was processing the text as she read: "As I’ve said, I’ve reviewed this novel and it is very much a whole in my mind." At the same time, because she was able to contrast her memories of previous readings with the experimental one she was now carrying out she was able to reflect on that: "Doing it this way [sentence by sentence] I am finding out a lot of things about how I read." In addition to recollections of previous knowledge and processing considerations she also provided meta-statements about her emotions while reading then and now: "I remember being just-, the feeling of, the first time I read this and it still happens reading this, is this total feeling of a frisson that sends you...."
4.4 Summary

Table A
Comparison of domain-specific and generic expertise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain-specific expertise</th>
<th>Generic expertise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The relationship with the author is &quot;familiar.&quot;</td>
<td>May only know the author by period and has to construct inferences about the author from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links many more text descriptions to the models of the author and reader.</td>
<td>Generates much of the text description from the text perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looks for specific instantiations.</td>
<td>Uses his/her knowledge of literary conventions to construct hypotheses.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The thematic problem space is "highly constrained." The thematic problem space is "multi-purpose."

5. Conclusion

While the above data are meant to be suggestive rather than conclusive, they do provide some insight for our developing understanding of how expert readers engage in the task of text description which is outside or within their areas of specialty. In a psychological study of generic expertise in experimental design, Schraagen reported that when experts lacked specific domain knowledge, they applied general task-specific strategies which lead to a structured solution. Similarly, the closer look at generic and domain-specific literary expertise in my study provides some evidence which suggest strategic differences given the readers' different knowledge bases and reading conditions. Literary experts working outside their areas of specialty clearly apply task-specific conventional literary strategies to construct their text descriptions. At the same time there is some indication of how their domain-specific knowledge is reformulated and transferred to generating a description of unfamiliar literary texts.

In addition, the structure, coherence and scope of all three experts' text descriptions share many similarities including an explicit focus on the author and reader. While the intentions of the empirical author may be irrelevant for a reader's interpretation, how readers construe the intentionality underlying the production of the text appears not to be. As well, their text-descriptions provide support for the view that successful reasoning in the domain of literature proceeds not by formal logic, but by a logic based on (empirical) evidence to support claims. The findings from this descriptive profile revealed that expert readers tended not to make claims unsubstantiated by textual evidence whether at the local or global levels. This suggests that effective literary reasoning is the
result of the soundness of the empirical evidence as well as coherence of the arguments.

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Works Cited

Fig. 1. Percentage of discourse perspectives for each literary text for gender expertise.

Fig. 2. Percentage of linguistic, propositional, and frame descriptions for each literary text.
Fig. 4. Linguistic, propositional and frame descriptions by reading condition within type of expertise.

Fig. 5. Specific frame descriptions by reading condition within type of expertise.
Fig. 6. Discourse perspectives by reading condition within type of expertise.
1. Introduction

One recalls from Ancient Greek culture that literature and history are the twin children of memory and that poetry, tragedy, dance, music, or even science are also related in many aspects. The Greeks and their historians considered the events in Homer's epics to be for the most part real and they understood them as authentic reports. However, today most scholars agree that the works of Herodotus and Tacitus, for example, are in many aspects literary narratives. Following Michelet and Burckhardt, I propose that the understanding of literary narrative and its close relative, the historical or historiographical text, has seldom been comparatively studied. In this article, I will present a brief study where I show the possibility of such a comparative study.¹

2. Method and Sample Data

2.1 Material

For my study, I choose texts of a similar topic and length based on the following criteria: 1) The texts should primarily narrate, describe, discuss, or explain something; 2) The author should be a direct experiencing participant or a representative of posterity; 3) The text should be written with the aim of treating fictions or historiographical non-fictions; and 4) A protagonist (a human actor) or an objectified institution (structure) should be the focus of the text.

Four texts about the sale of indulgences and Luther's conflict with the Church and one complementary text were selected, each of the five texts in the length of 800-900 words. All texts were used in Hungarian translation (for the sources see my Works Cited).

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The Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature and Culture as Theory and Application
Edited by Steven Tóthóy de Zepetnek and Irene Sywenky
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1) An autobiographical text, *Luther Márton önmagáról*, texts selected originally by Martin Luther himself, and based on texts of his occasional conversations and a letter written to the Pope. The text is historical in two ways: It narrates life events which have relevance in world history, but at the same time, the obviously personal-experiential text is characterized by poetic-rhetoric deviations.

2) A dramatic-ironical literary text, German author Dieter Forte’s *Luther Márton és Münzer Tamás avagy a könyvelés bevezetése (Martin Luther und Thomas Münzer oder die Einführung der Buchhaltung)*. The author presents the events and the protagonist from the point of view of an intellectual of today.

3) A psycho-historical text, American psychoanalyst Erik Erikson’s *A fiatal Luther és más írások* (Young Man Luther). While in the former texts descriptive and expository propositions can be rarely found, here the role of historical (historiographical) expository items is significant. In addition, these are embedded into the narration of events.

4) A biographical text, German historian Richard Friedenthal’s *Luther: élete és kora (Luther: Sein Leben und seine Zeit)*. The dominant descriptive propositions in the text suggest the nonfictive and possibly objective character of the text.

5) An expository-interpretive text, French historian Ferdinand Braudel’s *Anyagi kultúra, gazdaság és kapitalizmus a XV-XVIII. században. A mindennapi élet struktúrái (Civilisation matérielle, économie et capitalisme, XVe-XVIIIe siècle. 1. Les Structures du quotidien: le possible et l'impossible)*. In my selection, this is the only text in which Luther and his conflict are not in the focus. However, the expository-interpretative nature of the text is dominant in that it focuses on the structure and function of a historical institution: Money.

2.2 Subjects

Two groups of subjects took part in the experiment. 170 secondary school students before their graduation (71 females, 99 males; average age 18) and 108 university undergraduates in history (59 females, 49 males; average age 23).

2.3 Procedure

The subjects were informed beforehand that they would take part in a psychological experiment. Both groups of the subjects were divided randomly into subgroups of five. Each text was read — without any reference to the particular genre or to the authors — by a different subgroup of subjects and each subject read only one text. The subjects’ task was during reading to underline the phrases and propositions which aroused them emotionally and after reading out of a list to mark the items expressing the emotional states they found appropriate
for their experiences and to describe their most effective experience at hand. (Another part of the study, in which the reader's expectations and textual characteristics are focused on is forthcoming in Halász 1997a).

2.4 Treatment of Data

First, the effect of arousing emotions of each text during reading was measured using a total index. Two factors were taken into consideration: overall frequency of underlining and the frequency of the words not marked at all. The latter were subtracted from the sum of the frequency of the marked words. This score was compared to the total number of words of the text depending on the subjects' number. That is, the effect of arousing emotions of a text during reading was shown by the total number of the words/number of the weighed markings. The lower the percentage, the higher the ratio of the emotional effect.

Since from the point of view of a text's effect on arousing emotions during reading is especially informative as to whether the text has propositions and phrases of the kind which mobilize emotions to a greater extent, the frequencies were also summed up which amounted to 25 % at least of the subjects' underlinings per word. Based on a sum corrected for identical textual length, the average marking score of a subject was computed.

Out of the marked items, four items expressing emotions — attraction, love, respect, sympathy — were unambiguously positive social emotions, primarily referring to the reader's emotions about the heroes of the text. In opposition to them, four other items of emotion — aversion, contempt, dissatisfaction, indignation — represented negative emotions, referring to the reader's emotions about the actors' bad circumstances and about the subject and style of the text. The greater the total average frequency of positive social emotions as compared to that of negative ones, the greater the self-involvement effect of the text.

These quantitative indices of emotional effect were supplemented by a survey of the contents of the frequently marked phrases, namely, of several propositions connected closely with each other or of one proposition, and by a survey of the content of responses concerning the most effective experience.

2.5 Hypothesis

The distribution of the indices — those referring to a predominantly narrative text organized around a protagonist or to a basically descriptive/expository text presenting more institutions than people — were separated first. That is, within the category of a predominantly narrative text organized around a protagonist we did not expect a dominant role of a literary genre that was clearly written with an aesthetic-artistic intention (and admitted to be such by experts as well). At the same time, some differences in the frequency and differentiation of responses could be expected between the two main groups established according to the educational levels of the subjects, secondary school students and university undergraduates.
3. Results

3.1 Arousing Emotions during Reading

The effect of the four texts was higher than that of Braudel with secondary-school students. The effect of Erikson’s and Braudel’s texts differed between the two groups. The former’s effect was greater with the secondary school students while the latter’s with the undergraduates in history. The distance between the texts with respect to highest and lowest emotional effect—namely Luther’s and Braudel’s—with the secondary school students was greater than between the two texts of similar effect—namely Forte’s and Erikson’s—with the undergraduates in history (see Figure 1; Appendix).

Based on the most frequent markings which indicate a dominant effect, an average index of each subject was computed. According to the computation, Erikson’s text had the lowest score in both groups. As compared with Luther’s and Forte’s texts, Erikson’s text had high scores with the secondary school students and Braudel’s and Luther’s texts had high scores with the undergraduate students. However, the scores of Friedenthal’s text with the secondary school students and those of Forte’s text with the undergraduates in history were also significantly higher than Erikson’s. Further, with the secondary school students the distance between the texts with dominant effects and Erikson’s text was greater than with the undergraduates in history. At the same time, the difference in the effect of Braudel’s text between the two groups proved obvious (see Figure 2; Appendix).

3.2 Emotions Following Reading

It was tested whether the overall frequencies of all the marked items expressing emotions were different between the texts, that is, whether certain texts prompted the subjects to underline the given items to a greater extent than others. The texts showed similar average scores per subject in both groups (see Figure 3; Appendix). At the same time, based on the ratio between the frequencies of positive social emotions as compared to negative ones, the self-involvement effect of Luther’s text was higher than that of the other texts. From this point of view, Friedenthal’s text proved also higher scores than that of the other three texts while Erikson’s text proved higher scores than Braudel’s with the secondary school students. The effect of Luther’s text was similar with the undergraduates in history while, again, Braudel’s text showed lower scores than that of the others. None of the texts showed a significant difference between the two groups of readers (see Figure 4; Appendix). In both groups, Luther’s text showed the most balanced effect with relatively high positive social emotions and not too many lower negative ones. The effect of Friedenthal’s text was not basically different, while with Braudel’s text the weight of negative emotions was striking.
3.3 Cumulative Indices of Emotional Processing

Summing up the data in Figures 1, 3, and 4, it is clear that Luther's text could be seen on the one side and Erikson's and Braudel's text on the other, while Friedenthal's and Forte's texts were in the middle. As with the undergraduates in history, the effect of Braudel's text was not as low as with the secondary school students and the distance which separated the effect of Erikson's and Braudel's texts from that of Luther's text and from that of Friedenthal's and Forte's texts, was shorter with the undergraduates than with the secondary school students (see Figure 5; Appendix).

3.4 Frequently Marked (Emotionally Stressed) Propositions

In both groups, the propositions referring to the lonely hero fighting against powerful but iniquitous hostile forces and who performed his mission resolutely, the propositions proved to be decisive parts in Luther's text (e.g., "God sent me ... a monk against these great numbers of powerful people." "I can take back none of my words," "What are you alone able to do against these many wild monsters?", "God has moved into you," etc.).

In Forte's text, *bon mots* were emotionally stressful which contrasted the opponent's cynical corruptness with the hero's naive purity ("People pay only if we produce a deadly enemy for them," "The Holy Writ is a very nice book ... especially if one is unable to sleep," "Luther will cause great trouble. He still believes in God," etc.).

In Erikson's text the unusual referring to his aggressivity and interest in his food and bowel movements were striking as compared with his positive traits (which were overshadowed) ("raving anger," "disposition to constipation," "we must wash our hands in his blood," "Luther and the Pope behaved like two animals," etc.).

In Friedenthal's text the motives of individual responsibility and guilty feelings were mainly in focus ("One should wrestle with the innate original sin," "Everybody orientates himself to his judge alone," "You should follow Christ through suffering, death and hell," etc.).

In Braudel's text the propositions aroused the subjects' attention effectively, and may express their negative attitudes toward the French national economy as it was then ("The nouveau riche does not arouse sympathy," "the hatred and contempt of speculators," "Money is blood of the body of society ... the fat of the body politics: too much of them harms its mobility, too little makes it ill," "Hellfire should consume these banknotes," etc.).

3.5 Comments by Subjects

The significant part of interpretive responses was moral reflection, such as "He deserves honour as he dares to take on his ideas (Luther's text); Luther dares to take on what he has thought (Friedenthal's text); People are willing to accept the
truth of others only with difficulty (Forte’s text); Luther deserves our honour as he could overcome his fear of death as well (Erikson’s text); Money is a source of a lot of bad things; it is easy to understand why the poor hate the rich (Braudel’s text).” Self-reflection by the readers could be also found in several cases, such as “I despise myself because owing to my weakness I cannot reach my goals (Luther’s text); Certainly, Luther had to overcome difficulties to face uncertainties. As compared to this it is much more comfortable to live in self-deceit, to seek excuses, and that may happen to me as well (Friedenthal’s text); I am happy that I did not live in Luther’s time; life is much easier today (Erikson’s text); Independent of the fact of how much money we have, its effect is bad. I have the oppressive memories of my parents’ quarrels (Braudel’s text)."

While the subjects rarely commented on Luther’s, Forte’s, and Friedenthal’s texts themselves, the proportion of negative remarks was significant in the case of Erikson’s and Braudel’s texts, especially with the undergraduates in history: "The whole text is confused (Erikson’s text); I expected to read a historiographical text and instead I have met an eclectic and primitive compilation (Erikson’s text); It is incomprehensible. I feel sorry for the one who concocted this (Braudel’s text); One cannot understand a single word, like programs on the economy in the media (Braudel’s text)."

4. Discussion

The study was performed with secondary school students and university undergraduates in history to test whether the results from undergraduates were significantly different from those of the secondary school "naive" subjects. The majority of the undergraduates were freshmen and sophomores and while they could not be considered expert readers, their competence should have been higher than that of the secondary school students. The results show that there was no specific excess in the secondary school students’ emotionally stressed propositions and in their commentaries. If we did not know which questionnaire had been completed by a secondary school student and which by an undergraduate in history, we would have been able to ascertain authorship only in exceptional cases such as with an undergraduate’s answer as "The emotional effect is neutral. A historian should judge any text objectively. I suggest this to everybody."

However, others in the group, and who would certainly have agreed with this type of declaration, did not show similar responses in their reading activity. Similar to the secondary school students, they assigned more emotions in general during reading and more positive social emotions in particular after reading to given texts than to others — and independent of the historical "truth" of them. At the same time, following reading on the whole, they did not process the texts coolly (marking fewer words expressing emotions) than did the secondary school students and also responded to the texts by moralizing.
The emotional processing during reading by the undergraduates — although the negative remarks on the unambiguously historiographical text (Braudel’s) and the ambiguously psycho-historical text (Erikson’s) were significant — showed some differences as compared with that by the secondary school students. Braudel’s text aroused greater emotional strength and the stressful propositions expressed the subjects’ negative attitudes toward the new market based economy of present-day Hungary. The subjects made more negative remarks about the text with regard to its style and genre, than did the secondary school students. That is, the difference in the effect of Braudel’s text during reading between the two groups did not result in a more objective, more expert, or a more neutral processing.

Both groups responded to the stressful propositions in Erikson’s text similarly, but on the whole the undergraduates in history were less affected emotionally. At the same time, they rejected it to an even greater extent, perhaps owing to psycho-analytical and/or psycho-historical approach to the text. Behind this we can find simultaneously the role of the experts’ concern about psychologizing historical processes and that of aversion against a more complex point of view for which they were not prepared.

On the whole, independently of education and interest, Luther’s, Forte’s, and Friedenthal’s texts were emotionally more attractive and significant than Erikson’s and Braudel’s texts. In the processing of the texts the dividing line was between basic narrative presentation, sometimes mixed with description, but totally free of a scientific language, and a basic scientific expository presentation. At the same time, within the narrative side there is no similar line of demarcation between the processing of a fictive, autobiographical, or biographical narrative written with obviously literary intention and an autobiographical or biographical narrative written intentionally as a non-fictive text. The stress appears to be on the narration of a story and not on its fictive or nonfictive nature. In an extreme formulation: "There is no fiction or nonfiction as we commonly understand the distinction: there is only narrative" (Doctorow 25) and "There is no mimesis, only poesis. No recording. Only constructing" (Scholes 7).

Consequently, we have to accept that although the relativity of traits of fiction/nonfiction can be seen historically in a rather different way, this relativity is — in the context of Wittgenstein’s "family resemblance" (66) — always significant and this is especially true for today’s reader who is conditioned by "blurred genres" (Geertz 19). Thus, philosophical analyses remind us of criticisms of art, scientific explanations appear to be brief literary texts, stories are full of equations and tables, documents give the impressions of confessions, etc. The borderlines between "serious" and "fictive" discourse are indistinct in the stream of a general flow of texts, the borderlines between the self, the author, and the work become porous (see Habermas 242 ff).

Behind this argumentation lies the phenomenon that the historian’s text understanding is not completely different from that of the artist and that it is not
by chance that the phenomenon of literature is the point where arts and science meet (Gadamer 319-20).

According to Frye, ideas about literary fiction can be traced back to archetypical forms of stories, "pregeneric plot-structures" (162), or, in other words, to romance, tragedy, comedy, and satire. White extends these parameters to history and the notion offers a plausible way of describing the world with an explanatory effect. In other words, before a historian approaches the "data" of a historical problem, he or she prefigures it. For all intents and purposes, this act is poetic as far as it is precognitive and practical in the household of the historian's consciousness (see White 1973, 30). This thesis in itself is not revolutionary. However, it coincides with the ideas of a number of historians. For example, Trevelyan says that imagination lies at the bottom of the challenge of history. History helps us to experience the past in as real a way as the present. The criterion of historical study is "truth," but the drive is poetical. White goes beyond this, however. Where others thought of "only" drives and effect, he sees a cognitive pattern and a frame of cognition. Thus, historical narratives are "verbal fictions, the contents of which are as much invented as found and the forms of which have more on common with their counterparts in literature than they have with those in the sciences" (White 1978, 82; authors italics).

Precognitive activity is, of course, never unlimited. One cannot, as a historian, perform a construction in which Napoleon won the Battle of Waterloo (Hampson 189). The data possess connections independent of the historian's view as the relations between events are given. The historian's story "must emerge from his research and must be assumed to be at every point dependent on it" (Mandlebaum 25). But this does not refute White's thesis that "in a purely way, a historical narrative is not only a reproduction of the events reported in it, but also a complex of symbols which gives us directions for finding an icon of the structure of those events in our literary tradition" (White 1978, 88; author's italics). History and phantasy (fiction) are "the two poles of narrative spectrum" (Scholes and Kellogg 87). It depends on our view as to whether one concentrates on history (nonfictive narrative) as a figure against a background of phantasy (fictive narrative) or on phantasy as a figure against a background of history. Based on the above, it is understandable why in the experiment at hand the emotional processing of Luther's text is similar to the other two — literary and historiographical — narratives, but it does not explain why its emotional effect is greater. One of the representatives of the *nouveau roman*, Sarraute, contends that there is "a heroic epic in the document" based on personal experiences and such an epic occurs from all the written individual or communal events spontaneously (66-67). The peculiarity of such narrative comes from the fact that the author of the heroic epic is the hero himself who directly speaks of himself. Its effect is theoretically distinctive as it can be structurally connected with our self, our self-interpretive activity: "There is a narrative (or, at least, protonar-
rative) structure to experience, to our identity, and to action, which is the basis for our concern with verbal narratives that constitute the most pervasive mode of rational explanation we have.... The unity of self and its acts is, in the broadest context, a narrative unity" (Johnson 163-64). Further, "the process of autobiographical reflection [is] a fundamentally metaphorical one: a new relationship is being created between the past and present, a new poetical configuration, designed to give greater form to one's previous — and present — experience. The text of the self is thus being rewritten" (Freeman 30) and "we are imagining and thus fictionalizing ... what had already been rewritten will have been rewritten yet again, the latest version thus being another step away from the original.... All we have are memories of memories of memories" (Freeman 90).

Human life is the most "readable" when we interpret it depending on the stories which one reports about one's subject: "And these life stories are the most intelligible when narrative models — intrigues — are applied to them from the so-called history or fiction (drama or novel)" and self-interpretation has an excellent role as "it borrows from history as much as from fiction, making a fictive story from a life story, or if you prefer, a historical fiction combining the historiographical style of biographies with the romantic style of imaginary autobiographies" (Ricoeur 138). And last but not least, we also discuss ourselves in the framework of Frye's "pregeneric plot-structures" (see Gergen and Gergen 23).

The effect of Luther's autobiographical narrative is increased by the text's characteristic Erikson calls "historification" (139). This means "a distinct tendency to retrospective dramatization" (Erikson 139). As I have tried to show elsewhere, Luther sees himself — and the world as well — as the outcome of collision between mutually antagonistic forces, ultimately those of God and Satan, in the background of his uncertainties along with the threatening monster of hubris (see Halász 1997b). Thus, Luther's historification is his-story-fiction as well. However, in my opinion this is not equal to the contention that his whole story would be mere fiction. Instead, it indicates that his life story is as much literary as historical; the text of his self is a product of the same eloquence and literary merit with which his oeuvre is embedded. "Fact comes from facere — to make or do. Fiction comes from fingere — to make or shape.... Fact still means for us quite literally 'a thing done' and fiction has never lost its meaning of 'a thing made.' Fact, in order to survive, must become fiction. Seen in this way, fiction is not the opposite of fact, but its complement. It gives a more lasting shape to the vanishing deeds of men" (Scholes, Klaus, and Silverman 101). Thus, while reading Luther's text, or better said, reading Luther, the reader experiences on a larger scale what it is which presents a story about anyone's self, thus about his/her own self on a smaller scale. One experiences the connection of personal history with culture and in the meantime the birth of the
narrator-protagonist, of the "story-made-story teller" (see Orton and Christi; Stainton Rogers).

I have mentioned with reservation the dividing line between the basically narrative texts (Luther’s, Forte’s, and Friedenthal’s) and the scientific expository texts mixed with some descriptions (Erikson’s and Braudel’s). This reservation is motivated empirically by the fact that even the effect of the least emotionally charged two texts cannot be left out of consideration. In addition, my reservation is also theoretically motivated because although these texts are not deprived of narrativity, "theories are in fact plot summaries" (Weyne 118). Further, as I have referred to Wittgenstein’s notion of "family resemblance" in connection with the relativity between the features of fiction and nonfiction, it is appropriate to use Rosch’s idea of prototype for the phenomena discussed here. Literature and historiography — respectively narrative and descriptive, narrative and expository texts — cannot be conceived as being characterized by all the features of one category and by none of the features of another one. It is more correct to see continuities of given criteria at some major points at which text families resemble each other and resemble others less. In other words, these text families are quantitatively different, thus demonstrating the application of the empirical method for the study of text, "historical" or "fictive."

Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Works Cited


Appendix
The effect of arousing emotions of the texts during reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>secondary-school students</th>
<th>undergraduates in history</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>N=36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forte's text</td>
<td>N=31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erikson's text</td>
<td>N=35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friedenthal's text</td>
<td>N=34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braudel's text</td>
<td>N=34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A quotient of the total number of the words divided by the total frequency of marked words minus the words not marked.
The lower the quotient, the greater the effect.

p<.05 Luther's text and Braudel's text,
Forte's text and Braudel's text,
Erikson's text and Braudel's text,
Friedenthal's text and Braudel's text with secondary-school students

n.s. with undergraduates in history

secondary-school students and undergraduates in history:
p<.05 Erikson's text, Braudel's text
(by the test of differences between proportions)

* Corrected proportions for the subjects of equal number with the secondary-school students.
Average score per subject of the phrases and propositions of the most outstanding emotional effect through the corrected frequency to equal textual length

as compared to Erikson's text

secondary-school students    undergraduates in history
Luther's text    N=36            N=22
Forte's text     N=31            N=20
Erikson's text   N=35            N=22
Friedenthal's text N=34            N=22
Figure 3

Average scores of emotions per subject through the overall frequency of the emotions assigned to the texts following reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Secondary-school students</th>
<th>Undergraduates in history</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Luther's text</td>
<td>N=36</td>
<td>N=22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forte's text</td>
<td>N=31</td>
<td>N=20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erikson's text</td>
<td>N=35</td>
<td>N=22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friedenthal's text</td>
<td>N=34</td>
<td>N=22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braudel's text</td>
<td>N=34</td>
<td>N=22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n.s. by t-test
The weight of positive social emotions assigned to the texts following reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Secondary-school students</th>
<th>Undergraduates in history</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Luther's text</td>
<td>N=36</td>
<td>N=22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forte's text</td>
<td>N=31</td>
<td>N=20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erikson's text</td>
<td>N=35</td>
<td>N=22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friedenthal's text</td>
<td>N=34</td>
<td>N=22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braudel's text</td>
<td>N=34</td>
<td>N=22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A quotient of the frequency of positive social emotions divided by the frequency of negative emotions. The greater the quotient, the greater the weight of the positive social emotions.

p<.05  Luther's text and all the others' texts,
Friedenthal's text and Forte's text,
Friedenthal's text and Braudel's text,
Erikson's text and Braudel's text with secondary-school students

Luther's text and all the others' texts,
Friedenthal's text and Braudel's text,
Forte's text and Braudel's text,
Erikson's text and Braudel's text with undergraduates in history

n.s.  secondary-school students and undergraduates in history
(by the test of differences between proportions)

This statistical test is valid for proportions between 0.00 and 1.00, so the proportions greater than 1.00 are considered to be 1.00.
Figure 5

Cumulative index of emotional effect

Based on the data of Figures 1, 3 and 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Secondary-school students</th>
<th>Undergraduates in history</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Luther's</td>
<td>N=36</td>
<td>N=22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forte's</td>
<td>N=31</td>
<td>N=20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erikson's</td>
<td>N=35</td>
<td>N=22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friedenthal's</td>
<td>N=34</td>
<td>N=22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braudel's</td>
<td>N=34</td>
<td>N=22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reading Poetry and Surface Information Recall

1. Introduction

A well documented phenomenon of reading is that the surface form of a text is quickly forgotten. Numerous studies over the years have demonstrated that while the semantic content of a text may be recalled over relatively long periods of time, the surface form of a text is forgotten almost immediately (see, for example, Anderson; Bransford, Barclay, and Franks; Bransford and Franks; Gerbsbacher 1985, 1990; Graesser and Mandler; Johnson-Laird and Stevenson; Sachs). Although the loss of surface information is widely accepted as a common feature of reading, some empirical evidence has pointed in a different direction. Within the framework of the Empirical Study of Literature, Zwaan (1991, 1993) has shown that the specification of a text as a literary text increases the surface representation of that text and Van Peer (1990) has shown that the meter of a poem has a facilitating effect on the recall of surface form. These two studies suggest that the phenomenon of surface information loss may be context-bound to the genre of the text that is being read. To date, most explanations of the loss of surface information have tended to be based on general processing abilities (see Bransford and Frank; Gerbsbacher, 1985, 1990; Jarvella; Miller; Murphy and Shapiro) and have not taken into account the issue of text genre.

In the two studies reported here, the issue of the role of genre on surface information recall will be addressed within the context of poetry reading. My article starts with a review of psycholinguistic theories of surface information loss and the application of these theories to the issue of surface information recall. Genre theory is then employed as one option for offering greater specificity to discussions of surface information recall. In this framework, poetry is discussed as a genre in which it is predicted that surface information will be recalled. Three hypotheses, based on the different theories reviewed, are then presented. Within the context of poetry reading, Experiment 1 compares the predictions of the different theories. The results of Experiment 1 differentiate between two of the theories. However, two of the hypotheses — the Poetry Reading hypothesis and the Recoding hypothesis — can explain the results of Experiment 1. Experiment 2 was designed to differentiate between these two
hypotheses. The results of both studies are discussed and related to current positions on genre theory and theories of surface information recall.

2. Explanations of Surface Information Loss

Early research into the phenomenon of surface information loss placed its main emphasis on the demonstration rather than the explanation of the phenomenon. However, more recently, two studies have concentrated directly on explaining surface information loss (see Gemsbacher; Murphy and Shapiro). Gemsbacher (1990), working within the context of her general comprehension model proposes and tests two explanations for surface information loss based on how information is processed. Murphy and Shapiro, by taking into account anecdotal and experimental data relating to the verbatim recall of highly interactive sentences propose a pragmatic explanation of why some surface information is recalled.

Gemsbacher, in her general model of comprehension which she termed "structure building framework," presents an explanation of why surface information is lost during reading (1990). In her model, the comprehension of a text involves the construction of an internal representation of the text through the analysis of coherence relations between incoming information and existing information. At any moment during the comprehension process, the analysis of coherence relations is restricted to a specific section of text she designates as a "substructure." In the operationalization of her model, the text section size of a substructure is, roughly, a clause. While coherence relations are being analyzed, attention is focussed on the substructure and all levels of information relating to that substructure are accessible. However, once the issue of coherence relations has been resolved, attention is directed at the next substructure and only the semantic information relating to the previous substructure is retained. In other words, surface information is lost once attention has been shifted to the construction of a new substructure. This is called the processing shift hypothesis of surface information loss. The predictions of this hypothesis are that the greater the amount of shifting within a text the less accessible is the surface information and once a structure boundary has been passed surface memory will decay immediately.

An additional hypothesis proposed and tested by Gemsbacher is the recoding hypothesis. The principle behind this hypothesis is that once information has been integrated within a larger structure the original information loses its individuality and specificity. In other words, once in-coming information has been recoded into a larger memory structure, the original structure of the information decays. Empirical support for this position comes from Bransford and Frank's study, in which the exact surface form of cohesive sentences was seen to decay while the semantic information was recalled. The prediction of the recoding
hypothesis is that the more cohesive a text is the less surface information that will be recalled.

In addition to these two processing hypotheses which relate to surface information loss, Murphy and Shapiro propose a different explanation which relates to surface information recall. These scholars propose that the reader has strategic control over what information is recalled. In other words, differences in surface information recall result from the differences in the readers' aims while reading a text. This hypothesis is known as the *pragmatic hypothesis* of surface information recall and its main assumption is that the information that is attended to by the reader during the encoding process is the information that will be recalled. Empirical support for the pragmatic hypothesis comes from studies that demonstrate that surface information in highly interactive sentences is recalled (see Keenan, MacWhinney, and Mayhew). Murphy and Shapiro argue that the pragmatic hypothesis can explain important phenomena of surface information recall which otherwise cannot be explained by either the processing shift hypothesis or the recoding hypothesis. For instance, it is a well known phenomenon that surprising language usage such as unconventional or low frequency vocabulary is often remembered verbatim (see Gibbs; Van Peer). Neither the recoding hypothesis nor the processing shift hypothesis make any predictions about this phenomenon or explain why specific language patterns should be remembered verbatim. According to the pragmatic hypothesis, unconventional language is recalled because this information was attended to at the encoding stage of reading and it has significant implications for the comprehension of the discourse.

However, in its current formulation the pragmatic hypothesis for surface information recall is problematic in that it offers only a very general theoretical framework for explaining surface information recall. For example, the pragmatic hypothesis does not specify when or under what conditions will the reader apply strategic reading so as to recall surface information. Further, the pragmatic hypothesis does not specify what specific language structures or configuration of language structures and reading tasks would induce surface information recall. In other words, while the pragmatic hypothesis offers a general theoretical framework for explaining some phenomena of surface information, it still lacks specific theoretical content. Accordingly, in its present formulation it is very difficult to make any predictions as to when surface information will be recalled.

3. Genre Studies and Poetry

One direction which can be taken to offer greater specificity to the pragmatic hypothesis is to situate this hypothesis within the context of genre studies. Genre as presently conceptualized involves the connection between specific prototypic language patterns, processes of reading and discursive function (see Freedman
Medway; Swales). In other words, what genre studies can offer the pragmatic hypothesis of surface information recall is knowledge relating to the textual or environmental conditions under which the reader is likely to strategically direct her/his reading towards surface information recall. In this sense, the concept of genre specific reading involves a connection between the categorization of a text as a specific text type and the employment of a series of reading procedures which are assumed appropriate for reading this specific genre. Thus, the pragmatic hypothesis of surface information recall can be restated as follows: differences in surface information recall result from reading specific text types according to the reading procedures assumed appropriate for the specific genre being read. For example, while reading an informative text, surface information will not be recalled because the reader will not consider attending to surface information to be an appropriate reading procedure for this text type; however, while reading a computer manual specific terms and procedures will be recalled verbatim since the reader will consider this to be an appropriate reading procedure.

One genre that is particularly worth looking at, in this context, is the genre of poetry. Anecdotal and initial empirical evidence suggest that poetry produces particularly strong surface information representations (see Van Peer 1986, 1990). In addition, analysis of early school-based literary education in poetry suggests that the foregrounding of surface features for comprehension purposes occurs. Literary theories of poetry specify that the surface form of poems is important for the reading of poetry. Formalists, such as Jakobson and Mukařovský, specify that the formal patterns of language found in poems draw attention to themselves and direct the reading process. Conventionalists, such as Culler and Fish, specify that reading poetry involves the convention of close attention to the surface information of the poem. It follows, then, that paying attention to surface features is an appropriate reading procedure for poetry.

Accordingly, in relation to this genre, it may be possible to predict specific textual and environmental conditions under which surface information recall can be predicted. Previous research has specified that readers will categorize a text as a poem on the basis of prototypic textual features or external context (see Hanauer 1995, 1996; Zwaan 1991, 1993). The reader can be informed by an external authority (such as a teacher) or a defined context (a poetry reading performance/a text in a book of published poems) that the text that they are reading is a poem (see Zwaan, 1991, 1993). Or, the formal features of the text may draw the reader's attention that she/he is reading a poetic text (see Hanauer 1995, 1996). Thus, it is hypothesized that surface information will be recalled when a text is categorized as a poem by its external context or by its prototypic textual features.

In relation to the prototypic textual features of poetry, several scholars have discussed the importance of graphic and phonetic information for the categoriz-

It should be pointed out, however, that these studies do not make an essentialist argument that poetry is defined only by specific language patterns. Rather, they claim that it is an empirical issue that novice readers will categorize a text as a poem when presented with textual features that are characteristic of poems. In my 1996 study, different levels of graphic and phonetic information in unspecified genre contexts were seen to have a role in the categorization of poetic text. Of particular interest in that study was the result that the subjects' poetic text categorization judgements strengthened or weakened in relation to the level of graphic and phonetic information presented to them. Thus, these two features have been seen to be functional in defining textual situations in which texts have been categorized as poems. It is assumed, therefore, that once a text has been categorized as a poem, the reader will pay close attention to the surface structure of the poem and will encode sections of it verbatim to memory. On this basis it is possible to design a study that will investigate the genre-specific, poetry reading hypothesis of surface information recall.

4. The General Design of the Study

According to the positions outlined above, three hypotheses relating to surface information recall can be defined:

1) The Processing Shift Hypothesis. Surface information will be recalled only while a structure is being developed and attention is focused on it. Once a boundary structure is passed or a new structure is encountered, memory for surface information will decay immediately.

2) The Recoding Hypothesis. Surface information will be recalled in units of information that have not lost their individuality and specificity by being integrated within larger memory structures. Once a unit of information has been integrated within a larger memory structure, memory for surface information will decay.

3) The Poetry Reading Hypothesis. In texts that are categorized as poems, it is appropriate to direct attention to surface information. Accordingly, surface information will be strongly recalled in texts that have the prototypic features of poetry or have been externally categorized as poems.

The above hypotheses make contrasting predictions as to the amounts of surface information which will be recalled in relation to a situation in which, in turn, the poeticity level of a text is manipulated. One way to manipulate the poeticity levels of a poem is to manipulate its graphic form. The traditional format of a poem — 3 stanzas, 4 short lines each — has been seen to elicit very high poeticity ratings (see Hanauer, 1995, 1996); whereas, the same poem presented in a paragraph format — which is usually associated with literary prose
has been seen to elicit low poeticy ratings. The manipulation of graphic information has the advantage of being a relatively simple manipulation that does not change any of the specific language patterns and thus does not artificially create or remove "unconventional" language which in itself may have an effect on verbatim recall. Thus, by presenting a poem in a traditional graphic form and the same poem in a prose paragraph format, a situation can be constructed in which theories of surface information recall can be evaluated.

The specific predictions of surface information recall of the three hypotheses presented above in relation to a text with high and low poeticy levels can be summarized as follows:

1) The Poetry Reading Hypothesis: A significant difference will be found between the poem in the traditional graphic form and the same poem in a prose graphic form. Significantly higher surface information recall will be found for the traditional form of the poem because this graphic form categorizes this text as a poem. Once the reader has categorized the text as a poem, the reader will employ the appropriate reading procedure of paying attention to the surface features of the poem in order to interpret it. Accordingly, higher surface information recall will result from the traditional graphic form.

2) The Processing Shift Hypothesis: A significant difference will be found between the poem in the traditional graphic form and the same poem in a prose graphic form. Significantly higher surface information recall will be found for the prose form of the poem because this graphic form involves fewer substruc­tures. The traditional graphic form of the poem involves short lines and stanza breaks which force the reader to handle more information structures and thus involves more analyses of coherence relations and lower levels of surface information recall.

3) The Recoding Hypothesis: A significant difference will be found between the poem in the traditional graphic form and the same poem in a prose graphic form. Significantly higher surface information recall will be found for the traditional form of the poem because this graphic form with its short lines and stanza breaks emphasizes the individuality of the single lines and thus offering the option of greater surface information recall.

As can be seen in the above summary of predictions, the single measure of levels of surface information recall in graphically manipulated poems can only differentiate between the poetry reading hypothesis, the recoding hypothesis, and the processing shift hypothesis. In order to differentiate between the poetry reading hypothesis and the recoding hypothesis an additional measure, the level of content integration, is required. Experiment 1 uses the single measure of levels of surface information recall and evaluates the theoretical predictions of the poetry reading hypothesis, the recoding hypothesis, and the processing shift hypothesis. Experiment 2 uses two measures, the level of surface information recall and level of content integration, to evaluate the theoretical predictions of the poetry reading hypothesis and the recoding hypothesis.
5. Experiment 1

5.1 Method

Subjects. Eighty subjects, aged 18-21, participated in this experiment. All subjects were native English-speaking undergraduate students enrolled in overseas programs at Israeli universities.

Materials. The stimulus texts involved two graphically manipulated versions of two original poems by James Joyce: "The Twilight turns from Amethyst" and "On the Beach at Fontana." These poems were chosen because of their graphic form—three stanzas consisting of four short lines each—and their multiple use of phonetic patterns of alliteration, consonance, assonance, and rhyme. In their original form these poems were judged by four experienced readers (PhD students of English literature) to have high phonetic and high graphic features. The manipulation of the poems consisted of two levels of graphic salience, high and low. The following definitions were used: high graphic—3 stanzas of four short lines each with capital letters at the beginning of each line (the traditional form of a poem); low graphic—a paragraph form with capital letters only at the beginning of a sentence (a prose form of the poem; see Appendix A). These specific materials had been used in a previous poetic text categorization experiment and have shown that the traditional form of the poem is clearly categorized as a poem while the prose form of the poem elicits low poeticity categorization ratings (see Hanauer 1996).

The two versions of the poems were also used to construct the materials for the task to assess the subjects' memory for surface information, a cued-recall task. Five words were deleted from each of the versions of the poem and replaced by open lines. The words deleted were chosen because of their phonetic and graphic salience in the original version of the poem. Three of the words deleted were end-line rhymes and two were mid-line alliterations. This procedure is based on Van Peer (1986, 36). The words deleted from Poem 1 ("Amethyst") were: "deeper," "avenue," "slow," "way," and "amethyst." The words deleted from Poem 2 ("Fontana") were: "whines," "single," "whining," "shoulder," and "unending."

Tasks. The subjects were asked to perform the following tasks: A) Read the text twice carefully in order to answer a comprehension question and B) Fill in the exact words missing in the cued recall version of the poem.

Procedure. The subjects were tested in eight groups of ten. The eight groups were equally divided into a treatment and a control group. Within the treatment group (N=40), each subject was presented with a booklet including a cover page with instructions, one of the versions of the poems, and the same version of the poem prepared as a cued-recall task. The four sets of materials (poem 1/high graphic; poem 1/low graphic; poem 2/high graphic; poem 2/low graphic) were randomly distributed. The subjects were instructed that the task before them was
a comprehension task. They were told that they should read the text twice through carefully because the comprehension task would be done without looking at the text. Subjects were not allowed to look forward or backward in the booklet, and after reading each page they were required to fold the page and place it under the other pages of the booklet so that it was no longer visible. The recall task was initiated only after the read version of the poem was folded and out of sight. The instructions for the recall task specified that the precise wording of the original text they had read was required in completing the task.

The control group was only presented with the version of the poem prepared as a cued recall task for the treatment group. Without reading the full version of the poem, the control group was required to fill in the most suitable words in the blank spaces. For the treatment group, the filling in of the blank spaces in the poem was a cued-recall task, whereas for the control group it was a close exercise. The four version of the poem (poem 1/high graphic; poem 1/low graphic; poem 2/high graphic; poem 2/low graphic) were randomly distributed between the subjects.

5.2 Results and Discussion

As shown in Table 1 below for the treatment group, the traditional graphic format of the poems elicited higher levels of verbatim recall than the prose format. An average increase of 1.20 words was found for the traditional format over the prose format in Poem One (Amethyst) and an average increase of 1.40 words was found for the traditional format of the poem in the second Poem (Fontana). For the treatment group, the average frequency of verbatim responses is seen to be consistently higher than that of the control group. The observed increase in exact verbatim responses found for the traditional graphic format of the poems for the treatment group, was not seen in the control group. Only small differences can be found between the graphic versions of the poems for the control group. A three-way ANOVA was calculated for the frequency of verbatim responses for the two graphically manipulated versions of the two poems and for the two groups (treatment/control). Main effects were found for the graphic manipulation, F(1,72)=11.45, p<.01, and for the groups F(1,72)=103.06, p<.01. No main effect was found for the change in poem content. Significant interactions were found between poem content and group, F(1,72)=22.89, p<.01, and between graphic form and group F(1,72)=7.20, p<.01. No significant interaction was found between the graphic form and poem content and no three-way interactions were found.
Table 1
Summary of means and standard deviations of frequency of recall for two graphically manipulated versions of two Poems and for two groups (treatment/control) in Experiment 1 (N=80).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poem</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Graphic Form</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional format</td>
<td>M (S.D.)</td>
<td>Prose format</td>
<td>M (S.D.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Amethyst&quot;</td>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>4.40 (0.69)</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.20 (1.13)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Amethyst&quot;</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>0.50 (0.53)</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.70 (0.48)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Fontana&quot;</td>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>3.10 (1.59)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.70 (1.59)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Fontana&quot;</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>1.50 (0.71)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.00 (0.82)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to further consider the interaction between graphic form and group, post-hoc Tukey-B comparisons of cell means were calculated. Significant differences (p<.05) were found between the traditional and prose graphic formats for each of the poem contents for the treatment group. No significant differences were found for the graphic manipulation in either poem contents for the control group. The main effect for the graphic variable can thus be attributed to the graphic manipulation in the treatment group and not the result of a production task in the control group.

For the treatment group, the same pattern of results for the graphic manipulation was seen in both poem contents. The results show a significant difference in the amounts of verbatim recall elicited by the two graphic forms of the poem. In both poem contents, a higher frequency of verbatim responses was found for the traditional poem format. This result was not repeated for the control group, in which no significant differences were found for the graphic manipulation in either poem content. These results show that the observed increase in verbatim responses for the traditional graphic format derives from encoding and retrieval processes and not from the subjects ability to "guess" the exact words on the basis of the cloze version of the poem. This may also explain the significant interactions between the poem content and group and between graphic form and group. The control group was involved in a "guessing" rather than a recall task and therefore had a different pattern of responses.

The results of Experiment 1 support the predictions of the poetry reading hypothesis and the recoding hypothesis and are in contrast to the prediction of the processing shift hypothesis. The observed higher levels of surface information recall for the traditional graphic form of the poem are explained by the poetry reading hypothesis as resulting from the ease of categorization of this text as poem and the subsequent focussing of attention on surface information. The recoding hypothesis explains this result by predicting greater surface information recall for information that has not been integrated within a larger memory structure. The traditional form of the poem places a much greater emphasis on
the individuality of the lines and therefore there will increased verbatim recall for this graphic form of the text. Overall the results of Experiment One differentiate between two of the three hypotheses and present initial evidence to support the poetry reading and recoding hypotheses.

6. Experiment 2

The aim of Experiment 2 was to differentiate between the two possible explanations of Experiment 1 with regard to the poetry reading hypothesis and the recoding hypothesis. These two hypotheses make identical predictions in relation to the direction of verbatim recall for the two graphic versions of the poem. However, if an additional information source — recall of integrated content information — is added to the experimental context, then the two hypotheses can be seen to make different predictions. The recoding hypothesis postulates that once information has been integrated within a larger memory structure, it will lose its individuality, and, therefore, surface information will decay. In relation to Experiment 1, higher verbatim recall was predicted for the traditional graphic format by the recoding hypothesis because this format with its short lines and stanza breaks places greater emphasis on the individuality of the single lines and results in less integration of information. Accordingly, within the recoding hypothesis there is a prediction of a reverse relationship between the amount of verbatim information recalled and the amount of integrated information within a longer term memory structure. The recoding hypothesis predicts a negative correlation between verbatim information and integrated content information.

In contrast, the poetry reading hypothesis predicts a positive correlation between verbatim information and integrated content information. The poetry reading hypothesis assumes that once a text has been categorized as a poem, the reader will pay close attention to the surface structure of the poem in order to interpret it and therefore will encode sections of it verbatim to memory. Accordingly, the poetry reading hypothesis predicts that higher levels of verbatim recall will be accompanied by higher levels of integrated content recall.

6.1 Method

Subjects. Seventeen subjects, aged 18-21, participated in this experiment. All subjects were native English-speaking undergraduate students enrolled in overseas programs at Israeli academic institutions. The specific subjects used in this experiment had not participated in any of the previous experiments.

Materials. The stimulus text used in this experiment was the original version of the poem "On a Faded Violet" by Percy Bysshe Shelley. As in the case of stimulus items used in Experiment 1, this poem was chosen because of its graphic form — three stanzas consisting of four short lines each — and its
multiple use of phonetic patterns of alliteration, consonance, assonance, and rhyme. This poem was judged to have high phonetic and graphic features by four experienced readers (see Appendix B).

The original version of the poem was also used to construct the materials for the cued-recall task. As in Experiment 1, five words were deleted from the original version of the poem and replaced by open lines. The words deleted were chosen because of their phonetic and graphic salience in the original version of the poem. Three of the words deleted were end-line rhymes and two were mid-line alliterations. In addition, three literary reading comprehension questions were constructed to evaluate the readers' recall of integrated content information. All three questions involved the integration of specific information between different individual lines of the poem and the two main characters of the poem, the speaker and the flower. In other words, within the comprehension questions, integrated content information was operationalized as the ability to recall explicit connections between information in two or more different individual lines and about two separate characters.\(^1\)

**Tasks.** Each subject was asked to perform the following three tasks: A) Read the text twice carefully in order to answer comprehension questions; B) Answer three reading comprehension questions in their own words; and C) Fill-in the exact words missing in the cued recall version of the poem.

**Procedure.** The subjects were tested in two groups of 10 and 7 subjects. Each subject was presented with a booklet that included a cover page with instructions, the poem, a page with three reading comprehension questions, and the same poem prepared as a cued-recall task. The subjects were instructed that the text before them was a comprehension task. They were told that they should read the text twice carefully because the comprehension task would be done without looking at the text. The subjects were not allowed to look forward or backward in the booklet and having read each page the subjects were required to fold the page and place it under the other pages of the booklet so that it was not visible. Only once the read version of the poem was folded back and out of sight did the subjects complete the reading comprehension questions. The instructions for the reading comprehension questions specified that precise wording was not required in answering the questions, however as much information as possible should be supplied in their answers. The recall task was completed after the subjects had finished and folded back the comprehension questions. The instructions for the recall task specified that the precise wording of the original text that they had read was required in completing the task.

1) What explicit connections are made between the flower and the speaker's lover in the text?; 2) What explicit connections are made between the state of the flower and the speaker in the text?; 3) On which part of the speaker's body is the flower situated? In what specific terms is it described?
Scoring Procedures. Two scores were collected for each subject. The first score consisted of the number of precise words the subject recalled in the cued recall task. On this task scores could range from 0 to 5. The second score related to the number of connected information items the subject remembered relating to the content of the poem across the three comprehension questions. A correct score was only given to information items that were explicitly connected in the subject’s answers. Specific information from individual lines that was not explicitly connected was not considered a correct answer, even if this information could have been used to answer sections of the question. In other words, a correct answer was by definition the connection between two or more information sources. The integrated content information was independently marked by two scorers with 83% agreement. Disagreement over specific items was resolved through discussion between the two markers.

6.2 Results and Discussion

In order to evaluate the relationship between the subject’s verbatim recall and integrated content information recall, a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was calculated for the two sets of scores. This analysis revealed a positive, statistically significant, correlation between the two sets of scores ($r=0.71$, $p<.01$). High levels of verbatim recall were accompanied by high levels of integrated content recall. This result supports the predictions of the Poetry Reading hypothesis and is in contrast to the predictions of the Recoding hypothesis.

As seen in relation to Experiment 1, this result suggests that the greater verbatim recall elicited by the traditional graphic format of the poem is not the result of lack of integration of the poems components (the recoding hypothesis) but rather as described by the poetry reading hypothesis, that is, a result of attention paid to the surface features for poetry comprehension purposes. This result is also supported by studies evaluating the recoding hypothesis conducted by Gernsbacher and Murphy and Shapiro. Although these studies did not consider the role of reading specific genre, their results did reveal that integrated information does not result in surface information loss.

7. General Discussion

This study presented a genre based explanation of surface information recall. Specifically, in the investigation of poetry, a poetry reading hypothesis which included the close consideration of surface information was proposed and tested. This hypothesis states that once a text has be categorized as a poem, the reader will pay close attention to the surface features of the text for comprehension purposes and will encode sections of it verbatim to memory. Taken together the results of Experiments 1 and 2 offer preliminary evidence that supports the
poetry reading hypothesis and explains surface information recall in genre specific terms. Experiment 1 demonstrated a significant increase in verbatim recall for the traditional graphic form over an unconventional prose format of the same poem. This result — consistent for two poem contents — was predicted by the poetry reading hypothesis. It is based on the conception that the traditional graphic format is associated with high pocticity ratings (see Hanauer 1995, 1996) and thus will involve paying close attention at the initial encoding stage to the surface features of the text. The traditional graphic format will be easily accessible to poetry directed strategic reading, as it is a high frequency conventional graphic format. Experiment 2 demonstrated that higher levels of verbatim recall are associated with higher levels of integrated content recall. This result which is in contrast to the predictions of the recoding hypothesis, is predicted by the poetry reading hypothesis on the basis that attention is directed towards the surface features because they are functional for the interpretation of the poem.

Overall, the results of the study support the pragmatic hypothesis of surface information recall proposed by Murphy and Shapiro. However, in contrast to Murphy and Shapiro, this study situates the pragmatic hypothesis in the context of genre studies and specifically the genre of poetry. This made it possible to predict specific situations in which surface information recall would increase.

These results raise interesting questions in relation to previous explanations of surface information loss. Surface information loss is typically considered an inherent feature of reading in general, but this study poses the question as to whether it is a genre-specific issue. The findings of previous studies could have been influenced by the cognitive control systems of the specific text types that were employed in the particular studies. In informative texts, surface information is not functional for comprehension purposes and therefore there is no strategic reason to pay attention to it or encode it. This genre-based explanation is essentially different from those proposed so far. Subsequent studies of surface information loss should take the issue of genre specific processing into account.

This study can be seen as offering support to current positions in genre studies. Although previous research has acknowledged that textual schema have an effect on the way texts are read (Kintsch and Van Dijk; Van Dijk and Kintsch), current studies of specific genre have actually theoretically and empirically explored the specific connections between genre-specific reading strategies and specific language patterns. This direction can differentiate between general, wide-based inter-generic reading phenomena and genre specific reading phenomena and thus, ultimately leading to much greater specificity in our understanding of the phenomena of reading.

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Works Cited


The twilight turns from amethyst
To deep and deeper blue,
The lamp fills with a pale green glow
The trees of the avenue.

The old piano plays an air,
Sedate and slow and gay;
She bends upon the yellow keys,
Her head inclines this way

Shy thoughts and grave wide eyes and hand
That wander as they list —
The twilight turns to darker blue
With lights of amethyst.

The twilight turns from amethyst to deep and deeper blue, the lamp fills with a pale green glow the trees of the avenue. The old piano plays an air, sedate and slow and gay; she bends upon the yellow keys, her head inclines this way. Shy thoughts and grave wide eyes and hands that wander as they list — the twilight turns to darker blue with lights of amethyst.

Wind whines, and whines the shingle
The crazy pierstakes groan;
A senile sea numbers each single
Slimesilvered stone.

From whining wind and colder
Grey sea I wrap him warm
And touch his trembling fineboned shoulder
And boyish arm.

Around us fear, descending
Darkness of fear above
And in my heart how deep unending
Ache of love!

Wind whines, and whines the shingle the crazy pierstakes groan; A senile sea numbers each single slimesilvered stone. From whining wind and colder grey sea I wrap him warm and touch his trembling fineboned shoulder and boyish arm. Around us fear, descending darkness of fear above and in my heart how deep unending ache of love!
Appendix B

The odour from the flower is gone
Which like thy kisses breathed on me;
The colour from the flower is flown
Which glowed on thee and only thee!

A shrivelled, lifeless, vacant form,
It lies on my abandoned breast,
And mocks the heart which yet is warm,
With cold and silent rest.

I weep, — my tears revive it not!
I sigh, — it breathes no more on me;
Its mute and uncomplaining lot
Is such as mine should be.
DMITRY A. LEONTIEV, NATALIA ZHERDEVA, and INNA CHUGUNOVA

Readers' Perception of Commercial Genres and Book Covers: A Psychosemantic Study

1. The Objectives of the Study

The importance of a book cover and its design for the marketing and sale of the book is self-evident to everyone engaged in the publishing industry. However, in literary research with regard to reader response to literature in the context of book choices or purchasing, this aspect has not been paid much attention to. From the few studies that are available, foremost is perhaps Gérard Genette’s notion of the "paratext" (see his chapter on the péritext editorial 7-20).

The importance of the cover appears to hold special import for popular/commercial literature such as crime fiction, adventures, romances, etc., as well as children’s books. According to Bourdieu, this section of the literary field may be designated as being within the "field of large-scale production." In the case of our study, the criteria of the large-scale production of literature include factors suggesting that different popular/commercial books from the same series or even in different series are produced, marketed, and sold with similar and often interchangeable book covers while for readers the content of this genre is of less importance when compared with readers of canonized fiction or of regular books in general.

Owing at least partially to the relative sameness of the book cover, the rational choice of readers which books to choose for purchase is in question: which book to choose if so many look the same? Our hypothesis is that the decision with regard to purchase may be impulsive rather than specific or determined. The choice of a book of popular/commercial literature is based on mechanisms difficult to clarify, explain, or justify verbally and even if the buyer provides a verbal explanation, this is more often than not questionable as to its truthfulness. As analysts of the mass book market note, impulsive purchase is in fact the result of a number of factors, including word-of-mouth information, cover design, the

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perceived success of previous books from the series, the author's reputation, the plot, and advertising (see, for example, Romanos). The list of these criteria of impulse purchasing of popular/commercial books contains two basic variables: a preliminary set (conditioned by the background information about the book such as the author's reputation, advertising, word-of-mouth information, etc.) and the cover design (responsible for creating an immediate impression following direct contacts with the type of books in question).

In this article, we present the results of a study with regard to the hypothesis of impulse conditioning by book cover design for the choice of books. Our study aims at describing some of the mechanisms of the relationship between book cover design and book choice — in the following referred to as "impulse condition" — as well as the further aspect of reader expectation based on the hypothesized impulse condition. In addition, our study suggests inquiry into the "psychological" construct as well as effect on readers of book covers of popular/commercial fiction. We may speak of two functions of book cover design: the visual distinction of the book among other books, which has the effect of attracting attention to a given book and the resulting intention to creating a favorable image of a given book. The latter function can be, in turn, divided into two: the construction of general attraction toward the book and the construction concrete anticipatory reader-response emotions in line with the genre of the book. For example, a thriller should arouse different emotions than a romance. The publishing industry of popular/commercial literature, therefore, aims at not only to creating a general positive impression, but also to intervene in the reader's subconscious expectations of how a book of the given kind would look like.

In sum, the principal aim of our study can be formulated as a psychological analysis of readers' impulse condition and subconscious mechanisms with regard to book purchase in the context of the specific genre of popular/commercial literature. Our study deals with the following aspects of our hypothesis: 1) The assessment of impulse condition with regard to book appearance; 2) The analysis of cross-sample consistency of the impulse condition; and 3) The role of general "ideal" images of popular/commercial genre specimens and their evaluation.

2. Theoretical Postulates and Methodology

Perhaps the most appropriate theoretical and methodological approach for the study and substantiation of our above introduced hypothesis may be the so-called "psychology of subjective semantics," an approach elaborated by Yelena Yu. Artemyeva (see 1980, 1997). Based on empirical evidence, Artemyeva stated that
human experience conserves the traces of one's encounters with different objects of the world not only in form of their cognitive images but also in the form of "records of emotional impressions from them," which she designates as "semantic codes" of the objects. The semantic code is amodal, that is, not linked to sensory modalities, and describes the object in terms of its emotional evaluations rather than its objective properties. The code provides fast recognition and discrimination of different objects through their personal sense and regulates the subject's interaction with the objects. The semantic code can be explicated by different procedures in terms of both verbal and nonverbal semantic descriptions. Particularly, the semantic differential (SD), based on either/or dichotomies without intermediate grades appears to be relevant. Artemyeva treated primary SD data as variables of qualitative, rather than quantitative nature. Hence, she rejected quantitative graduation of estimations as well as the standard procedure of reducing primary data to a small number of secondary factors thus losing most of the qualitative information. In terms of the n-scale SD semantic code, any object can be represented as a point in a n-dimensional space. The distance between any two objects in this space can be calculated in exact figures. Another important property of semantic codes is their high cross-sample and temporal consistency.

Having established that the subjective certainty of an estimate of a given object by a given scale correlated with the degree of interindividual congruence of estimates of the object by the scale, Artemyeva considered the interindividual congruence of semantic codes — the semantic code intensity (SCI) — to be the relevant measure for the impressiveness of a given object (1980). Some of her empirical results confirm this assumption. Comparing the SCI of eighteenth-century jewellery from a museum exhibition, of nineteenth-century jewellery from a private collection, and of ordinary present-day jewellery (each group consisted of three objects), Artemyeva has found a significant decline of the SCI for all the objects of the second group as compared with the first, and especially for all the objects of the third group as compared with the second (see 1986). In another study (see 1986) she found that the objects manifested a significantly higher SCI for the Uspensky Cathedral in Kondopoga (Northern Russia) as a real object than for the photo of this Cathedral.

In a number of experiments in the field of Empirical Aesthetics, it was possible to assess the semantic code of the anticipated impressions of the objects, the encounter with which the impressions were only expected or anticipated, and to elaborate some new assessment techniques within the subjective semantic paradigm (see Leontiev 1991a; Leontiev, Delskaya, and Nazarova; Leontiev and Yemelyanov). One of our methods employed in the above studies is the Color Attitude Test (CATT), and this method was used in the present study (see, for a theoretical elaboration, Leontiev 1991a; Leontiev and Yemelyanov). The Color Attitude Test — first designed by Etkind — is based on the popular Luscher Color Test and uses the same test material (8 cards of 8 different specially
selected colors). However, while the instruction of the traditional Luscher Color Test requires to rank the colors by their attractiveness for the subject and the results are interpreted in terms of the subject's actual emotional and psychological state, CATT requires to rank the same colors according to their associative closeness to the given object, be it a thing, a person, or a general concept. In our present study, the subjects were requested to choose one of the eight colors of the standard Luscher set that fits best to the estimated object, than the next one, and gradually to arrange the whole set in a rank succession according to the associative closeness of each color to the object. Thus, the CATT data allow to make the same calculations as SD, that is, to calculate the pairwise distances between any objects in 8-dimensional space of color associations (G. Tatevyan, personal communication) and to calculate an index of interindividual consistency of color associations to the given object, analogous to SCI (see Leontiev and Yemelyanov). We designated this method as the index of extension (IE) of the summarized colour sequence characterizing each object. After computing the average rank of each color for each object in a sample group, we calculated in each group the discrepancy between the maximal and the minimal average rank value (IE). In the case of random arrangement of colors, the average rank value for each separate color will surge toward 4.5 and the IE toward zero. In the case of completely congruent arrangements within a group, the values of average ranks will reproduce the ranks in any individual succession, varying from 1 to 8, while IE reaches 7. In real cases, IE varies from 0 to 7, reflecting the congruence of individual estimates of a given object in terms of color associations. Both SD and CATT have a definite specificity. As it is known from previous studies (see Leontiev and Yemelyanov), CATT proves to be able to better catch differences between the semantic codes of individual objects and their unique overtones, while SD better catches the commonality between different objects in their semantic codes and their emotional grouping. CATT is linked to individual emotionality in a more immediate fashion, while SD is based on the language and sociocultural picture of the world held by the subjects. In subjective semantic studies both assessment techniques complement each other.

In our study, we used a special 47-scale bipolar SD (an either/or version without intermediate grades) and standard CATT.

3. Sample, Procedure, and Experimental Hypotheses

In order to control the hypothesis of the cross-sample consistency of semantic codes, we used 7 samples selected by several distinctive criteria: gender, professional relations with the book trade, and level of aesthetic competence or expertise. The samples were as follows: 1) Occasional buyers in a large bookstore (males [N=20]); 2) Occasional buyers in the same bookstore (females [N=20]); 3) Buyers in a standing wholesale and retail book fair (males [N=20]); 4) Traders in a standing wholesale and retail book fair (males [N=20]); 5)
Readers' Perception of Book Covers

Teenagers (13-17 years) in a summer camp (males and females [N=20]); 6) Postgraduate students in the humanities at Moscow State University (males and females [N=10]); 7) Professional writers and literary critics (males and females [N=10]). In total, the study covered 120 subjects, all of them in a field setting. Samples 1 and 2 were studied in a large Moscow bookstore (Krasnaya Presnya); Samples 3 and 4 in a well-known standing Moscow wholesale and retail book fair at the Olimpiyski sport complex; Sample 5 in a summer camp for adolescents near Moscow; Sample 6 of subjects in the University's dormitories; and Sample 7 in a countryside sanatorium of the Writers Union of Russia at Peredelkino.

All the subjects were interviewed individually or, sometimes, two at a time. The procedure included several stages. First, the subjects were asked to evaluate by SD six following notions, presented in succession: "good criminal novel," "good science fiction," "good book for children," "bad criminal novel," "bad science fiction," and "bad book children's book." Following this, the subjects were asked to evaluate the same notions by CATT, ascribing an associative succession of 8 colors to each of them. Then, the investigator displayed four books belonging to one (the same) of three genres of popular/commercial fiction involved: criminal novels, science fiction, and books children's books and asked the subjects to evaluate each of them by SD. We did not ask the subjects to evaluate other genres of books — that is, regular books — by CATT, for it was evident that the results of the inquiry would directly reflect actual colors of their cover design. And last, we proposed to the subjects to choose as a gift for their participation in the study one of 6-7 books belonging to one (the same) of the three popular/commercial genres in the study and then to explain their choice. The procedure took about 30 minutes.

We were dealing with two groups of independent variables, namely, the objects of evaluation (real books vs. abstract concepts; the concepts could be "good" or "bad"; both types of books and concepts differed by genres) and different samples. Dependent variables were the data of two assessment techniques, namely, the choices of SD adjectives and the rankings of colors associated with the evaluated objects. It is important to note that only abstract concepts were uniform for all the samples and provided representative statistics. As far as regular fiction books — that is, other than popular/commercial fiction — are concerned, they differed in different samples, thus we were able to pay attention only to some trends in their evaluation, rather than draw solid conclusions. In sum, what we managed to investigate in this study were semantic images of abstract genre-related concepts while the evaluation of regular fiction played only an auxiliary role, similar to the final procedure of choice.

In terms of the methodology described above, we formulated experimental hypotheses as follows:

Hypothesis 1: There are semantic codes of mass genres that are expected to be consistent within the samples and partly consistent across the samples;
Hypothesis 2: Semantic codes of regular fiction books are expected to be more consistent than semantic codes of abstract concepts ("good criminal novel," etc.). Semantic codes of "good" genre concepts are expected to be more consistent than those of "bad" genre concepts;

Hypothesis 3: The books of whose semantic codes are closer to the semantic code of the "good" genre concepts (genre-congruent codes), sell better than those books whose semantic codes are far from it (genre-incongruent codes). Since we had no data about the dynamics of selling at our disposal, we were able to investigate only one logical consequence of the last hypothesis, namely, that the books with cover coloring corresponding to CATT data for good genre specimens will be chosen more frequently as a gift than the books with different cover coloring.

The stages of administering the data were as follows:
1) 42 primary tables were built (for each of the 7 samples and each of the 6 general genre concepts separately) with SD scales making the rows and individual subjects the columns. 1 was ascribed to the choice of the left pole of a scale and 0 to the choice of the right pole. The summary column in each table contained the sums of every row. Individual evaluations were thus aggregated and summarized within samples.

2) 6 secondary tables were built (for each of the 6 general genre concepts) with SD scales making the rows and summary columns of the samples in the columns. The secondary summary column in each table contained the sums of every row. This was to aggregate and summarize data across samples.

3) All the values in the secondary tables were evaluated by the 75% criterion, that is, the values that provided uniform estimations by at least 75% of a sample were considered concordant. According to this criterion, all the values were estimated as either concordantly surging toward one of the poles of a SD scale or being nonconcordant. This was aimed at selecting the effective SD scales (in terms of good consistency and discrimination).

4) The tertiary table for SD data was built with secondary summary columns making the columns in order to define SD scales that provided concordancy by subjects and divergency by objects estimations of at least 50% of the objects (concepts + books).

5) The same primary and secondary tables were built for the CATT data, with ranks of the 8 colors making the rows. The table was filled with rank values for each color in the color association succession. In all the primary and secondary tables we calculated also rank sum, medium rank, and secondary rank (the result of ranking medium ranks by value) in every row, as well as the index of scale extension (IE, see above).

6) The same procedure as explicated above was made for evaluations of regular fiction books. In addition, in the summarized data for each book we calculated the number of SD scales that coincided with the "good" and "bad" genre concepts.
7) The results of gift choices were presented as the ratio of the number of choices of each book to the number of cases when this book was proposed among others. We also calculated the number of different reasons for choosing the given book, mentioned by the subjects and according to the following classification: author’s name; title; cover design; brief annotation; intuitive decision; and others.

4. Selected Results

4.1 The summarized estimates of all six genre concepts are fairly concordant. It is worth noting that the criterion of concordant choice of one of the poles by at least 75% of a sample — usually accepted in subjective semantics — is far more strict than regular criteria of significance. For instance, for N=118 the values of 88.5 and greater, as well as 29.5 and smaller, fit to this criterion. If we compute a chi-square criterion for the value 89 or 29 — the least concordant one that fit to our criterion — we obtain the chi-square 29.5 for 1 degree of freedom, while the chi-square 6.63 is significant at .01 level. Thus, using this very strict 75% criterion, we find that 40 to 70% of SD scales reach it. In particular, for the genre concept "good criminal novel," 20 scales of 47 reach this criterion, for "good science fiction" 30 scales, for "good children's book" 34 scales, for "bad criminal novel" 27 scales, for "bad science fiction" 28 scales, and for "bad children's book" 30 scales. When we tried a still higher criterion of concordance, namely 90%, the number of concordant scales was still notable: correspondingly, 11, 13, 22, 6, 9, and 14. It is not possible to present all the SD data in all the samples here, and thus we present only the summarized figures for the total sample (see Table I, Appendix), having in mind that intersample differences are negligible as compared with common trends.

The values given in Table 1 mean the absolute number of choices of the left pole of each SD scale in the total sample. In fact, the numbers of relevant protocols (N values in the first row) are somewhat less than the number of subjects and slightly differ for different concepts because of some (rare) omissions in the protocols. Lacking choices of separate scales in individual protocols are responsible for fractional values in the Table and we ascribed the value of .5 in case of such an omission.

In Table 1 (see Appendix), we see, first, that the images of good and bad genre labels are quite clear in all the samples; second, that criminal novels are estimated in the least concordant and books for children in the most concordant way; and third, that the differences between genres are less for "bad" labels than for "good" ones.

4.2 Sixteen SD scales equally clearly differentiate "good" and "bad" labels of all three genres in question. This implies that the inventory of separating subjectively good from bad books is statistically significant. In addition to the
scales which explicitly account for an evaluative dimension (original-banal, pleasant-unpleasant, interesting-uninteresting, dim-bright, exciting-dull, dynamic-boring, evil-good, witty-slow-witted, clever-stupid, musty-fresh), there were also scales of a metaphorical nature in the list (broad-narrow, dark-light, weak-strong, open-closed, polydimensional-flat, uninhibited-restricted). The last six scales account for the construct that can be called "openness" and seems to play a decisive role in the subconscious impression and expectation of a new book.

4.3 Semantic scale functions. Having in mind that a semantic scale functions well if it provides different estimates for different genre concepts and regular fiction books and the same estimates apply to different subjects (see Artemyeva 1980), we tried to single out the set of well-functioning scales equally valid both for genre concepts and regular fiction books. Having constructed the Table for 6 concepts and 6 books, we excluded scales that failed to fit to both of these criteria. Nine SD scales have been left as satisfactorily corresponding to the criteria: dim-bright, dynamic-boring, inteligible-unintelligible, colored-black and white, merry-sad, warm-cold, pragmatic-romantic, shallow-deep, and childish-adult. Using these 9 scales only, we compared by the chi-square criterion the results of all the samples with each other. We failed to find any significant differences and have thus additional reasons to state that cross-sample differences make no substantial influence on the generalized data.

4.4 CATT data: The data provide good correspondence with the SD data. In Table 2 below presents the ranks of all the colors for all the 6 genres for our entire sample (N=118). Table 3 below presents the picture of colors most closely associated with all the 6 concepts and corresponding IE values and that reflect the degree of concordance of individual estimates. We see that there is both a general factor of "good-bad" and special preferred colors for all three genres; their order within the common set of "good" colors is different for all three genres. The closest colors associated with good criminal novels are red and purple, with good science fiction green and blue, and with good children's books yellow. Differences on the "bad" pole are less than that on the "good" ones. If we compare IE values, we receive the same picture as with the number of concordant SD scales: the highest IE values are for children's books and the lowest for criminal novels, as is the case with SD.

Table 2
Average ranks of colors associated with 6 genre concepts across the total sample of N=118

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>4.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>5.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Yellow 4.92 4.85 4.53 5.07 2.27 6.58
Red 3.75 5.03 3.84 5.24 2.86 6.02
Purple 3.86 5.10 3.78 5.12 3.52 5.36
Brown 5.21 4.04 5.53 3.62 6.22 3.20
Black 5.0 3.75 5.83 3.53 7.20 1.97
Grey 4.33 3.41 5.59 3.36 6.05 3.18

1 = Good criminal novel; 2 = Bad Criminal novel; 3 = Good science fiction; 4 = Bad science fiction; 5 = Good children’s book; 6 = Bad children’s book.

Table 3
Differences between the images of the 6 genre concepts in terms of color associations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Criminal Novel</th>
<th>Bad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>red, purple, green, blue</td>
<td></td>
<td>grey, black, brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IE=1.46</td>
<td></td>
<td>IE=1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Fiction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>green, blue, purple, red</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IE=2.56</td>
<td></td>
<td>grey, black, brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's Book</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yellow, red, green, purple</td>
<td></td>
<td>black, grey, brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IE=3.77</td>
<td></td>
<td>IE=4.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5 Regular fiction books
Regular fiction books are estimated in a less concordant way than "good" and "bad" abstractions, although their semantic image is also clear in most cases. The differences between samples are usually not substantial; advanced readers (samples 6 and 7) are the most critically disposed, and teenagers the least critically as compared with the general adult sample. Women tend to avoid extremes. The criminal genre is estimated in the least concordant way while children’s books are the most concordant. The latter is true for both abstract good and abstract bad perceptions of regular books of fiction.

4.6 Gift books
The choice of gift books partly followed the regularities of color preferences. In particular, choosing from the books of the same series, the subjects preferred a criminal novel with red-purple cover over the green one and completely ignored the yellow one. Science fiction novels with a green spot on a dark background has been chosen more often than the ones in red-blue-purple coloring, and the ones in black-brown coloring were the least preferred ones.
This supports the main hypothesis that subconscious image plays an important role in buying books of popular/commercial literature. Overall, the books with cover in color and associated with good genre specimens were preferred by the subjects. Thus, our Hypothesis 1 was confirmed. Even cross-sample consistency of semantic codes was very high, not to mention intrasample consistency. Our Hypothesis 2 proved to be wrong: abstract genre concepts were estimated in a more concordant way than regular books. "Good" and "bad" genre specimens revealed no systematic differences in the degree of concordance; however, the differences between genres we have not anticipated were rather clear and stable. The results of subjects' choice of gift books points in favor of Hypothesis 3, although these data have no sufficient statistical representation.

5. Conclusion

Based on the visual perception of the book cover, our evidence indicates that there are subconsciously emotion-loaded images of "good" and "bad" genre specimens of books of popular/commercial fiction preceding the choice and purchase of such books. These images can be more or less clear and unambiguous and seem to have the nature of amodal semantic codes and this result was established by a pronounced similarity of SD and CATT results. The general meaning of the results presented above stems from our theory of interaction between an individual and an artwork. We proposed a hypothetical scheme of the interplay of different factors in the situation of person-art interaction. Nine primary factors or conditions have been described. Three of them characterize the person involved (value organization, needs, and aesthetic competence), three the work perceived (contents, aesthetic structure, and advertising-informational envelope), and three characterize the situation (cultural background, group norms, and concrete obstacles). All other factors emerge from the interaction of the nine primary ones. For instance, cultural background and aesthetic competence determine aesthetic taste; aesthetic taste and group norms determine a person's general attitude toward particular kinds and genres of art; and aesthetic taste and motives of art consumption determine the criteria of choice, while this motive is determined by person's needs and concrete obstacles.

In the case of our study of book covers of popular/commercial literature and readers' response, the criteria of choice are to be found in the advertising and informational orientation and marketing of the books as apparent in and through the book covers. The covers' advertising and informational appearance and impact on readers accounts for the readers' perception of the particular genre of popular/commercial fiction at hand. The impact of the book cover influences the readers' valuation of the book and thus this process influences the readers' decision whether to purchase or not to purchase and/or whether to read or not to read the book. The combined result of our study is that the cover design of popular/commercial literature is relevant not only to the socioeconomics of the production of a genre of writing and its reading but that the factor of cover design impacts on the readers aesthetic and psychological perception as well.
Consequently, the semantic image of a book and the degree of its correspondence to the semantic image of the genre determine the readers' predisposition toward the content of the book in a definitive genre-specific manner.

There are some questions concerning our data, however. First, how are we to explain the lower concordance of semantic evaluations of regular books as compared with those of abstract labels? We expected the opposite, namely larger individual variance of the abstract images. In fact, however, the subconscious agreement of our subjects as to the emotional attributes of all the 6 genre-related abstract concepts was surprisingly strong. This finding corresponds to the results of another study where subjects' semantic evaluation of concrete objects of brands of products when compared with their analogous abstract concepts such as "good or "bad" bank, car, juice, chewing gum, shampoo, TV set, etc. resulted in a lower concordance with regard to concrete brands (Leontiev and Lebedeva). At this stage, these results are in need of further analysis and we are unable to provide an explanation.

Some other data seem more intelligible: "good" abstract genre representatives are more diverse than "bad" ones because, one may suppose, the idea of "good" includes also the idea of "typical for the given genre" with sharp enough features of the criminal novel, or science fiction, or children's books. Correspondingly, "bad" representations of books have less marked genre features; in fact, the notions of "bad" books of different genres were closer to each other than the more special images associated with "good" ones. The most concordant results which could be expected would have to be with regard to childrens' books as compared with other genres was easy to predict because in this genre emotional content is represented in most clear and polarized ways.

We may also speculate that readers' color preferences associated with different genres may be connected with emotional expectations from the books of the given genre. According to current research in the clinical and experimental psychology of colors, yellow is the color of fantasy, openness, free emotional discharge and this is what children expect from their reading. Red is the color of tension, struggle, danger as used for criminal stories. Green is the color of quiet self-realization and doing one's job and it is not as directly linked to science fiction as the two previous colors to their corresponding genres. It is understandable and common-sensical that brown, black, and grey — colors people normally dislike — would be associated with bad books.

Finally, although some of the emotional bases of choosing popular/commercial literature are evident, the functional mechanisms of choice are not yet entirely clear. Our study revealed an important mediating link, that of readers' expectations of the genre at large and their response to book covers of three genres of popular/commercial literature.

Moscow State University


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1. Introduction

For the last ten years, a major focus of our research has been on the cognitive processes of professional actors. This research has indicated that an actor's basic role-learning strategy consists of elaborating the text to make explicit the implied plans of the characters (Noice 1991, 1992). Our inquiries have also shown that this process is far more efficient than rote repetition (Noice 1993) and that an intermediate step involves decomposing the text into smaller, goal-directed segments which actors call "beats" (Noice and Noice 1993). After segmenting a script into beats, actors are able to recall considerable amounts of text verbatim in the absence of any intention to memorize it.

2. Protocol Analysis

To obtain a more detailed look at an actor's learning process, we performed a line-by-line analysis of a single actor's think-aloud protocol. He was given the same six page scene used in the study mentioned above (Noice and Noice 1993) and asked to read quickly through it once to get an idea of the overall content. Then the participant was asked to work his way from the first line of dialogue to the last as if this were a scene he would have to learn and perform, talking aloud into the experimenter-provided tape recorder. The participant was told to censor nothing; just to verbalize each thought as it occurred without considering whether it was pertinent or extraneous. The protocol revealed that the procedure can be incredibly detailed. The actor dug out up to a half a dozen clues to the character's mental and emotional states from only two or three words of text (Noice and Noice 1994). Heretofore, this type of meaning-based procedure has been shown to be useful mainly for retention of the gist (e.g., Anderson 1974; Begg; Bransford, Barclay and Franks; Brewer; Brewer and Hay; Cofer, Chmielewski, and Brockway; Perfetti and Garson; Sachs). Analysis of this think-aloud protocol suggested that one reason why actors retain the exact words with this type of meaningful strategy is that their analysis focuses on why the characters chose these specific words to implement their plans.
However, we could not be sure that this one protocol was not atypical and therefore decided to collect six additional think-aloud protocols, using the same scene and procedure (Noice and Noice 1996). Repeated readings of these protocols revealed that all of the actors' utterances fell into one of 12 categories:

1) **Background.** Statements speculating on such factors as location, time of day, occupations of the characters, etc.

2) **Interactions.** Statements about mental or emotional interactions between characters in which one character affects or is affected by another character.

3) **Traits.** Statements concerning enduring traits, such as shyness or aggressiveness.

4) **Importance.** Statements regarding the relative importance of particular lines because they summed up a situation or revealed the specific nature of an interaction.

5) **Memorization.** Statements regarding the relative ease or difficulty of learning certain lines and why particular lines would be memorable.

6) **Response/Initiative.** Statements noting whether a particular line was a response to another character's preceding line or the introduction of new subject matter.

7) **Linguistic Information.** Statements that focused on such elements as onomatopoeia or word-length.

8) **Performance Aspects.** Statements regarding how the subject would use the information in the script during performance.

9) **Style.** Statements focusing on or speculating on style, era, genre of the play, the playwright's other works, etc.

10) **Directorial Input.** Statements regarding possible changes in interpretation based on the director's eventual choices.

11) **Metastatements.** Statements concerning a participant's process of learning a script in general without reference to this particular scene.

12) **Editorial/Extraneous.** Statements concerning elements other than the text or the actor's process.

All protocol statements were sorted into the above categories by the second author. To assess reliability of the scoring scheme, an independent rater scored a randomly selected subset of 50%. The mean percentage of agreement between the independent rater and the main judge was 87.11%. Discrepancies were resolved by discussion.

As expected, the largest single category (# 2) consisted of statements concerning interactions. Indeed, approximately five times as many utterances belonged in this category as in the next highest category (# 11): metastatements. The exact percentages of statements in each category generated by the six actors are shown in Table 1 (see Appendix).
This detailed examination of the protocols provided additional evidence that exploring the text on a word-for-word, line-by-line basis in order to determine the character's goals is a defining feature of a professional actor's learning strategy.

3. Comparing Actors' Strategies to Those of a Professional Mnemonist

At first glance, the need for rapid, verbatim acquisition of lengthy, complex discourse appears specific to actors. However, performers who give mnemonic demonstrations also must have this capacity to acquire material with extraordinary speed and accuracy. How would a professional mnemonist proceed if faced with a theatrical script to memorize? To answer this question, we contacted one of the world's foremost specialists in this area, Harry Lorayne, who graciously consented to generate a think-aloud protocol for our test scene (Noice and Noice 1996). Normally Lorayne uses (and advises his readers to use) strategies designed to insure recall of material after a single exposure. However, in the case of a theatrical script, Lorayne makes an exception and recommends repeated readings. Needless to say, actors also routinely go over their scripts many times. Therefore, since a single pass-through is never used for this type of material, the experimenters explicitly stated that there would not be a subsequent recall test; otherwise the participants might have modified their usual first-pass strategy to comply with what they perceived as task demands. Moreover, the experimenters had already addressed the issues and amount of recall of this same scene in previous research (e.g., Noice 1993; Noice and Noice 1993).

The first part of Mr. Lorayne's protocol dealt with learning the literal facts of the drama: the names, appearances and relationships of the characters. The second part revealed Lorayne's method for learning the dialogue and relating each speech to the preceding cue. In addition to the "visualize and link" approach, described by Mr. Lorayne in his many books (e.g., Lorayne 1957, 1975, 1985, 1988; Lorayne and Lucas), and frequently referred to in the psychological literature as "imagery mediation" (e.g., Herrmann), Lorayne coded a great deal of the script with a device we referred to as the "mini-scenario." This device consisted of a series of linked images that were not static but unfolded over time, a sort of "mini-movie." The use of this device allowed Lorayne to keep adding images to the scenario until he had coded all of the salient words verbatim.

Two main conclusions were reached by comparing Lorayne's protocol with that of the six actors:

1) Both the actors and Lorayne processed all statements at a micro-level. The actors did this in order to gain information essential to interpretation and performance. (As we have previously shown — e.g., Noice and Noice 1993 — actors are able to retain the exact words as a byproduct of the analysis.)
The same detailed examination was performed by Lorayne for a totally different purpose, (i.e., to create interacting images).

2) Lorayne, by employing the mini-scenario, was able to use imagery mediation to code extended dialogue verbatim.

4. Accounting for Superior Performance of Actors

While the above research brought us closer to understanding the details of actors’ role learning strategies, it did not explain exactly what factors were responsible for remembering text word-for-word when the learning approach centered on meaning. Was the superiority of a learning strategy based on analysis simply a product of actors’ expertise or could specific factors that were responsible for the results be determined? If these factors could be identified, might they be beneficial to a general student population? We performed a short series of experiments in an attempt to isolate the element that is responsible for the enhanced retention we had observed with actors (Noice and Noice 1997).

One important aspect of their role learning processes appears to be dictated by the nature of a theatrical script. The difference between prose material and a playscript is that a playscript is the only example of fictional narrative in which the author’s control of viewpoint is totally absent. Indeed, control of viewpoint is one of the prose writer’s most important techniques for creating a specific effect on the reader. For example, if the author wants the reader to identify solely with the main character, even though the story is written in the third person (and therefore might be considered to be an “objective presentation” by an average reader unversed in narratology), that reader will nevertheless experience the entire story from a single viewpoint as in this example:

Jason wended his way through the crowd, hoping his feeling of guilt didn’t show on his face. He needed a drink, fast. Only about ten more feet to the bar. "Jason Davis, how are you?" It was Mike Streeter, one of the last people in the world Jason wanted to run into. "I’m fine, Mike. How about you?" "Doing just great, thanks." He looked like he was doing great. But why not, Jason thought. Mike probably hasn’t had a care in the last twenty years.

On the other hand, if the author wants the reader to stand outside the events of the story and consequently experience more irony, he or she would probably write the narrative from the omniscient viewpoint as in this example:

Mary and Jill recognized each other instantly. Of course, neither was surprised the other was at the Exhibition Hall. "Mary, it must be ten years. Still into flowers, I see." "More than ever. Are you exhibiting tonight?" "No — just renewing some old acquaintances." If Mary had known why Jill was really there, she’d have raced from the Hall that very minute. But she didn’t know. How could she?
Still other manipulations of the readers’ responses are possible. For example, if the author wants the sense of identification engendered by the former method but does not want to the story to be narrated from one character’s viewpoint only, the author than can shift narrative viewpoints throughout as follows:

Mrs. Wells looked disapprovingly at the new maid. Not dressed like someone in service should be, she thought. Definitely not up to the standard of the last one. "Would you like me to make up the bedroom now, Ma’am?" "Yes, Joanne, I would." Mrs. Wells decided she didn’t like her voice either. The front door bell rang and Joanne shut off the vacuum. She ran downstairs to answer it. The caller was a well-dressed young man, carrying a large bouquet of flowers. "Is Mrs. Wells in?" Joanne couldn’t help wondering why such a nice looking young man was bringing flowers for that dried-up old prune.

Some authors have attempted to write in a purely objective manner but it is a real tour de force and in almost every case some use of narrative viewpoint is apparent. For example, in a story that is considered to be one of the best examples of purely objective prose narrative extant (Hemingway’s "The Killers"), the lack of objectivity is apparent in at least one passage: "George watched them, through the window, pass under the arc-light, and cross the street. In their tight overcoats and derby hats they looked like a vaudeville team" (Hemingway 219).

However, unlike authors of fiction, playwrights must write objectively because there is no narrative, only dialogue and a few stage directions. Our research has shown that this lack of manipulated viewpoint in a theatrical role is one that requires actors to fill in the gaps by speculating on the attitudes, motivations, goals and emotions of the characters and that, as a byproduct of this analysis, actors frequently retain the exact dialogue with little or no word-for-word memorization (Noice 1993; Noice and Noice 1993). Obviously, this process of filling in the gaps requires effort. Therefore, it might be thought that the effort itself is responsible for the increased memorability instead of the specifics of the actors’ strategy.

5. Three Linked Experiments

5.1 The Role of Effort

The actors’ process — of repeatedly questioning the script in order to determine the character’s goals and plans — is highly detailed and obviously extremely effortful. Many studies have shown that tasks which increase encoding difficulty benefit retention. For example, McDaniel, Ryan, and Cunningham showed that filling-in deleted letters in paragraphs enhanced recall. Similar findings have been reported for inverted typography (Graf and Levy) and sentence scrambling using expository passages (e.g., Einstein, McDaniel, Owen, and Cote; McDaniel, Einstein, Dunay, and Cobb). However, the above studies compared various types of effortful processing to read-only controls, whereas our
studies showed that the actors' strategy produced enhanced recall over intentional memorization. To determine whether the effort involved in the actors' generation of explanatory elaborations was responsible for this enhanced recall, we tested 16 male and 16 female students enrolled in an Introduction to Psychology course (Noice and Noice, 1997). We gave them a five-page, two-character scene from the play, *The Time of Your Life* (Saroyan). Male students were told to study the male role and female students the female role. Participants received a script with interspersed questions that were designed to require the generation of elaborations necessary to determine the character's goals (or the states of mind involved in the attempt to attain those goals). For example, after a section in which one character has bombarded another with a series of personal inquiries, we inserted the question "Why is Mary answering Joe?" In order to answer this question, the participants would have to make the effort to understand why this woman would reply to such intrusive inquiries by a complete stranger.

The memorization group received the same scripts without the why questions. Both groups were given the same amount of study time and no mention of a recall test was made. After performing a brief interpolated task, all participants were given scripts in which only the "other" character's speeches appeared and were told to write out (as accurately as possible) as much as they remembered of the dialogue they had been asked to attend to. The results were scored with three measures in descending order of leniency: true verbatim (absolute word-for-word accuracy), acceptable verbatim (which allowed for minor changes) and total recall (which also gave credit for paraphrases). Using the strict criterion of verbatim recall, students who deliberately set out to memorize the material recalled far more of the text ($M = 42.6\%$) than those who had generated answers to the why questions based on a careful reading of the text ($M = 23.1\%$), $F(1, 28) = 27.02$, $P < .01$, MSe = .011). The superiority of intentional memorization over why-question answering held up for the two less lenient measures as well ($M = 57.5\%$ vs. $M = 33.3\%$ for acceptable verbatim, and $M = 76.0\%$ vs. $M = 61.0\%$ for total recall). These results appear to cast doubt on the notion that effort involved in generating explanatory elaborations is, by itself, responsible for the memorial superiority of analyses over memorization seen with professional actors.

### 5.2 Goal-Assignment

Having shown that this type of effort is apparently not responsible for the enhanced recall produced by the actors' strategy, we performed another experiment, this one investigating the benefits of goal-assignment (Noice and Noice 1995). As already described, the reason actors pose questions of the script is to determine the goals of the characters. It has frequently been shown that this type of goal-assignment increases comprehension and retention (e.g., Fletcher and Bloom; Graesser and Clark; Trabasso, Secco, and Van den Broek; Trabasso, Van
den Broek, and Liu). Would processing a script by connecting the words of the text to the implied goals of the characters produce retention that was equal to or better than that produced by intentional memorization? We gave 32 students the same five-page scene from *The Time of Your Life* used in the previous experiment. Half of them received copies in which a professional actor had written notations in the margins that provided the implied but unstated goal for each section of dialogue. These students were told to repeatedly read the scene while thinking about the connection between the dialogue and the provided goals. The remaining students were given the text without any annotations and simply told to memorize it word for word. Neither group was informed that there would be a recall test. As with the previous experiment, the results were scored with three measures of accuracy: true verbatim, acceptable verbatim and total recall. Under the strict criterion, true verbatim recall, the memorization group (M = 44.19%) outperformed the goal-processing group (M = 29.11%), [F (1,28) = 15.01, MSe = .012] Similar results were obtained for the acceptable verbatim group (M = 58.76% vs. M = 43.86%), [F (1,28) = 11.23, MSe = .016]. Only when the very lenient criterion, total recall, was applied to the data, did the two groups remember equal amounts (M = 77.46% vs. M = 73.27%), [F < 1.0]. Once again, these results were the opposite of those we had consistently obtained with professional actors. However, these results did suggest a further line of inquiry which would involve a more exact duplication of an actor’s process. Thus this study served as a pilot project for the next experiment in the series.

5.3 Active Experiencing

Having found that neither the effort involved in the deriving of the goals nor the processing of the text in terms of the goals was sufficient to explain the enhanced recall we had repeatedly found with actors, we turned our attention to other factors that might possibly explain this phenomenon. In examining the actors’ think-aloud and retrospective protocols that we had collected over the years, we found frequent references to their actively taking on the character’s perspective. Would students who were instructed to duplicate the actors’ procedures in this regard also demonstrate enhanced memory? Or was the actor’s ability to recall dialogue verbatim by using an analytical strategy simply the product of many years of practicing the craft?

To test this notion, we designed an experiment in which the instructions would require students to study a script as actively as actors do. If these students could equal or exceed the performance of students who intentionally memorized the same material, it would indicate that actors’ enhanced recall is due to the specific nature of their learning strategies, not just to their long experience in learning scripts. The challenge was to devise instructions that would require students to process the material by using the actors’ strategy of actively taking on the characters’ perspectives. Therefore, we provided the same annotated scripts used
in the previous experiment but asked the students to actively use the dialogue to obtain the goals (as specified in the margins) the way one does in life. It was stressed that they had to use the words "for real." It was apparent from the participants' facial expressions, tones of voice and body language that they were attempting to comply with the experimental instructions.

Also, since we have shown that professional actors make this process highly explicit (e.g., Noice and Noice 1996), we encouraged this type of explicitness by asking students to visualize someone they knew (but were not intimately associated with) as the other character in the scene. For example, if the goal is to tease the other character into revealing some information, while professional actors would as a matter of course elaborate on the situation by visualizing the other character and speculating on his or her education, background, marital status, etc., novices would probably not engage in this degree of elaboration. In other words, the instructions to visualize someone as the other party in the scene would encourage participants in this condition to process the material in the same highly active manner that actors routinely do. Finally, students were specifically instructed not to try to memorize the material since professional actors rarely attempt to memorize a script this early in the process. The condition in which the participants learned under the above constraints was called the active experiencing condition.

Students in the control (memorization) condition received the same scripts (but without marginal notations) and were simply told to memorize the material using whatever strategy they had found useful in the past when material had to be retained verbatim. In this experiment, in order to check on motivational factors, we drew the participants from two different populations: theatre students and psychology students. Specifically, the first group consisted of 7 male and 6 female students in the very early stages of an introductory acting class who participated as part of a class assignment. These students had done a few "warm-up" acting exercises but had yet to perform a single scene from memory. The second group consisted of 16 males and 16 females enrolled in an Introduction to Psychology course who had no background in theatre. (The disparate numbers in the two groups was due to the first being composed of one entire acting class and the second of all those students in an Introduction to Psychology class who had volunteered for this experiment.)

Half of each group was assigned to the active experiencing condition and the other half to the memorization condition. Participants in each condition were tested separately in large rooms where they could spread out and recite the dialogue aloud without disturbing their fellow students. None of the participants were specifically informed about an upcoming memory test. All other parameters, including the scoring scheme, were the same as in the two previous experiments.
6. Results

6.1 True Verbatim

A separate analysis was carried out for each of the three measures of recall performance with the rejection level being set at .05. Figure 1 presents the results for true verbatim (see Figure 1; Appendix). As can be seen, the highest amount of recall was produced by acting students in the active experiencing condition (M = .576). The recall scores were then subjected to a three-factor (group, sex, strategy) between-subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA) which confirmed that the difference between the active experiencing condition (M = .4801), and the memorization condition (M = .347) was indeed significant, $F(1,37) = 7.52$, MSe = .021.

These results, however, need to be qualified by a significant interaction between group and strategy, $F(1,37) = 16.31$, MSe = .021, which indicated that, while acting students using an experiencing strategy outperformed those using a memorization strategy, $F(1,37) = 16.247$, MSe = .02, psychology students recalled an equal amount in both learning conditions. There was also a tendency for females to remember more of the text than males (M = .460 vs. M = .368), $F(1,37) = 3.62$, MSe = .021, $p = .0651$. No other significant effects emerged.

6.2 Acceptable Verbatim and Total Recall

Using the less stringent measure which allowed for minor changes, we also calculated the proportion of idea units scored as acceptable verbatim (true verbatim plus almost verbatim) (see Table 3 [Appendix]). Again, participants using an active experiencing strategy remembered significantly more of the text than those using a memorization strategy (M = .641 vs. M = .445). As in the first analysis, acting students showed superior recall compared to psychology students but only in the active experiencing condition, while psychology students showed superior recall to acting students, but only in the memorization condition, $F(1,37) = 18.140$, MSe = .027]. And again, there was a tendency for females to outperform males ($P = .053$).

We were also interested in whether one strategy was more conducive to encoding the gist of the playscript rather than the exact words. Therefore, we analyzed the total recall data with a three-factor between-subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA). Those results will be found in Table 4 (Appendix). As with the previous two measures, the active experiencing strategy resulted in more overall recall relative to the memorization strategy, (M = .843 vs. M = 562 collapsed across the 2 groups), $F(1,37) = 32.06$, MSe = .023. The ANOVA also indicated that in general, the psychology students appeared to be better memorizers than the acting students, $F(1,37) = 4.50$, MSe = .023; while psychology students remembered about 76% of the text, acting students only
remembered 65% which, incidentally, casts doubt on the supposition that only good memorizers are drawn to the acting profession.

Also, using this least stringent measure of recall performance, the difference between females and males (M = .7667 vs. M = .6388 was no longer just a tendency but was now significant, $F(1,37) = 6.65$, MSe = .023. However, this result possibly just reflects increased motivation to do well on tests, a common finding with female students in our institution.

Again, as in the previous analyses, the main effect of strategy was qualified by a significant interaction with group, $F(1,37) = 22.87$, MSe = .023. An analysis of simple main effects showed that the active experiencing strategy was more beneficial to acting students than to psychology students, $F(1,37) = 38.55$; however, psychology students recalled as much of the material in the active experiencing condition as those who were explicitly instructed to memorize it (M = .7772 vs. M = .7336). In other words, acting students remembered significantly more of the text by using the active experiencing strategy but psychology students recalled the same amount with either strategy. Finally, there was little evidence of either guessing or intrusion for either group.

6.3 Implications for a New Cognitive Learning Factor

This final experiment set out to investigate if students would demonstrate enhanced recall when instructed in the use of professional actors’ learning strategies. The results showed that acting students, when told not to memorize but to use the words tactically (i.e., as the means to obtain a goal), learned more than twice as much material word-for-word as acting students who intentionally memorized the same script. While this process was not as effective for psychology students, they still recalled as much of the material as their colleagues who set out to memorize it. One could speculate that the process was so effective with the acting students because they are motivated to become skillful performers and therefore had a high degree of interest in the task. Indeed, it has been shown that interest in a subject can facilitate both comprehension and recall (e.g., Alexander, Jetton, and Kulikowich; Garner, Alexander, Gillingham, Kulikowich, and Brown; Schiefele and Csikszentmihályi). Another factor involved in the acting students’ remarkable recall might be that those who have a desire to act may also have a greater tendency to identify with fictional characters. At any rate, it is obviously not their expertise as actors that accounts for these results; these students were complete beginners, most of whom had never even seen a live play. (This lack of expertise also applies to the psychology students; they were overwhelmingly non-psychology majors, taking a single intro course to satisfy a college distribution requirement.)

Furthermore, these results leave open the question of why the psychology students — who were also specifically told not to memorize the text but to use the words tactically — recalled as much as their colleagues who deliberately
memorized the same material. We propose that a very specific form of perspective-taking plays a central role here. Perspective-taking has frequently been shown to result in enhanced memory, but only over controls who were not intentionally memorizing the same material (e.g., Anderson and Pichert; Dooling and Lachman; Owens, Bower, and Black; Sulin and Dooling). Furthermore, the procedure used in those experiments did not require participants to actively use the text to gain their ends. That is, there was nothing to prevent the readers from remaining observers, simply reporting remembered facts. On the other hand, we specifically instructed students to picture a person with whom they would exchange the dialogue and to actually try to obtain a goal (e.g., to strike up a conversation) vis-à-vis that person by speaking the dialogue aloud and "for real." In other words, the participants were encouraged to identify with the to-be-portrayed person and to actually experience the script events rather than just think about them. At first glance, it might seem that the visualization itself could have enhanced retention, as in the well-known Paivio experiments. However, in our experiment, the visualization instructions concerned only the person the participant was trying to affect with the to-be-remembered dialogue, and that dialogue contained no references to the appearance of any character. Therefore, the visualization of the person being addressed should increase the participant's active engagement but should not affect memory for content in the way that picturing a loaf of bread would enhance recall of the word "bread." This type of approach to processing material appears to be so powerful that we feel justified in proposing active experiencing as a candidate for a separate learning principle.

Indeed, this process of trying to "live" the material rather than just learn it would seem to amplify the power of effortful processing, perspective taking and other mental processes involved in the application of the active experiencing principle. For example, the first of these three experiments showed that mental effort by itself did not produce retention that equalled or exceeded intentional memorization. However, in the present experiment when the participants actively identified with the character, retention of the dialogue drastically improved, indicating that while various types of mental effort can produce enhanced recall compared to read-only controls, a specific type of effort (which we call active experiencing) can actually produce enhanced recall compared to intentional memorization. While this process requires speaking aloud, we do not believe that the motoric and articulatory codes involved can fully explain its power. Indeed, we have previously shown that repeating the dialogue aloud results in far less retention than the use of the actor's strategy (Noice, 1991, 1993).
7. Summary and Conclusions

In these three linked experiments, an attempt was made to identify the critical elements in the actor's highly efficient role-learning strategy. Although each task focused on one particular strategic element, others were necessarily involved. For example, in the why-question condition, the participants, in addition to effortful processing, also had to understand the causal connection between their answers and the words of the text. In the goal-assignment condition, the participants had to make the effort to grasp how the words of the text related to the goals of the character, to view the text from the perspective of that character and to determine why those particular utterances constituted attempts to obtain those particular goals. However, in spite of the multiple learning factors involved in those conditions, only the participants who actively took on the character's persona equalled or exceeded the recall produced by intentional memorization.

A great deal of recent investigation has been carried out on identification, an area of inquiry in which emotional responses to literature and film are examined (e.g., Dijkstra, Zwaan, Graesser, and Magliano; Oatley; Tan; Zillmann). It has been shown that a reader's emotional involvement with a fictional character is elevated by that character's success or failure in achieving a goal (see Dyer; Stein, and Trabasso). Furthermore, this involvement increases the likelihood of story events being included in a reader's mental representation of the narrative (see Miall). Therefore, it seems possible that our participants who did not simply read about the character but became that character in their imaginations also experienced this heightened emotional involvement. Moreover, since our participants actively used that character's words as their own to influence a specifically visualized other character, we think it probable that some of the exact dialogue would be included in the participants' mental representations.

While this turned out to be the case, at present there is no evidence that readers' or viewers' responses when identifying with fictional characters share any underlying psychological mechanisms with those of actors who are living through the characters' experiences at the moment of performance. However, this would appear to be a fruitful area for future inquiry.

For now, we are convinced that active experiencing greatly enhances the learning of dramatic script, even by complete novices. Our immediate concern is whether this same enhancement will be found with prose narrative or expository text, an area we are currently investigating.

Indiana State University
Augustana College


Example of an Annotated Script

MARY: I'm afraid it does. Thank you. You shouldn't have gone to all the trouble.

JOE: No trouble at all. (Pause) You have children?

MARY: Yes. Two. A son and a daughter.

JOE: How swell. Do they look like you?

MARY: Yes.

JOE: Then why are you sad?

MARY: I was always sad. It's just that after I was married I was allowed to drink.

JOE: Who are you waiting for?

MARY: No one.

JOE: I'm not waiting for anybody either.

MARY: My husband, of course.

JOE: Oh, sure.

MARY: He's a lawyer.

\[\text{To end the flirtation without offending him} \]

\[\text{To gain sympathy} \]

\[\text{To level with him} \]
### Table 1

**Classification of Actors' Explanatory Units (in Percentages)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>A. A.</th>
<th>T. D.</th>
<th>B. G.</th>
<th>A. N.</th>
<th>P. T.</th>
<th>S. W.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>12.37</td>
<td>12.05</td>
<td>6.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactions</td>
<td>40.63</td>
<td>40.63</td>
<td>35.71</td>
<td>59.18</td>
<td>43.30</td>
<td>27.71</td>
<td>42.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traits</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>5.36</td>
<td>10.31</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>10.71</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>6.49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorization</td>
<td>32.25</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>23.47</td>
<td>6.02</td>
<td>8.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response/Initiative</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>21.65</td>
<td>4.98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Linguistic Info.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>13.54</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>9.64</td>
<td>7.14</td>
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<td>Style</td>
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<td>12.5</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>4.33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Directorial Input</td>
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<td>2.04</td>
<td></td>
<td>.43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Metastatements</td>
<td>17.71</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>20.48</td>
<td>8.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial Comments</td>
<td>7.29</td>
<td>17.86</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>6.19</td>
<td>6.02</td>
<td>6.49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of EUs</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>462</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 2

Mean Proportion of Idea Units Scored as Acceptable Verbatim as a Function of Group, Sex and Learning Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Active Experiencing</th>
<th>Memorization</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Acting Students</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>.664</td>
<td>.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>.822</td>
<td>.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>.743</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psychology Students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>.518</td>
<td>.169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>.561</td>
<td>.171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>.540</td>
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</table>
Table 3

Total Amount Recalled as a Function of Group, Sex and Learning Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Active Experiencing</th>
<th></th>
<th>Memorization</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>.842</td>
<td>.079</td>
<td>.364</td>
<td>.286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>.977</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.418</td>
<td>.061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>.910</td>
<td></td>
<td>.391</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>.732</td>
<td>.140</td>
<td>.618</td>
<td>.158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>.823</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>.849</td>
<td>.174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>.778</td>
<td></td>
<td>.734</td>
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</table>
Figure 1

Mean Proportion of Idea Units Recalled Verbatim as a Function of Group and Learning Strategy
Affective Response to Reading:
A Comparison of Reading in the United Kingdom and The Netherlands

1. Conceptual Distinctions in the Affective Domain

Moods and emotions are both affective phenomena but their functions are different and, therefore, their role in reading behaviour may not be quite the same either. As exact definitions of emotion or mood are rarely given, we shall confine ourselves to a description of the functions of these phenomena. According to Frijda: "Emotions exist for the sake of signalling states of the world" (354); according to Morris: "moods exist for the sake of signalling states of the self" (256). People react emotionally to events and such events may appear to them directly or indirectly, for instance, in a book or a story. The concept of emotion includes such terms as love, sadness, joy, anger, and fear (see Fisher). Emotions such as joy are pleasant or euphoric, other emotions such as anger are unpleasant or dysphoric (see Strayer). Readers may experience emotions such as these and also a wide variety of other emotions — euphoric or dysphoric — in reaction to a text (see Van Der Bolt and Tellegen 1993, 1995).

Emotions come and go but moods are always with us, although we may experience them as episodic as they move in and out of focal attention. An unnoticed mood probably reflects a satisfactory state of the self (Morris 264). The concept of mood includes terms such as enthusiastic, upset, lethargic, and relaxed. Such terms refer to both level of activation — higher or lower — and to hedonic level: pleasant or unpleasant (see Thayer). Enthusiastic and upset or lethargic and relaxed have a high or low level of activation in common but differ on the hedonic level. People use various strategies to modulate their moods: They attempt to perpetuate a good mood or try to improve a bad mood. For instance, alcohol is ingested to reduce unpleasant tension while sweet snacks may be eaten to increase energy and thus to fight off depression (see Thayer). The wish to modulate moods plays an important role in reading motivation (see Tellegen; Tellegen and Catsburg; Tellegen and Coppejans). People may pick up a book and start reading with the intention to hold on to their good mood or to change their bad mood.
If moods and emotions have different functions, they may play different roles in reading behaviour and this may be recognizable in data on affective aspects of reading behaviour. In this article, we will present and discuss data using the conceptual distinctions as outlined above.

2. The Data

The data on which this study is based have been drawn from three sources: From respondents in a panel study for audience research in the United Kingdom (including young people aged 12 years and above and adults); from respondents in a panel study for social scientific and marketing research in the Netherlands (including people of 18 years and above); and from a survey among Dutch pupils (aged 9-19) in elementary and high schools.

Respondents in the United Kingdom completed a list of about the influence of media on their feelings by using a scale of the following possible answers: "yes definitely," "yes to some extent," "not sure," "not really," or "not at all." In this study, only those answering "yes" — either definitely or to some extent — are counted as in agreement. The Dutch data are part of the material collected by Lilian van der Bolt for a PhD dissertation on the role of affect in reading behaviour. For each of her questions the respondents could choose one of the following answers: "never," "sometimes," or "often." For the percentages of agreement in this study the answers "sometimes" and "often" are combined.

The Dutch respondents answered about a hundred questions on various affective aspects of reading behaviour. For the comparison under consideration, data were selected resulting from those questions that were closest to the British material. For the United Kingdom, the questions on books were part of a set of questions dealing with several media. This section was introduced as follows: "Influencing your Feelings. There are some things, such as watching a TV programme or reading a book that can make you feel different emotions, e.g., happy, sad, or excited. Please answer the following questions...." Finally, they were asked: "Please give any examples you want to mention of any of the above ... write in your answers." The set contained ten questions on the influence of books on feelings. These questions were presented in pairs in which the first question was on change of affect and the second question was on the inclination to return to the book or story that had caused this change in affect.

3. Discussion of Data from the United Kingdom

Let us now consider the data from the United Kingdom as presented in Table 1 below. When we look at the answers to the first questions of each pair, it becomes clear that changes in affect owing to the reading of books are quite common. Between one third and three quarters of the respondents — depending
on the affect mentioned — report to have experienced change of affect owing to the book or story. We notice some differences in relation to age: More respondents in the age of 25-55 claim to be familiar with experiencing sadness and anger owing to their reading than those either younger or older. Happiness is said to be experienced by more of those aged 16 to 45. Fewer of those over 45 say they are excited by their reading than younger respondents do. Relaxation, owing to reading, hardly shows any difference because of age at all.

Table 1
Influence of Books on Affect and Percentages of Agreement
(United Kingdom)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>12-15</th>
<th>16-24</th>
<th>25-34</th>
<th>35-44</th>
<th>45-54</th>
<th>55+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>669</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>952</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A) Is there any book or story which made you sad when you read it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>61%</th>
<th>63%</th>
<th>74%</th>
<th>76%</th>
<th>74%</th>
<th>69%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(\chi^2=39.36 \text{ DF}=5 \text{ P}=.05)

B) Do you sometimes want to go back to such a book or story which made you sad?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>43%</th>
<th>39%</th>
<th>42%</th>
<th>41%</th>
<th>34%</th>
<th>29%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(\chi^2=42.05 \text{ DF}=5 \text{ P}=.05)

Difference between A) and B)

|   | -18 | -24 | -32 | -35 | -40 | -40 |

C) Is there any book or story which made you angry when you read it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>38%</th>
<th>45%</th>
<th>49%</th>
<th>48%</th>
<th>48%</th>
<th>44%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(\chi^2=12.88 \text{ DF}=5 \text{ P}=.05)

D) Do you sometimes want to go back to such a story which made you angry?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>17%</th>
<th>17%</th>
<th>15%</th>
<th>13%</th>
<th>12%</th>
<th>8%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(\chi^2=37.40 \text{ DF}=5 \text{ P}=.05)

Difference between C) and D)

|   | -21 | -28 | -34 | -35 | -36 | -36 |

E) Is there any book or story which made you happy when you read it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>73%</th>
<th>78%</th>
<th>78%</th>
<th>76%</th>
<th>73%</th>
<th>69%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(\chi^2=24.25 \text{ DF}=5 \text{ P}=.05)

F) Do you sometimes want to go back to such a book or story which made you happy when you read it?

|   | 66% | 67% | 66% | 62% | 57% | 53% |

(\chi^2=44.5 \text{ DF}=5 \text{ P}=.05)

Difference between E) and F)

|   | -7  | -11 | -12 | -14 | -16 | -16 |
G) Is there any book or story which made you calm when you read it?

\[ X^2=2.01 \ DF=5 \ P=.85 \]

39% 37% 36% 36% 38% 38%

H) Do you sometimes want to go back to such a book or story which made you calm?

\[ X^2=2.30 \ DF=5 \ P=.81 \]

31% 31% 27% 30% 31% 30%

Difference between G) and H)

-8 -6 -9 -6 -7 -8

J) Do you sometimes go back to such a book or story which made you excited?

\[ X^2=32.63 \ DF=5 \ P=.05 \]

63% 63% 64% 61% 56% 52%

Difference between J) and I)

-7 -8 -13 -14 -16 -19

Regarding the answers to the second question of each pair — do you go back to such a book or story? — we notice that the amount of positive reactions to these questions is in all cases lower than the amount of positive reactions to the first question of each pair. Part of this is to be expected as there are readers who never read a book a second time (see Brewer; Protherough; Tellegen and Coppejans). However, this consideration would lead us to expect equal reductions in positive reactions in all pairs of questions and in all age groups. This is not the case. Respondents were more inclined to reread books that made them happy, calm or excited than they were to reread books that made them sad or angry. Also, the tendency not to reread books that made them sad or angry increases strongly and proportionally with age. Could those differences between reading and rereading be accounted for by differences in affect as referred to in the questions? For an answer to this question we first have to categorize the affective terms in the data.

4. Categorization of the Data According to our Conceptual Distinctions

The way each question is posed — "Is there any book or story which made you ...?" — gives the impression that they refer not to moods but only to emotions. Readers, so it seems, react to events as presented to them in a text. The terms for affect used in the first three pairs are terms included in the concept of emotion (see Fisher). Although the way the questions are posed in the fourth and fifth pair is the same as in the earlier ones, the terms used to describe affect here —
Affective Response to Reading

I calm or excited — refer to level of activation and thus also refer to components of mood. That these questions were also taken by respondents as referring to mood was shown in their remarks. Although the introduction to the questionnaire only used the terms "emotions" and "feelings," some respondents used the term "mood" spontaneously in their comments.

Besides categorizing the questions as referring to emotion or to mood, we can categorize them according to the hedonic level. Sadness and anger are less pleasant emotions than happiness: The first two are dysphoric emotions, the last one is an euphoric emotion. The questions on relaxation (calm) or excitement as pleasant or unpleasant depends on the inner state of the individual. According to these considerations the questions can now be categorized as follows: Questions referring to dysphoric emotions: sadness and anger; Questions referring to an euphoric emotion: happiness; and Questions referring to arousal components of mood (calmness and excitement). When we look again at Table 1, we see that the differences between reading and rereading are sizable in the case of dysphoric emotions. When respondents read certain books for the first time, they apparently experienced dysphoric emotions in reaction to events as described in these books and it is likely that a sizable amount of them preferred not to experience such reactions again. When respondents reacted to events in books with an euphoric emotion, a larger number of them was willing to repeat this pleasant experience. The differences between reading and rereading in the case of arousal components of mood are about the same as in the case of the euphoric emotion, that is, relatively small.

As the differences in the case of calmness and excitement are about the same as those for happiness, then, supposedly, the experienced changes in arousal level owing to the reading of books were experienced by the respondents as pleasant. They became calm when they wanted their activation level reduced or excited when they preferred an increase in arousal. If their level of activation changed towards a preferred, pleasant level, than we have to consider the possibility that they used the reading of books as a strategy to modulate their mood, that is, they read a book with the intent to achieve the desired state and succeeded in reaching this objective. For a further consideration of the intent of readers when they start reading a book and of the connection between age and affect owing to reading, we now look at some results of the Dutch survey.

Table 2
Influence of Books on Affect. Percentages of Agreement
(The Netherlands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>9-12</th>
<th>13-17</th>
<th>18-34</th>
<th>35-54</th>
<th>55+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>2456</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A) A book makes me sad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>51%</th>
<th>48%</th>
<th>42%</th>
<th>43%</th>
<th>47%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
510 / Sabine van den Oetelaar, Saskia Tellegen, and Mallory Weber

B) I like to read sad stories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in grade 4 and 6 of primary school</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>+6</td>
<td>+9</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>+10</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C) What happens in a book makes me angry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in grade 4 and 6 of primary school</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>-6</td>
<td>-9</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>-18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D) What happens in a book makes me glad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in grade 2 and 4 of high school</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>-9</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>-18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E) I read a book because it makes me calm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in grade 4 and 6 of primary school</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>-20</td>
<td>-32</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>-36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F) I like to read exciting books

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in grade 2 and 4 of high school</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Discussion

In Table 2, we present comparable results from the Dutch project. The data from the United Kingdom were from respondents of age 12 and above which corresponds roughly to students in Dutch high schools and adults. Dutch data from primary school children, aged nine and above, are presented also as these provide some additional information on influence of books on affect over the life span. When we look at the questions in the Dutch survey, we notice that three of the six questions refer to affective phenomena in the same way as in the data from the United Kingdom: "makes me sad, angry, or glad." Two questions refer to preferences such as "I like reading sad stories/exciting books" and one question clearly refers to an intent: "I read a book because it makes me calm," that is, a respondent agreeing to this statement uses the reading of books for mood control, in this case by reducing the level of arousal.

A good number of respondents in the United Kingdom agreed with statements about an effect from the reading of a specific book on their level of arousal — it is reported to have made them calm. In turn, the Dutch respondents who agreed with the statement on calmness indicated their acknowledgement of such an effect, which, to them, was an effect of the act of reading that they pursued intentionally. If it is possible to pursue a desired affective effect by means of reading books, then it is more likely that this affective result forms part of a mood change than that it forms part of an emotional reaction. This occurs in that we react to events in books unpredictably especially when a book is read for the first time. However, such reactions are difficult to pursue. Had the readers in the United Kingdom been able to predict how they would react emotionally to certain books; that a good number of them would have reacted with sadness and anger to specific books; and that they did not intend to reread such books, the results would have indicated that they probably had preferred not to read those books at all.
After we incorporated this tentative categorization of affective phenomena into the data and into processes of emotion while reading and mood management through reading, we now look at connections between age and affect. As we already noticed, many respondents in the United Kingdom experience dysphoric emotions in reaction to a book. Sadness is reported to be experienced by 75 percent and anger by nearly 50 percent of those aged between 25 and 55, while the percentages for those either younger or older are a bit lower. This curve in the pattern where percentages are highest in the middle groups is different from the pattern for rereading which forms a straight line: with age increasing the inclination to reread books caused sadness or anger decreases steadily.

Dutch respondents seem to be less inclined than those in the United Kingdom to react to a book with dysphoric emotions. In the case of anger this difference appears to be limited to those between 35 and 55 years of age: nearly 50 percent of the respondents in the United Kingdom and less than 40 percent of those in the Netherlands indicate to have been made angry by a book. In the case of sadness the difference is more pronounced: more than 20 percent less in the Netherlands for each age group. Among Dutch respondents, there is a remarkable difference in appreciation of sad stories between students and adults: over half of the students say they like to read sad stories while only a third of the adults indicate to like such reading. It is even more remarkable that there seem to be students who do not react with sadness to events in books and yet indicate they like sad stories. Are they longing for an emotional reaction to a book which they cannot achieve? If this may be the case, it may again be an indication that emotional reactions owing to reading are unpredictable. When we compare the data from both countries, we may tentatively say that young people either in the Netherlands or in the United Kingdom are less averse to react with sadness to events in books than adults. In the United Kingdom more young people are willing to repeat the experience than adults, in the Netherlands more young people than adults like sad stories.

Euphoric emotions are represented by happiness in the data from the United Kingdom and by gladness in the Dutch data. In the United Kingdom happiness by the reading of books scores high: nearly three quarters of the respondents experience this and well over half of them reread the books that caused it. Again, the inclination to reread such books decreases systematically with increasing age but this decrease is much smaller than in the case of books causing dysphoric emotions. About two thirds of the Dutch respondents experience gladness by the books and for Dutch children in primary schools the percentage is even higher: over three quarters of them are gladdened by events in books.

We now consider answers to questions referring to level of arousal. When we look at the percentages for relaxation (calmness) due to reading in the United Kingdom, we see a pattern different from the pattern for emotions due to books in that there is no connection to age at all. Over a third of these respondents say
they use the reading of books to relax and this behaviour is independent of age. In the Netherlands the results for relaxation due to reading are not quite the same. Over a third of respondents aged 13 and above appears to use the reading of books to reduce their level of arousal but here there is a tendency of this behaviour to decrease with increasing age. Both in the Netherlands and in the United Kingdom, the percentages for excitement due to reading are considerably higher than the percentages for relaxation. In the United Kingdom the percentages for those aged 35 or above are lower than for those below that age and there is a systematic decrease of the inclination to reread books which caused excitement from young to old. The Dutch seem to have an extraordinary liking for exciting books: nearly all students and 85 percent of the adults say they have this preference.

As a whole, the data from the United Kingdom show a tendency of an inclination to reread to decrease with age. It remains to be seen whether this is the result of a general tendency to refrain from rereading according to advancement in years or whether it is the result of a specific tendency to refrain from reading with certain affective connotations when one gets older. The fact that calmness is the only exception might indicate the presence of such a specific tendency.

6. Considerations for Further Research

In this study, data on affective phenomena in reading behaviour and reader response were presented. These data were taken from research in the United Kingdom and in the Netherlands. The same affective phenomena — sadness, anger, joy, excitement, and calmness — were studied in both countries and in this they were similar to each other. However, the investigations were dissimilar as to the exact questions asked, such as references to specific books in the United Kingdom and to books in general in the Netherlands. Therefore, the results are not presented as conclusions but as hypotheses for further research.

6.1 Hypotheses

The inclination to react emotionally to events in books is greater in the United Kingdom than in the Netherlands. In both countries, the appreciation of sad stories tends to decrease with increasing age. The reading public in both countries is well aware of the connection between the reading of books and changes in level of arousal and such changes are intentionally pursued. In both countries the inclination to increase arousal level by reading exceeds the inclination to arousal reduction. This phenomenon is more pronounced in the Netherlands than in the United Kingdom.

These hypotheses are derived from a comparison between audience research data in the United Kingdom and reading research data in the Netherlands. If
these hypotheses were to be tested, a survey in which the same questions in the same context are put to respondents in each country would be necessary.

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University of Amsterdam
Vrije University
University of Amsterdam

Works Cited


Reading Pornographic Literature: The Author and Gender Appropriation

1. Introduction

Empirical research on gender differentiation in reading and readership is rare.¹ This is the case whether the question of gender differentiation is directed at the author or the reader of the text and it is only with the emergence of feminist criticism that scholars have begun to explore aspects of the question of whether there is a "female" or "male" text and whether women read literature differently from men and if so, why. In 1995 Renate von Heydebrand and Simone Winko state that "Models of the reading process and less often such with regard to value do exist. However, traditional reading research neglected the study of the influence of gender differentiation on reading so that more often than not we are forced to rely on hypotheses rather than on results" (208-09; my translation). Since the publication of Elizabeth A. Flynn and Patrocinio P. Schweickart’s volume of articles, Gender and Reading in 1986 to the above quote from Heydebrand and Winko’s article in 1995 there is very little available on the topic either in European or in North American scholarship. A recent publication, Hartmut Eggert and Christine Garbe’s 1995 Literarische Sozialisation, deals with the question but so with reference to young adults only. In addition and in a larger context, Terence R. Wright, for instance, argues in his recent article, "Reader-Response under Review: Art, Game, or Science?," convincingly that Reader-Response Criticism has been too long too subjective. The Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature and Culture and its often focus on the processes and problematics of reading and readership, in my opinion, responds, in principle, to this criticism as well as to the lack of empirical research on dimensions of gender in reading and readership (for an English-language introduction of the approach, see Tótósy).

Despite the contention that in fiction an author cannot be pigeon-holed into holding a singular male or female voice, I am interested in the question with regard to the "feminine" or "female" text I found formulated by a number of

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¹ I would like to thank for valuable comments on and suggestions for my article by Elizabeth A. Flynn (Michigan Technological University) and Karin Wehn (University of Halle-Wittenberg).

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feminist critics and theoreticians. For instance, in Elizabeth Grosz's most recent book, *Space, Time, and Perversion* (1995), the noted Australian feminist asks: "By what criteria can we say that a text is ... feminine?" (10). Alternatively, if Peter Dixon and Marisa Bortolussi's contention that "readers construct a mental representation of the narrator's [author's] knowledge, perspective, and goals" (405) is accurate in that their suggestion may be extended to the problematics of what readers may do with regard to gender and gender-specific narration.

While it is impossible to fully tie imagination and its narrative expressions to gender because of the large number of variables such as authorial intent, authorial predisposition, thematics, context, the readers' perception and reading of the text, etc., and thus all narration is built on the base of imagination and the all overriding nature of fiction. At the same time, in my opinion it is meaningful to study the narrative constructions of worlds based on specificities of gender. Consequently, a pertinent question may be to ask how a text is read by a male or a female reader with regard to these specificities. In particular, how are gender specificities constructed by the author?

In this study, my objective is — based on a limited amount of empirical data provided by a readership survey — to analyze authorial "appropriation" of the voice of woman. Further, if the readers do not know the gender of the author, would they be able to induce, from the text, the gender of the author? The results of my analysis should be able to offer at least some preliminary clues about the problematics of such voice "appropriation" in the context of the above introduced gender differentiation in literature.

For North American feminist critics and scholars of literature, the arguments about the existence, effects, function, and impact of erotic, sexual, and pornographic literature have always been heated ever since Susanne Kappeler's seminal 1986 book, *The Pornography of Representation*. More recently, the surprising merger of political expediency of the American fundamentalist right with that of anti-pornography Feminists has created heated debates within and outside of the academe (see McLaughlin). At the same time, women's literary erotica and pornography appears to increase and this becomes evident when publishers such as Quality Paperback in the US and Canada lists several volumes

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2 In my article, I define the genre I am dealing with into erotic, sexual, and pornographic literary text types; however, I realize that these designations are often used interchangeably. My definition is designated based on an increasing level of explicitness in description and word choices. In other words, an erotic literary text is defined as a text that has the least amount of explicit words and descriptions while a pornographic literary text the most of such. Obviously, the reader's imagination, ways of reading, and his/her basic disposition toward such texts is widely different and taking into account the difficulty of gauging the borders and limits of community standards and even legal definitions, a "simple" erotic text may be much more "dangerous" and "subversive" than a most explicit pornographic literary text.
of *Herotica* — a series of erotic, sexual, and pornographic short stories written by women — and sells them across the continent.

With regard to the censorship of sexual and pornographic literature, France represents a particularly interesting and convoluted situation that is unlike the clear and very negative approach toward this genre of writing in Europe elsewhere or in North America and I will use the situation in that country as an example here. Although censorship of sexual and pornographic literature has been strong in France — at least until the 1970s — this has changed since the mass publishing of the works of the unexpurgated Marquis de Sade and such by now well-known texts as Pauline Réage's *Histoire d'O*, Emmanuelle Arsan’s *Emmanuelle* volumes, Jean de Berg’s *L'Image*, George Bataille’s *Les Larmes d'eros*, or the recent short novel of Alina Reyes, *Le Boucher* (Seuil, 1988; in English translation *The Butcher* [Methuen, 1991]). But there is an interesting distinction between the French perception of sexual and pornographic texts and that of the Anglo-Saxon and German perception. The editor and publisher of many of the above mentioned pornographic and sexual novels, the now septagarian Jean-Jacques Pauvert, discusses the situation of erotic literature in France as compared with the rest of Europe and North America as follows.

In France, a rather idiosyncratic country as far as the erotic is concerned, we have always considered the erotic an integral part of literature itself ... Do you realize that in the United States, you could not have read the complete works of Zola or Colette until the end of the 1960s? They were always expurgated. ... Here is another example. In the *Anthologie des lectures érotiques*, one finds Ausone, a Gallo-Roman author of the sixth century, a very Christian poet, who wrote a text on marriage entitled "Cento Nuptialis." At the end there is a scene that takes place in the bedroom, where, obviously, the husband and wife make love. Ausone describes this lovemaking in a rather precise fashion; one could say one which was erotic or obscene. When compiling the anthology, I was looking for this text, and I found one version, published jointly in 1988 by Oxford University Press and Harvard University Press. And the bedroom scene was not translated. They had left it in Latin! It's bewildering, but that's America. In France, we have been translating that scene for centuries. (Pauvert in Hohmann 4).

As an extension, I might add to Pauvert’s observations that it always puzzled me how it is possible that words such as “fuck” or scenes with nudity are censored out of films in North America, for instance, but at the same time any amount and type of violence is permitted. Obviously, this situation and practice locates sexual and pornographic literature in the marginal owing to prevalent social and religious discourse, established legal practices, community standards, etc. And we all know about the legal tribulations of Henry Miller’s or D.H. Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*.

However, while censorship and the history of these books is a related and important issue — and hardly explored in literary scholarship at that — for me the matter here lies not in the ethics or the history of publishing of pornographic
literature but rather in the follow-up of the fact that this type of literature has always been written and read and this continues to be the case. Indeed, as Albert Mordell argued already in 1919 in his book, *The Erotic Motive in Literature* — the first application of Freud's psychoanalysis to literature — "no doubt the critic who examines literary masterpieces to find sexual symbols is not a popular one; but that does not alter the fact that the sexual meaning is there" (123). Consequently, if this is the case with "regular" literature and the study of literature, the study of texts where sexual meaning is explicit should be equally meaningful.

In the last few years, there has been, albeit still in limited numbers, but nevertheless an increasing volume of studies and attention given to the "female" text as I mentioned above. This attention extended to sexual and pornographic literature as well, albeit, again, only sporadically (see, for example, Sheiner). However, while sexual and pornographic literature is being written, published, and, in some instances, studied in certain ways, for me, instead, the importance of the matter is that it is being read and increasingly so (see Benedict; Holmes; *Kultur*; Pauvert qtd. in Hohmann). From this I extrapolate that we ought to pay attention to the process, the how of this reading in its varied and manifold aspects.

Following the above mentioned feminist suggestions, my interest has, in addition, a systemic direction that is both political and is with regard to the process of fiction. In North American literary scholarship but also elsewhere there is an on-going discussion about the notion of "appropriation." Here, this is with reference to the representation of the female voice by the male writer and the voice of ethnicity and minority. Some feminist scholars and writers of colour contend that a white male fiction writer ought not to write fiction in which he "appropriates" the voice of a woman or that of a representative of an Ethnic Minority. Scholars who promote this notion are more often than not ridiculed by the academic establishment. For me, while the notion poses some difficulties, it is understandable and I agree with Joanna Russ who suggests with reference to voice of women and literature that "one of the things that handicaps women writers in our — and every other — culture is that there are so very few stories in which women can figure as protagonists. Our literature is not about women. It is not about women and men equally. It is by and about men" (4). Russ's

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3 I would like to add here that interestingly, the emergence of sexual and pornographic literature is remarkable in the literatures of East Central European literatures since the mid-1980s to a point where this characteristic constitutes a literary paradigm shift. Further, as this paradigm shift is tied to the socio-cultural and political changes with regard to communist ideology and political oppression, similar changes in literary narrative can be observed in Mainland Chinese literature despite the totally different cultural parameters there (see my forthcoming article, "Configurations of Postcoloniality and National Identity: Inbetween Peripherality and Narratives of Change" [1997]).
implication is of course that there is a historically established situation in literature that at large men write and men write about women and create women in their fiction. And this is no small impact: "By choosing to read, we open ourselves to the writer's control" (Weinstein 156). Having said this and agreeing with the notion that the "voice" of the author is of significance, in this article I do not intend to elaborate on the validity or the problematics of appropriation and I cannot even begin to tackle the problematics of the issue. Instead, in the context of the above postulated parameters of reasoning for the study of reading processes with regard to gender differentiation and its consequent implications of readers' perceptions I am interested in the question of whether readers are able to gauge the gender of an author. This objective, I contend, opens up a large number of implications ranging from the question of appropriation to authorial power, the construction of meaning, etc.

More close to my objective, I am interested in the question: If readers do not know the gender of the author, will they be able to tell from the text the gender of the author? We are all aware of the problematics of erotic, sexual, and pornographic literature in their multi-dimensionality as to their objectifying the female and femininity, their political, as well as literary implications, etc. For my question, I thought that sexual and pornographic texts will be the most appropriate because most of such texts are with reference to the woman as the object. In addition, for my questionnaire I selected three excerpts where it is a woman who "speaks," whether the text was written by a male or a female author. By asking the readers to attempt to determine the gender of the authors I hoped to get a sense of whether at least for certain types of texts the gender of the author may or may not be determined. The results will give us limited, but in my opinion nevertheless valuable data with regard to the above suggested problem of "appropriation" and the pertinent problem of the construction of fiction.

With regard to pornographic and/or sexual literature, Michael Rowe's 1995 volume, Writing Below the Belt: Conversations with Erotic Authors, contains statements by well-known authors of pornographic/sexual literature who either confirm that they are able to write their texts because they are, for instance gay and male (e.g., John Preston) or they confirm that they are able to write stories of pornographic nature because all they use is imagination (e.g., Caro Soles alias Kyle Stone). Thus, in the more immediate domain of pornographic literature, the opinions are split: some sexual and pornographic texts are written because the author is of a specific sexual persuasion and this is expressed in his/her text while some sexual and pornographic texts were written purely out of the imaginary, regardless of the author's gender or sexual interests. And here, then, comes the objective of my study: What may the readers' responses be to such texts when they are unaware of the author's gender and/or sexual interests?
The objective of this questionnaire is to gauge whether readers of either gender I. Do have a sense and structure text explicitly sexual and pornographic; 2. Whether male and female readers are able to determine such text as to its male or female authorship. For the research project, three passages were chosen, all three written by male and female authors. The texts are from literary texts, written in various languages and translated into English for this questionnaire. All three excerpts speak in the original with a woman's voice. In the following, please read the texts and respond to them in detail: which text would have been written a man or a woman and why in your opinion? Please indicate in your response whether you are male or female, your education level, and whether you are a native English speaker or not; if not, your nationality.

Text A)
"He finally took his clothes off, kicked his shoes off, and told me to stand up and that I must take that goddam pantyhose off. I too took my shoes off now and quickly rolled down the offensive stockings although I put them on especially for him, they were of a nice smoky colour, and now I should be glad that he did not rip them off. I wanted to crouch down in front of him, I had only the blouse left on me, it had a decollette that my tits spilled almost out of them. But he was uninterested in this daring pose and I suddenly felt lost. He then said that he wants me to stand in front of him, so I did, my Venus just in front of his face, week in my knees. He embraced my hips, took my asscheeks into his hands and burrowed into my groin. I felt his tongue inside me, he was slurping, his tongue was in my cunt and for minutes I lost time, I don't know what he was doing, and felt his finger, too, in my cunt, with another one caressing my anus, and I returned to time and place when I heard his voice telling me that one does not have the chance to lick such a nice and clean cunt everyday. Then he took my clitoris into his mouth and all presence left me, if he hadn't been holding me I would have crumpled to the floor. The next I remembered I was on the bed, he was bending my legs backward, licking me, digging his tongue into my cunt, sucking my juices out, then sucking on my anus, licking it and I realized that I was making noises, babbling and sighing with short shrieks. I never experienced such pleasure. Then something burning hot and enormous began and swept through me."

Text B)
"I am amazed I got through tonight. I just got home from work, believe it or not! I was working on the business paper. I got stuck at one section and it took me hours to work through it. I finally gave up trying to finish it tonight. I plan to stay home tomorrow to get to the end of the fucker. Sensual diversion: now that it is night time and I have a scotch beside me (and a cigarette) I can attempt some visualizations (not that the business reading was inspiring!). I can picture your beautifully defined chest and shoulders and running my fingers across your chest, up to shoulders, down the side to your stomach,
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tickling the curls lightly — gooseflesh — nuzzling my face against your neck, stroking chest with breasts lightly so the nipples just dance, feet climbing the inside leg, fingers continuing in the groin tickling resident hairs, now for the tongue lightly moistening soft flesh down and across and down to the sensitive stomach, farther down to meet the prick — tongue gently caressing, teeth lightly teasing. Then beginning to suck tip, then teeth again, fingers fondling balls in rhythm with teeth, sucking harder now the tip, moving down slowly to gather more prick with mouth oh so slowly with alternating tongue and teeth, sucking tip more greedily mixing saliva with secretions, tasting, smelling, erotic sensations building in both bodies, moving faster now aiding with hands at base, moving deeper into cavity, back of throat closing on tip, lips nibbling on balls, sucking and swallowing — wait — hair in mouth, pause to remove (a touch of reality, why not?). Back to steady rhythm on beautiful stiff prick, body writhing, moaning with pleasure, ecstasy mounting, sucking harder, faster, alternating teeth and tongue, pleasure unbearable, complete abandonment — volcanic eruption.”

Text C)

"What I enjoyed was to see how they were by themselves. That I could be the observer there, and to see how they played with their dick and how it was formed, the shape of it, and when it became hard, and also the way they held their hand — it turned me on. Everybody jerks their dick differently. And when they abandon themselves into it, when they allow themselves to abandon themselves, this is very exciting. And to see them come that way. This guy, he was in his sixties and he'd never jerked off, he said, in front of a woman. And he was sort of holding his hand this way, well, to see that particularity of it and, as I say, to see when they got so hot they can't stop themselves in spite of being shy, that's very exciting. That's what I like best — watching them lose control. Checking him in bed, I saw his erection. I was certain he would not act on it without my taking first initiative, so quickly I undressed. I could not get aroused even if I had strong, tender feelings towards him. Seeing his hard cock, smaller than yours, and with a foreskin, which when the skin is pulled down is much redder than yours ... thinking about the way we had just fucked ... well, longing for your big, hard dick, it was almost painful. How could I abandon myself to this man who loves me? When he penetrated me, lying on top of me, he was moaning louder than I ever recollect. It was almost as if he was crying. Since it never takes him long to come, the whole thing was over soon."

2.2 The Bibliographical Sources of the Selected Text Excerpts

3. Analysis

In the following I will present selected textual and statistical features drawn from the completed questionnaires, followed by a brief and selected analysis.

3.1 Sample Responses to the Questionnaire

In order to illustrate the ways and manner in which the respondents analyzed the pornographic/sexual passages, here I am presenting two responses, one by a female and one by a male respondent:

1) "Gender: Female, Canadian, non-native speaker of English, PhD student. In my opinion, of the three excerpts A) was most likely authored by a man, while B) and C) were authored by women. Excerpt A) While the description aims at presenting the sexual excitement from a woman’s perspective, it is altogether too mechanical to be convincing. Discourse-wise, it reminds me of some older pieces of pornographic literature produced by male authors, e.g., Fanny Hill or The Story of O. The whole description seems to focus too much on the expertise of the male who is practically subjugating the woman in the course of the sexual act. The choice of lexemes: ‘tits,’ ‘Venus,’ ‘asscheeks,’ ‘cunt’ (twice), does not suggest a female voice. The description, ‘he was slurping’ underscores my perception. The first sentence in the passage is meant to be free indirect discourse, i.e., the woman representing the man’s words within her own discourse. Yet, in the subsequent sentences, the discourse continues to possess the same artificial quality. My impression is that of a man trying hard to please sexually, yet unable to do so — hence his attempt to compensate with the vulgar graphics, yet totally unerotic inventory of ‘how to’ techniques. In this context, the sentence, ‘I never experienced such pleasure’ sounds hollow and unconvincing. When one compares the climactic finale of Excerpt B) or the ironic, yet totally believable ending of Excerpt C), one is left with the conviction that the first excerpt is far from being the real thing. Excerpt B) No doubt written by a woman. The whole passage is a vision, a fantasy. Obviously, the narrator or protagonist is not directly interested in her performance as a lover. Rather, she emerges as such through the physical response from her absent lover. The act of fellatio is described by someone who has obviously experienced doing it, rather than by someone to whom it was done. While this paragraph is probably as dynamic as the previous one — it consists almost entirely of verbs and derivatives of motion — it also manages to present the beauty of the act itself. The male body is enjoyed in the sexual act. Interestingly, and in contrast, the oral sex in Excerpt A) seems to focus only on the performer and it is as if he is actually describing what he is doing while in Excerpt B) the woman appears really experiencing pleasure. In Excerpt B) the whole act is presented as an uninterrupted segment of mounting pleasure. Lexically, the passage is reminiscent of erotic women’s romances, yet there is a high degree of realism rather than schematism. Excerpt C) The problem with the authorship in the third passage arises in my opinion from some kind of discrepancy between form and content. In other words, the whole situation described suggests a female author. Yet, some of the vocabulary used is more likely of a man. My choice for a woman author is dictated by the fact that most probably the use of what I consider male descriptions and lexemes are an intentional rendition of free indirect discourse: as if the man is talking. Unlike passage A), there is an obvious shift when the woman is describing the subsequent sexual act. The description is sardonic or even sarcastic. The remarks about
the 'foreskin' and the 'redness' of the penis, which, depending on the woman's emotional involvement, is differentiated into 'cock' — small, red, pathetic — and 'dick' — big, hard, painful. The closing sentence, suggesting both disgust and relief in a typically detached, yet insulting manner is perhaps the strongest indicator for me of a female authorship.

2) "Gender: Male, German, have a PhD and am not a native English speaker. I am thirty years old. Excerpt A: Hard to say whether it was written by a man or a woman. In any case, it is quite disgusting. Not a particularly sexy passage, to be honest. So that leaves us with two possibilities: the text was either written by a male misogynist (impersonating an imagined female 'pleasure' that hardly seems credible — the act depicted is boring, rough, mechanical, completely un-erotic, if not to say brutal) or by a female/feminist chauvinist who tries to 'expose' the aggressiveness of the 'male' voice and 'male' sexuality (when taken up, mirror-like, in a 'hysterical strategy,' as the story goes, by a female subject). Since there are more male chauvinists than female counter-chauvinists, I would say the passage was written by a man. The writing, in any case, is awful. Sounds like one of those Mickey Spillane-like pulps from the 50s. The sentence 'I never experienced such pleasure' is either meant as a cruel joke or the author indeed has no respect or feel whatsoever for human sexuality, be it male or female. Excerpt B: Again, hard to tell. I rather like this passage. Though, unlike excerpt A it is very sexy. Very alluring. The emphasis on stream of consciousness (?) and flow (of liquids and thought?) seems to suggest that the author is aware of some of the more 'intellectual' stereo-types about female sexuality (whereas the author of A is playing to the masses) — which, of course, doesn't tell us anything about the author's gender. But then again, there seems to be a genuine love of male genitalia, a lust for sex with a man that would point to a woman-author who is decidedly and enthusiastically heterosexual. Which is a nice thought. It might also have been written by a (probably very sympathetic) man, a true lover of women (if that's not too trite a cliché), who imagines his ideal woman-voice. But I think I like it better the other way round. Yes, let's say, this one was written by a woman. Excerpt C: Definitely a man. And not a bad author either. It's a tricky passage. It's not so much the emphasis on voyeurism (a feature usually associated with men) than the — how shall I say? — 'taxonomical' character of the (female) voyeurist's gaze that would suggest a male author. Comparing sizes, colors, speed — pure locker-room talk. Unlike in passage B, the focus is not on privacy (on two individuals, 'you' and 'I'), but on a whole set of 'different' lovers, about whom 'you' and 'I' converse. 'Checking' people in bed and telling the results to one's lover (in order to get one's kicks not out of the act, but out of its telling), all this shows the male origin of this female voice. As a matter of fact, I wouldn't be surprised to learn that this is the author's very intention: that the speaker of this passage is actually presented as some imaginary or dreamed-of female companion or Doppelgänger of a male protagonist. So, I'd say, it's a male author, portraying his (his character's?) markedly male vision of his female mirror-image.

3.2 Overall Statistical Results of the Questionnaire.

1. From 65 mailed-out questionnaires 34 respondents mailed back their responses. Out of the 34 respondents, I received 14 male responses and 20 female responses. The demographic profile was that all respondents were college
or university educated and approximately 80% of the respondents being of training and with degrees in the Humanities. As far as possible cultural differentiation which may have affected the responses, 27 responses were from Canada (with 5 non-native English speakers) and 7 responses came from Germany. Although cultural differences may affect reader-response, I do not believe that in this case this would be of significance because of the similarity of educational levels and most in the Humanities. The age range of the respondents was between the early 20s to the mid-30s, with under five respondents of above 40 years of age.

2. The statistics of responses assessing the passages right on the passage being written by female or male authors, the results were as follows.

2.1 From the male respondents 64.3% gauged the authorship of passage A correctly, from the female respondents 55%;

2.2 From the male respondents 50% gauged passage B correctly, from the female respondents 60% gauged passage B correctly;

2.3 From the male respondents 35.7% gauged passage C correctly, and from the female respondents 60% gauged passage C correctly. 2.4 In total male and female responses passage A was gauged 58.8% correctly, passage B was 55.9%, and passage C was gauged 50% correctly.

3. In total, the passages were correctly assessed by 25% of the female respondents and 21.4% of the male respondents.

My preliminary analysis of the responses is as follows. Female respondents gauged the texts correctly to a higher degree. Why this may be the case remains to be analyzed. The most significant result of the questionnaire at this point — and so to my utter consternation — is the result that questions my initial hypothesis, namely that imagination and fiction cannot be "appropriated": It appears that male authors did not successfully "appropriate" the female voice and thus their fiction and perhaps fiction then as a whole, may be gender specific. That is, at least in the case of a specific text-type, that of erotic and pornographic literature. Obviously, further research is necessary to follow the findings of the empirical evidence provided by the survey. Because of the specificity of the text type, it may also be of importance to gauge the authors' position as the source of the texts. In other words, while — as I pointed out above — some authors of pornographic and sexual texts claim to work from imagination alone, it appears to me that a majority of them are of the position of one of the most prominent contemporary authors of sexual and pornographic literature, Marco Vassi: "fact, fiction, who knows? It happens and you write it down. And then you write it down and it happens" (82). If this may indeed be the case, it may also be the case that — in very general terms and here disregarding "slippages" created by the factor of imagination and inbetween situations when a man is more woman or the other way around — men write men and women write women, as the results of the survey suggest.

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Works Cited


Using Think-Aloud Protocols to Reveal Readers’ Understanding of and Responses to Narratives

1. Introduction

Reading narratives is, in our view, a dynamic interaction between the author and reader.\(^1\) The author, as narrator, selects and organizes episodic content about sentient agents. These agents act intentionally or react unintentionally to other agents, objects, and events. These actions occur in space and over time. The agents evaluate each other, objects, events and actions in terms of actual and potential harms and benefits, experience success or failure (harm or threat) in achieving their goals, express appraisals, emotions, and preferences, formulate goals and plans of action based upon these evaluations, carry out the plans through attempts, evaluate the outcomes of these attempts as to whether goals are attained or maintained, and experience success or failure in goal attainment. The success and failure outcomes begin new episodic cycles of evaluation followed by the formulation of new goals and plans of action. Agents also engage in protagonist-antagonist conflicts. Agents resolve the conflicts between mutually incompatible goals by winning or losing or ending up in stalemates.

The narrator unfolds the narrative through clauses over time. The reader attempts to construct a coherent and dynamic representation through the understanding of each clause as it is read. With each new clause, the reader’s interpretations and inferences modify a changing memory representation of who the agents are, where they are in space and time, what they do, know, think, or feel, and whether things are going well or going badly. In short, the narrator provides the reader with an opportunity to experience and evaluate the lives of others. The reader, in turn, uses knowledge of human intentionality and causation to infer relationships between events, actions, and states. The reader understands what occurs by evaluating, explaining, setting up expectations, and elaborating the circumstances in which the agents find themselves.

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*The Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature and Culture as Theory and Application*

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In literary approaches to comprehension, instructors are often interested in the "reader's response" (see Trabasso, 1992a for a review of Appleyard's book on this topic). How might one find out how a reader "responds" as the narrative unfolds over time? This article describes a program of psychological research aimed at answering this question. In the study, readers were asked to "think aloud" while they try to understand a narrative, one sentence at a time (see Suh and Trabasso; Trabasso and Suh). The think-aloud protocols constitute the primary data for revealing what and how readers understand. Before presenting the methods and findings of this study, we will briefly examine the methods that one could use to study what readers understand as they read or listen.

2. Ways of Finding out What Readers Understand

One general method to find out what a reader understands is to intervene in some manner after the reader has read the narrative or portions thereof. These interventions may ask the reader to retell, answer questions, summarize, judge the importance of ideas, and to interpret further or to discuss the content of what was read. Psychologists have focused primarily on retelling, answering questions, summarizing, and judging importance of ideas (see, e.g., Omanson). Discussion and interpretation are commonly used by teachers to assist them in finding out what readers have learned or think about literature in instructional contexts. The discussion and interpretation are, however, likely to be constrained by questions of interest to the teachers or by the readers themselves (see McKeown, Beck, and Sandora).

In approaches to comprehension, readers are frequently asked to listen or read a narrative entirely and then to recall it verbatim. For example, Stein and Glenn asked children in the first, third, and fifth grades to listen to folk tales and then to retell them. Trabasso, Suh, and Payton asked college students to read brief narratives, to rate each narrative as to its overall coherence, and then to recall them, either immediately after they read the narrative or two days later. The assumption here is that the reader's construction of a coherent understanding of the narrative leads to retention of what was read. Stein and Glenn analyzed the episodic structure of the narratives via discourse analysis using a "story grammar." They found that older children retold episodically structured stories better than younger children. They also found that well-structured episodes were recalled better than ones that were incompletely structured, regardless of the age of the reader. Trabasso et al. (1994), analyzed the potential causal inferences that readers could make between clauses of the story. When a story's clauses could be highly inter-related by the reader through causal inferences, the story was more likely to be judged as coherent. Furthermore, coherent stories were better retained, especially two days after reading. In each of these examples, the reader's understanding and structuring of the narrative content is related to how
well the reader retells what was read. Good retention results from the reader’s integration of the ideas based upon the text into a coherent memory representation.

Another, common method is to ask readers to answer questions of the who, what, when, where, and why variety. The aim of question answering is to reveal what the reader understands about a text and what kinds of inferences, causal or otherwise, that the reader makes as she reads or after she has read the narrative. Lehnert has provided a detailed analysis, from an artificial intelligence perspective, of the kinds of questions that could be asked and what they reveal about a reader’s knowledge or understanding of events portrayed in a text. Graesser and his colleagues (see Graesser 1981; Graesser and Clark; Graesser and Black) have carried out the most systematic psychological studies of the kinds of information revealed by different kinds of questions. In particular, why and how questions are crucial in revealing inferences made by readers about the causes and consequences of agents’ actions (see also Trabasso, Van den Broek, and Liu, for an analysis of how why and how questions reveal the understanding of complex narratives).

A third procedure, used mainly in educational and reading research, is to ask readers to rate the importance of sentences with respect to a text (see Brown and Smiley). Here, the reader is required to evaluate how each sentence is related to other sentences, in the context of the narrative. Trabasso and Sperry analyzed the causal relations between sentences in each of the six Chinese folk tales studied by Brown and Smiley. They found that judgments of importance were a linear function of the number of causal connections of a clause to other clauses. The more causal inference connections that a clause had to other clauses, the more important was its rating. This finding suggests that readers apprehend the causal relations of a sentence as they read and judged its importance in the context of the story.

A fourth procedure, used largely in reading comprehension research, requires the reader to provide a summary what was read. Since a summary limits what the reader may report, the reader must also evaluate what is to be included in the summary. Typically, readers summarize the most "important" ideas and leave out details. Important ideas are those that are highly related and the highest in a hierarchy of relationships (see Omanson; Trabasso and Sperry; Trabasso and Van den Broek; Van den Broek 1988, 1990; Van den Broek and Trabasso).

The four methods — retelling, summarizing, judging the importance, and answering questions — yield measures of post-reading comprehension that are highly interrelated (Omanson) and therefore measure common processes. Omanson had college students read brief narratives and then either recall, summarize, rate the importance, or answer questions. The inter-correlation of the four measures was very high and positive (r = .77).

We now turn to a brief evaluation of these methods with respect to the question of how to reveal what readers understand a narrative.
3. A Brief Evaluation of Post-Reading Methods

Any procedure that is used to reveal what readers understand about a narrative is of value. Each procedure provides useful information, depending upon the aims and goals of the research or instruction. Retelling indicates how much of the original narrative the reader can access and produce. Answering questions reveals the kinds of relationships that the reader can infer. Judgments of importance and summarization reflect the readers' ability to evaluate the structure of the narrative. However, since these methods are applied after the reader has read the narrative, what is learned may reflect processes and understandings that occurred during reading, between reading and the assessment, or at the time and as a result of the assessment itself. The latter is especially problematic for making inferences about what was the reader's response to the text during silent reading and comprehension. For example, the reader may not have thought about why an agent did something until the why question was imposed. If so, then what is revealed as understanding is a result of questioning and does not necessarily reveal what the reader understood during the first, silent reading.

A second problem is that post-reading methods impose a heavy demand and reliance upon memory and retention for what was read. Readers can forget what they read, felt, and thought about during reading since these states are very transient in nature. If so, they may fail to recall, to answer questions, to judge importance, or to summarize information that they understood well during reading. One way to minimize forgetting is to keep the narrative available and to allow the reader to reread it in order to answer questions etc. While this would help the reader's memory, re-reading may have effects that are different than the first reading (see Langston and Trabasso). For example, knowledge of what happens at the end of the narrative can affect how one understands what happened earlier. If one wishes to capture the transient states of a reader during comprehension, one needs to use what are called "on-line" rather than post-reading methods. We now turn to a consideration of some on-line procedures and what they may or may not reveal about the reader's response during reading.

4. "On-Line" Reading

One can adapt post-reading methods so that they assess what is understood closer in time to the reading experience itself. One can interrupt the reading at specific locations and intervene with a variety of methods. One can ask questions, have readers report emotions or evaluations, test for recognition of words or sentences that would be affected by the making of inferences at the point of probing, have readers continue the narrative, make predictions about what is going to occur, report, verbally, their understanding as they read words, clauses, sentences, or paragraphs, or have viewers narrate events that they view in picture stories (see Trabasso and Nickels; Trabasso, Stein, Rodkin, Munger, and Baughn) or film.
All of these intervention procedures are constraining and intrusive. The reader will, of necessity, engage in activities that might not occur during silent reading. However, we must keep in mind that each procedure is informative. They all reveal something about what readers can, could or do understand, react to, and learn during and from the reading of a text.

5. Issues over the Use of Think-Aloud Procedures and Verbal Protocols

In our research, we obtain "think-aloud" protocols from readers as they read and understand narratives. Think-aloud methods and their resulting protocols have been extensively used in the psychological study of problem solving and writing. An important review of verbal-protocol methods, in general, and thinking aloud, in particular, is found in the work of Ericsson and Simon (1993). Ericsson and Simon have, in a 1980 article, addressed issues and criticisms of verbal protocol methods. Further, Ericsson reviews the use of the use of concurrent verbal reports during comprehension (1988).

We share important assumptions with Ericsson and Simon with respect to think-aloud protocols. We assume that the think-aloud protocol of a reader reflects 1) What was available to the reader as a result of reading the sentence; 2) What was accessible to consciousness; and 3) What could be coded in and communicated in language. We also are aware that the protocols can underestimate or overestimate what readers actually do during comprehension. We believe that what is available to a reader's consciousness is constrained by the narrative text and the goals and purposes of the reader. If one asks a reader why an agent carries out an action depicted in the text, then the reader is motivated to find reasons or causes for the action. There are also limitations of working memory capacity. It is also possible that thinking is not always consciously accessible and codable in language. This would be particularly true when the reader uses visual imagery during comprehension. What is reported, then, may underestimate what readers understand. However, any method that uses verbal communication would suffer from these same limitations. The point is that we be aware of the constraining effects of our procedures to reveal understanding and what inferences or generalizations we wish to make, based upon what we find.

Since verbal protocol methods are an intervention by a third party while the reader is engaged in reading, the intervention can also overestimate what the reader is thinking during comprehension. The interventions may set new and different goals for the reader. For example, asking why-questions could direct the reader to engage in explanatory strategies at a higher rate than they would do when reading silently. Since readers are talking to a third party, they may adopt communicative norms that are different from private ones used in understanding during silent reading. For example, readers may communicate more evaluation than they would make while reading silently. Goodwin and Goodwin describe
how people align assessments when engaged in spontaneous conversation. Trabasso and Özyürek and Özyürek and Trabasso analyzed think-aloud protocols and found that readers adopt three perspectives in evaluation. Character and narrator perspectives were taken when the reader's evaluations were part of the story. On the other hand, readers adopted a third party perspective and communicated to the experimenter evaluations of a general or personal nature (e.g., "That's too bad" or "I feel sorry for Jane"). These additions to the think-aloud protocols appear to be a function of the experimental intervention and conversational context. They thus may overestimate what readers do during silent reading.

Since we are asking the reader to report verbally what is understood during reading, we may change the nature of what we are studying. Most psychologists wish to study "pure" or undisturbed processes and are skeptical of methods that might alter what one studies. Their interest seems to be focused on what readers do during silent reading (see Trabasso, 1992b for a review of a volume devoted to psychological approaches to comprehension). Ericsson, in fact, reviews some studies that show that readers who think aloud during reading retain and comprehend like controls who read silently (1988). These studies show that think-aloud methods were unobtrusive with respect to the processes being studied.

One can validate what one observes in think-aloud protocols by convergent or independent methodologies. An excellent review of this kind of validation of verbal protocol methods is found in Magliano and Graesser. Suh and Trabasso used convergent methods by obtaining verbal protocols via thinking aloud on one group of college students and used their data to predict recognition priming of goal-based inferences by a different group of students who read the same narratives silently. They showed that recognition speed of goal sentences was facilitated when a goal that occurred earlier in the text was the motivational source of a concurrent goal or attempt.

Experimental psychologists wish to study processes of comprehension without disturbing them by the methods of study. In contrast, educators have pedagogical goals of finding out what is the reader's response to a literary work. What the reader knows, feels, understands, thinks, believes, infers, or questions are all valid data according to these goals. Since our interest is in communication of understanding as it occurs in classroom or everyday life contexts, then what is communicated, understood, expressed, or felt is of interest, as data, even if it differs, to some extent, from what readers do during silent reading. This interest may lead to different research goals than those psychologists who believe that they are studying "pure" processes.
6. Think-Aloud Protocols Obtained during Comprehension

The think-aloud protocols were obtained in the doctoral dissertation of Suh. In this dissertation, college students read eight, three-episode stories. An episode contained settings (S) that introduced the character and gave relevant personal characteristics; initiating events (IE) in which the character undergoes a change in state that creates a problem; a goal (G) where the character desires to attain something that resolves the problem; attempts (A) to attain the goal; outcomes (O) that indicate goal success or failure resulting from the attempts; and emotional reactions (R) of the character to goal success or failure.

There were eight different stories. The stories consisted of 13 to 18 sentences (mean = 15 sentences). Each sentence was typed separately in the middle of a 5 X 8 card. Participants were instructed to read silently what was on each card. They were told to try to understand each sentence in the context of the story and to tell the researcher about their understanding. Participants saw one card at a time, read each sentence, one at a time, at their own pace, and talked to the researcher about their understanding of each sentence as it was read. The participant’s communication was tape recorded and transcribed. The total data set consisted of 64 (8 readers by 8 stories) verbal protocols. Each verbal protocol contained the thoughts that accompanied each story text sentence for an entire story.

7. What is Thinking Aloud?

Our studies show that readers communicate their attempts to construct coherent understanding of another life though explanation- and expectation-based understanding, while elaborating through association all aspects of the text (see Suh and Trabasso; Trabasso and Suh; Trabasso and Magliano 1996a,b). They also show that readers are concerned about the well-being of other’s, monitor their concerns, evaluate circumstances, and express evaluations via general and specific appraisals, preferences, emotions, goals, and purposes (see Trabasso and Özyürek; Özyürek and Trabasso). In order to appreciate the phenomena of the verbal protocols, we provide below an example with commentary based upon these studies.

Suh studied two kinds of story structures. In the "Goal Fail" story, the protagonist’s initial goal fails in the first episode. In the second episode, the protagonist formulates a subordinate goal, necessary to attaining the main goal, and succeeds in attaining the subordinate goal. In the third episode, the protagonist carries out attempts that lead to successful attainment of the initial goal. For example, Ivan, a warrior, learns that a giant is destroying villages and killing people. He wants to kill the giant and so he goes to a nearby village at night and waits for the giant. The giant comes and he shoots an arrow at the giant. The arrow only wounds the giant. Later, a famous swordsman comes to
the village. Ivan asks him to teach him how to fight with the sword. Ivan becomes a skilled swordsman and the teacher rewards him with a large sword. Ivan returns to the village and slays the giant. Ivan becomes a hero to the villagers. In a control condition, readers read a version with a "Goal Success" structure where the main protagonist's initial goal succeeds in the first episode (e.g., Ivan kills the giant with the arrow). The second episode is the same as in the goal fail story. In the third episode, Ivan returns to the village, as before, and is welcomed as a hero.

8. What Kind of Inferences do Think-Aloud Protocols Reveal?

The following example of a think-aloud protocol is that of a college student reading the Ivan story, sentence by sentence, under the instruction to try to understand each sentence as it is read and to tell the experimenter how it was understood. The example is from the first episode of the "Goal Success" version of the Ivan the Warrior Story. Sentences (S) of the story, denoted by number (S1, S2, etc.) are alternated with clauses (c) from the protocol, denoted by number (c1, c2, etc.), and are followed by comments based upon Trabasso and Magliano's (1996a) analysis of understanding in terms of explanation, elaboration, and prediction, and Trabasso and Özyürek's analysis of evaluation.

Text (S1): Ivan was a great warrior
Think-Aloud Protocol: c1. He is good at fighting.
Comment: The reader elaborates the text by activating relevant world knowledge about warriors, and explains why Ivan is great with an appraisal of his fighting ability.

Text (S2): Ivan was the best archer in his village
Think-Aloud Protocol: c1. I have an image of a medieval archer
    c2. His style of fighting is with a bow and arrow
    c3. because he is an archer
Comment: The reader elaborates the text with an appraisal of Ivan's archery skill in the first two clauses. The reader uses a paraphrase of the text in the third clause to explain the inference that Ivan fights with a bow and arrow. The third clause also serves to maintain the main proposition of the text in working memory so that it can be reflected upon and interpreted. Maintenance also aids in later retrieval during reading and understanding (see Trabasso and Magliano 1996a).

Text (S3): One day, Ivan heard that a giant was terrifying people in his village
Think-Aloud Protocol:
    c1. Ivan, being a great warrior
    c2. heard of a giant
    c3. and will probably go and fight
    c4. and try to kill it
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c5. in order to stop the people in the village being terrified

Comment: The reader retrieves the setting in the first clause (Ivan is a great warrior) to explain why he might hear about the giant (a maintenance and paraphrase of the text). The reader then makes two predictions in the third and fourth clauses about Ivan's future goal plans of action (attempt to fight and to kill). These predictions are explained by a goal (to prevent terror) in the fifth clause. Thoughts in clauses c3-c5 are the result of the reader's activation of relevant knowledge. The thought in the fifth clause is an emotion experienced by others and represents an evaluation of the consequences to the people of the giant's actions and as an explanation for Ivan's prevention goal.

Text (S4): They said that the giant came to the village at night and hurt people
Think-Aloud Protocol: c1. Ivan is probably getting very angry at this point
   c2. he will want to slay the giant

Comment: The reader evaluates the initiating event in the text of the giant's actions with respect to harming the people by predictive inferences about Ivan's emotion (anger) and goal (slay the giant). These predictions depend upon the activation of relevant knowledge and retrieval of a thought expressed to the prior sentence (to kill the giant).

Text (S5): Ivan was determined to kill the giant
Think-Aloud Protocol:
   c1. As expected
   c2. Ivan being a warrior
   c3. and caring about people
   c4. will want to kill the giant

Comment: The reader confirms a prediction made during comprehending the previous sentence in the first clause. The reader then explains in the second and third clauses, why Ivan wants to kill the giant. This is done by retrieving the setting that he is a warrior and inferring that this role entails goals and responsibilities of defending and caring about people. This goal, activated from relevant world knowledge, motivates the goal of killing the giant in the fourth clause. This clause contains a paraphrase that maintains the text in working memory. The evaluations by the reader to this sentence are primarily expressed through the character's goals and purposes.

Text (S6): Ivan waited until dark
Think-Aloud Protocol:
   c1. Ivan is going to try not to be seen
   c2. to try to kill the giant that way

Comment: The reader explains the text by evaluating the attempt of waiting until dark by inferring two goals (not to be seen and to kill the giant). The first explanation is the result of activating relevant world knowledge. The second explanation is a result of carrying over the goal of killing the giant from the prior sentence and thoughts.
Text (S7): When the giant came, Ivan shot an arrow at him.

Think-Aloud Protocol:

c1. When the giant came,
c2. Ivan shot an arrow at him
c3. and tried to kill him.

Comment: The first two clauses contain thoughts that paraphrase and maintain the text in working memory. The third clause explains why Ivan shot the arrow as an attempt to fulfill a goal. The goal is a carry-over from thoughts made to the prior sentence.

Text (S8): Ivan hit him and the giant fell down

Think-Aloud Protocol:

c1. He was successful in hitting the giant
c2. Ivan probably hopes that the giant is dead

Comment: The reader's first clause is an evaluation of goal success and maintains the main proposition of the text. The second clause contains a predictive, evaluative inference about Ivan's emotions (a possible successful outcome of his attempt).

Text (S9): The people were overjoyed

Think-Aloud Protocol:

c1. I assume that the giant did die
c2. So the people were happy
c3. they no longer were frightened by the giant
c4. They probably were pleased with Ivan
c5. and made some celebration

Comment: The reader confirms the expectation made during comprehension of the previous sentence. The confirmation is done through an evaluation of the people's emotion in the text. The inference in the first clause is an evaluation of the character's success in attaining a goal and it, in turn, explains the people's emotion. The second clause is a paraphrase of the people's emotion expressed in the text. This is explained in the third clause by an evaluation of success of their goal of not being frightened. This information is retrieved from prior text. The fourth clause is another paraphrase of the emotion expressed in the text, but it serves to explain the basis of a prediction of celebration. The latter is a consequence of the reader's use of relevant world knowledge about consequences of successful attainment of goals and ensuing emotions.

This completes our presentation of a part of a think-aloud protocol. The example, with the accompanying commentary, was given to illustrate our basic analyses and qualitative findings. One set of our qualitative and quantitative analyses (see Suh and Trabasso; Trabasso and Suh; Trabasso and Magliano 1996a) focused on the functions of the thoughts. Here memory operations are revealed where readers are constrained by the text and prior thoughts in what they retrieve, carry over, or activate as relevant world knowledge. What is available to the reader is then used to explain, paraphrase and maintain, or predict events in the text.
The Trabasso and Magliano data (1996a) lead to the conclusion that understanding is mainly explanation-based (e.g., Graesser, Singer, and Trabasso; Ranney and Thagard). The majority of what people thought about in trying to understand a sentence were explanations. People gave reasons and causes for text sentences or thoughts more often then they elaborated via associations or made predictions. Trabasso and Magliano (1996a) found that readers averaged 44.68 thoughts per story (nearly three thoughts per sentence). Seventy-five percent of the thoughts were inferences and of these, 68 percent were explanations, 20 percent were associative elaboration, and 12 percent were predictions. Furthermore, regardless of the source (world knowledge, prior thoughts, or the text) that readers used to make an inference, explanations predominated. Even when a prior association or prediction was maintained or retrieved in order to generate an inference, it was primarily used to explain.

Explanations involving text sources were based primarily on characters' goals even though they constituted only thirteen percent of the sentences in a given story. These findings support goal-based theories of understanding of narratives (see Graesser and Clark; Trabasso, Van den Broek, and Suh; Stein and Levine 1989; 1990; Suh and Trabasso). Goals were often maintained or retrieved and used to explain goals, attempts, outcomes, and reactions. Goals were retrieved as the primary text source for predictions. When readers made predictions using text information, they were nearly always expressed as purposeful outcomes based upon the superordinate goal of the story. For example, "Ivan will kill the giant" is a goal-outcome prediction from the sentence "Ivan returned to the village with his mighty sword."

Readers generate goal-based explanations and predictions in order to achieve a coherent mental representation of the text (see Graesser et al. 1994; Singer, Graesser, and Trabasso; Suh and Trabasso; Trabasso et al. 1989). Trabasso and Magliano (1996a) found that readers achieved coherence in explanation by maintaining in working memory and retrieving goals and other text or thought information. Moreover, readers explained successive sentences in the story by keeping the goal available in working memory. The correlation between the number of times kept in working memory and the likelihood that the maintained sentence was a goal was \( r = .88 \). That is, the more often readers maintained information over successive sentences, the more likely that information was a superordinate goal.

9. How do the Think-Aloud Protocols Reveal Evaluative Stances of Readers?

Özyürek and Trabasso and Trabasso and Özyürek analyzed the Suh think-aloud protocols on how readers evaluated sentence content and their own thoughts. In the above Ivan Story example, the reader monitored the concerns of the character and evaluated events as threatening or harmful by assuming the role of the narrator and taking the character's perspective. Evaluations were expressed as
preferences (not liking), emotions (anger or joy), and goals or purposes. Evaluations were also expressed as general appraisals of skill or attempts and as success or failure of outcomes of attempts. Evaluations also served to explain or justify other thoughts and evaluations.

In order to further understanding of how readers monitor the well-being of characters and evaluate the events that impact on them, we provide some examples of evaluations based upon the analyses of Özyürek and Trabasso and Trabasso and Özyürek. Three main kinds of evaluation were identified: appraisals, preferences, and emotions. In addition, goals and purposes were considered evaluative in the sense that characters wanted or did not want something or they carried out purposeful attempts to either maintain or attain desired states or to avoid or escape undesired states. In all cases, evaluations are negatively or positively valanced and indicate that things are going well or going badly. Our focus here, however, is on appraisals, preferences, and emotions as these are most obviously valanced.

10. Examples of Appraisals, Preferences, and Emotions

In this section, we illustrate appraisals, preferences, and emotions by three different readers per sentence during the reading of the first episode of the Jane Story. The story is unfolded over the examples.

Text: Jane became very heavy
Appraisal: Maybe she did not look good because of it
Preference: Jane does not like to be so
Emotion: I immediately feel sorry for Jane

Comment: Appraisals are expressed as "good" or "bad," in general, and they may be used to evaluate states, abilities, traits, etc. of characters as well as the harms or benefits of events and outcomes. In this case, the appraisal is of Jane's appearance and the reader assumes the role of narrator. Preferences are expressed primarily by "like" or "dislike" and they take the perspective of the character. Emotions are most often expressed by characters but in this case, there is a first person, reader perspective in response to the character's plight. These examples, then, illustrate how readers move in and out of the text, continuing it as a narrator or becoming a character. They also look at the text as a object and communicate to another their feelings.

Consider Jane's goal as the her story unfolds.

Text: Jane wanted to lose weight
Appraisal: It is especially difficult when you are a teenager
Preference: You don't like your body
Emotion: She is not happy
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Comment: In the appraisal of Jane's goal, the reader makes a generalization based on the preceding sentence and evaluates Jane's state of being overweight from a narrator or third party perspective. In stating a preference, another reader also makes a generalization based on the preceding sentence. The character's emotion is inferred by a third reader, again based on the preceding sentence. All three of these evaluations are consequences of the first text sentence. They each serve to explain the goal content of the text's second sentence. Initiating Events and Goals are thus related causally by a series of appraisals by the character.

The Jane Story continues with an attempt to achieve her goal.

Text: Jane jogged for a while
Appraisal: She thought jogging would be a very good idea
Preference: She probably likes sports
Emotion: She might enjoy it

Comment: Again, in these examples, readers explain why Jane is jogging and do so from her perspective. The readers co-participate as narrator with the author in telling the story. Readers evaluate outcomes in terms of success or failure. Consider two contrasting outcomes that continue the Jane Story in the two versions studied by Suh (1989).

"Goal Failure" Version:

Text: Jane did not become thinner
Appraisal: It's really too bad
Preference: (none observed)
Emotion: I image Jane being upset

"Goal Success" Version:

Text: Jane became very thin
Appraisal: She was successful
Preference: (none observed)
Emotion: She is probably very happy about that

The contrast of evaluations of outcomes as harmful or beneficial is clear in the examples. Readers make negatively valanced evaluations when Jane's goal fails. When she succeeds, the evaluations are positively valanced.

11. Are Things Going Well or are They Going Badly?

Zillman claimed that viewers of film identify with protagonists by "caring for them" and monitoring their concerns. From our perspective, if readers monitor the concerns of characters, they should evidence evaluation as to whether things are going well or badly over the entire course of the narrative. The above
example provided evidence for such monitoring. Özyürek and Trabasso examined the valences of the appraisals, preferences, and emotions as positive or negative indicators and quantified monitoring as the proportion of positive evaluations. Figure 1 (see Appendix) shows a plot of the conditional probability of a positive evaluation given that an evaluation was made for the sentences in each of the episodic categories of the Goal Fail and Goal Success stories from the Özyürek and Trabasso study.

Figure 1 shows that the Goal Fail and Success story structures were monitored by readers by expression of positive or negative appraisals, preferences, or emotions over the entire course of the narrative. In particular, positive evaluations began low, reflecting the majority of untoward Initiating Events. Things began to look better as the character formulated positive Goals and carried out Attempts related to a goal plan. However, Goal Failure and Negative Emotions in the first episode were evaluated negatively in sharp contrast to Goal Success and Positive Emotions. From that point on, however, things went well and the rate of positive evaluation was high. These data suggest that valence alone is sufficient as a semantic indicator of reader's monitoring of the concerns of the characters.

In sum, evaluation plays a role in the telling and understanding of narratives, in communicative interaction, emotional understanding, and in psychological well-being. Özyürek and Trabasso quantified their categories and found that readers track the well-being of characters mainly through the expression of a character's internal states. Five kinds of evaluative inferences were found: appraisals (good versus bad), preferences (like versus don't like), emotions (happy versus frustrated), goals (want versus don't want), or purposes (to attain or maintain X versus to prevent or avoid X). Readers evaluated all sentences. The mean rate of evaluation per sentence was 0.55. Positive and negative evaluations over the course of the story indicated that things initially went badly for characters, improved with the formulation and execution of goal plans, declined with goal failure, and improved as characters formulated new goals and succeeded.

While not reported here, Özyürek and Trabasso found that the kind of evaluation made depended upon the episodic category of the event and the event's temporal location in the story. Evaluations also served to explain or predict events. In making evaluations, readers stayed within the frame of the story and perspectives of the character or narrator. They also moved out of the narrative frame and addressed evaluations towards the experimenter in a communicative context.

12. Variation in Unit and Kind of Literature

In our studies, we investigated how readers thought about narrative sentences, one at a time. Obviously, the amount of text that the reader could be asked to
think about can vary from words to sentences to paragraphs to complete novels. This is an important question that is open to theoretical analysis and empirical investigation. In this section, we illustrate a pilot study carried out in collaboration with Adam Rose, based on his M.A. thesis project.

We chose as a text, the Jabberwocky poem from *Through the Looking Glass* by Lewis Carroll. The Jabberwocky presents a challenge to understanding since it makes extensive use of nonsense words and its sentential references have to be inferred. The Jabberwocky consists of six stanzas of four lines each, with the first and last stanzas repeating.

In our study, three levels of text and three criteria of understanding were used and six graduate student readers were asked to try to understand each level and to tell us about their understanding. The three levels were 1) Word or phrase, 2) Stanza or verse (four lines); or 3) Whole text. For the three levels, the first instruction was to try to understand the text, as in the Suh study. Two other instructions were used for level 3) (whole text): 4) Epitomization where the reader gave a summary of the meaning of the text and 5) Personal meaning where the reader gave an interpretation as to what the poem meant to him or her, personally.

We now present some examples of the think-aloud protocols for the five combinations of text level and instructions. Examples from Jabberwocky think-aloud protocols.

**Level 1: Understand a word or phrase.** Readers read words or phrases and communicated their understanding to the experimenter as they read them on 3 x 5 cards.

**Text:** Jabberwocky

Think-Aloud Protocol: This has verbal associations for me. The jabber part and the wocky part. Jabber as in talk and nonsense and wocky as in something awkward.

Comment: Word level thinking aloud constrains the reader to construct semantic associations in an effort after meaning.

**Text:** 'Twas brillig

Think-Aloud Protocol: The beginning of a narrative because 'twas sounds like it being a narrative and brillig. I don't know, these words just give me associations ... bright, brilliant are my associations with this word

Comment: The reader, when presented with a phrase, moves to structural and genre levels of interpretation, identifying the phrase as opening a narrative. In this case, knowledge of syntax and tense (past) contribute to the interpretation. Then, the reader moves to the semantic level and guesses at the meanings of the words.
Text: and the slithy
Think-aloud Protocol: The slithy toves are the subject of this phrase. Slithy like slimy.
toves. I don’t have any idea what those are. They’re talking about somethings doing
something.
Comment: The reader, again, uses syntactic knowledge and moves back to semantic
construction of word level meanings.

Text: did gyre
Think-Aloud Protocol: The slithy toves were gyreing ... I actually think this is a real word,
gyre ... as in gyroscope. I don’t know if it is a real word, but some kind of movement.
Comment: The reader now begins to integrate the meanings into sentence and referential
understanding of actions. This integration is facilitated by syntactic and semantic
interpretations of a verb phrase. The reader returns to interpreting the nonsense word at
a semantic, associative level.

Text: and gimble
Think-Aloud Protocol: As in nimble, jumping around and moving and hoping.
Comment: The reader continues to associate at the word level but also infers that "gimble"
is a verb, thus continuing to integrate the words into a sentence and using syntactic
information from prior text.

Text: in the wabe
Think-Aloud Protocol: which could be water or could be froth or could be anything.
Comment: The reader continues to construct word association meanings.

In sum, when the reader is confronted with nonsense words and phrases, the
primary effort is try to construct meaning through associations to word
morphemes, and to use syntactic and narrative structure information where
possible. As inferences accumulate, the reader moves to sentence level
understanding by use of predicates that integrate and organize sentences. All six
readers adopted these kinds of understandings: morphemic and word semantic
associations, syntactic and phrase knowledge, and narrative structure throughout
the entire poem as it unfolded through words and phrases over time. Our
analyses of these data are qualitative at this point and have not as yet been
quantitatively analyzed. The latter could be accomplished through the application
of a well-defined taxonomy and obtaining frequencies of each category.

Level 2: Stanza or verse level understanding
Text: 'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
      did gyre and gimble in the wabe.
      all mimsy were the borogoves,
      and the mome raths outgrabe
Think-aloud protocol: Once upon a time, in a faraway place, near the water in a fantastic
and special land where there were strange and wonderful creatures, that’s where the
story takes place
Comment: In understanding the first stanza, the reader renders a full interpretation. The reader begins with a conventional narrative and establishes time and space circumstances that serve as a setting for the story to follow. Note the absence of the constructive associations that were witnessed in the preceding word and phrase level examples. The word level associations, however, contribute to the integration at the narrative level.

Level 3: Whole poem understanding
Think-Aloud Protocol: This is a poem about a boy whose father...this is a poem about a boy who goes off to find a dangerous beast. and although his father has warned him about this beast, he goes out to look for it. he goes in search of the beast and when he least expects it, the beast comes to him, and he manages to kill the beast and bring it home in triumph. and although his father has told him to beware the beast, his father is very proud of him when he brings it back and when he comes home. and it’s about you can overcome even the most dangerous and scary and frightening creatures.

Comment: The reader after reading the entire poem of six stanzas, tells the story in terms of what happened from the perspective of the boy. Note that there is no reference to the opening and closing stanzas which are filled with nonsense words. The focus is on what happened to the main protagonist with a moral added at the ending. The reader uses narrative episodic structure with a setting, goal, attempts, outcomes, and evaluations.

Level 4: Whole poem and epitomization
Think-Aloud Protocol: I think I just did that. O.K. "jabberwocky" is about overcoming... seeking out and overcoming the most dangerous fears, animals, creatures, and beasts.

Comment: The reader drew a general moral implication on the previous reading and repeats it here. All six readers drew similar morals of challenges and overcoming danger, in line with knowledge of heroic myths.

Level 5: Whole poem and personal relevance
Think-aloud protocol: I mostly have these fears at the top of ski slopes. I don’t think that I can make the entire holistic relevance, but those are the times when I generally experience true fear. I suppose there’s also an emotional relevance out there too. Saying hard things. Doing ... facing ugly truths.

Comment: The reader now focuses personal evaluation and the emotions experienced when faced with threatening circumstances. The reader draws a different parallel personally then when the evaluation is done as an appraisal of the moral significance of the whole poem. The reader does not continue the moral of overcoming but focuses on the danger or threat. The distinction here is between problem-focused versus emotion-focused coping (see Folkman and Lazarus).

13. What Have we Learned from Studying How Readers Understand as They Read a Text?

In conclusion, our studies on thinking aloud provide substantial support for the claim that this form of concurrent verbal protocol is psychologically valid and pedagogically informative. The protocols reveal what and how readers' understanding is affected by the text. What is revealed in the reader's understan-
Reading depends upon the kind and unit of the text, the reader's goals and tasks, and the goals and purposes of the investigator or instructor.

Our studies reveal that understanding of the lives of others communicated through narratives is explanation-based and highly evaluative. Our studies show that the text constrains the reader's thoughts, feelings, and understandings. They reveal the reader's identification with protagonists via their monitoring of concerns, in line with Zillman's view, and that they express how they care about characters through evaluation of harms and benefits, inferring their goals and purposes, feelings, successes and failures. Also in line with Zillman, we found that the think-aloud protocols reveal how readers view antagonists. Readers want the protagonist to succeed and the antagonist to fail and often wish the latter harm (e.g., the hero killing the giant).

Since thinking aloud is obtained in a communicative context, it is not, strictly speaking, "thinking" out loud. Thinking aloud is a communicative context in which the reader is asked to interact with an authored text and to converse with a passive third party experimenter about how the text is understood. The reader communicates an understanding of the narrative, as it unfolds, by co-constructing the text with the author, one unit at a time. This co-construction involves the reader taking on narrator or character roles, associating and filling in space and time circumstances, elaborating characters, events, and actions, explaining why what happens, and predicting future events, states, actions, and outcomes. The reader monitors and evaluates characters, what happens to them, what they think, believe, prefer, and feel about these happenings, what they desire, what they do, and whether they succeed or fail. The focus of the reader on intentional action and harms and benefits represents the use of naive theories of rationality (see Rescher).

Works Cited


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Figure 1. Proportion of appraisals per sentence in each episodic category over the course of the narrative.
The Empirical Study of Literary Evaluation

1. The Evaluation of Literary Texts

In a previous article, I defended the claim that the Empirical Study of Literature should involve itself in descriptive studies and analyses of texts (see Van Peer 1995). I now wish to extend this claim by proposing that also the evaluation of literary texts can be studied in an empirical way.

When we say "evaluation," we enter the debate over the status and position of the literary canon. As we all know, the "canon wars" have raged for quite a while now in the Humanities, and most of the issues involved have not been resolved. I propose that some of the main oppositions in the debate may be summarized in the following claims.

1. Works of literature are included in the canon on the basis of
   1.1 The attribution of literary quality;
   1.2 Aesthetic properties of the texts.

2. The above acts of inclusion are subject to
   2.1 Political-ideological factors;
   2.2 Aesthetic factors.

3. The aim (and effect) of the literary canon is the
   3.1 Reproduction of social inequalities;
   3.2 Liberation from social inequalities.

As we can see, these are, in fact, empirical claims, and it is a sad thing that few empirically minded scholars have investigated the evidence pertaining to these theoretical "models." Perhaps some of the claims look so obviously true to empirical scholars — for instance claim 1.2 — that they think they need not put them to the test. But since there is no doubt that other scholars are suspicious of claim 1.2 and have a penchant for 1.1, I think that the decision not to test these ideas empirically is most regretful.

This, then, is one of the reasons I propose why we should study literary evaluation in an empirical way: because many of the claims made about it by

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literary scholars are in reality empirical claims and can be investigated as such. The Empirical Study of Literature is one of the few areas in literary scholarship where there is enough methodological awareness about the kind of evidence that is needed to settle such issues. Of course, my summary of the various claims is somewhat reductive and in dealing with them in our research we would do well to take into account a greater range of complexity and a higher level of sophistication than what I can present here.

That being said, however, I think there is value in discussing the previous claims, because in many debates about the literary canon they could act as underlying presuppositions. So what, then, is my own position? It is this: that of the above statements, 1.1 and 3.1 are false. Therefore, 1.2 and 3.2 are true. But if 3.2 is true, then 2.2 must be false, and hence 2.1 must be true. I recently defended this position (see Van Peer 1996), where I concentrated on claim number 3.1, as advanced by Barbara Herrnstein Smith. In her book, Herrnstein Smith asserts about the dominant classes in society: "since the texts that are selected and preserved by 'time' will always tend to be those which 'fit' (and indeed have often been designed to fit) their characteristic needs, interests, resources, and purposes, that testing mechanism has its own built-in partialities" (51).

Now, as I said before, this is an empirical claim, which can be subjected to a falsification procedure, to see how well it stands up against the empirical facts. This is what I set out to do.

2. Procedure

The search was for two literary works that were close to each other in terms of theme, plot, and subject matter, in their treatment of events as well as in the context of their production, but which nevertheless differed greatly in their ideological content. If claim 3.1 is correct, then the work that mirrored the prevailing ideology of the dominant groups at that time should have had more chances of ending up in the literary canon than the work that matched this ideology less perfectly, or that contradicted it. The case I selected was Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, which is almost certainly based on an earlier text, The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet, published in London in 1562 (some thirty years prior to Shakespeare's text) by Arthur Brooke, about whom we know next to nothing.

My comparison of the two texts led me to the conclusion that the texts by Shakespeare and Brooke are ideological opposites. In Shakespeare's text, authenticity of feelings overrides conformity to transient social norms and conventions. In Brooke's text, by contrast, strict adherence to such norms and conventions is propagated. Thus, an analysis of the ideological content should predict that Brooke's text, being so much more in line with the value system of
Elizabethan England, would end up in the canon, while Shakespeare's should have been condemned to oblivion. We know that this did not happen, and that of the two texts under consideration it was precisely the one that rejected the dominant ideology of its time that was accepted into the literary canon. The case unambiguously falsifies claim 3.1 and presents evidence in favor of 3.2.

A limitation of my analysis was that it was largely carried out intuitively. My conclusions were based on a description and analysis of the texts along traditional lines of inquiry in literary analysis. Although in such analyses one tries to be as fair and as objective as one can be, it is always possible that one "reads into" the text things that are not there, precisely as proposition 1.1 asserts. Thus, the question presented itself whether more independent procedures for empirically testing my conclusion about the different ideological content of both texts could be developed. For instance, would a computer analysis yield results similar to or different from mine?

In order to answer this question both texts were needed in an electronic format. This could be obtained easily enough for Shakespeare's text; but there were no electronic copies of the Brooke text available. Consequently, I developed an electronic version of the Brooke text myself. Next, a computer program able to do the job was needed. I chose the Harvard III Psychosociological Dictionary, which allows the categorization of 80 to 90 percent of all content words in a text, according to a number of domains. I have used the version of this dictionary as provided by the computer program ALEXIS (developed by Colin Martindale, Robert Hogenraad, and Dean McKenzie). The program will scan a text and give you the number of occurrences (of words) for each of the domains.

3. Individual vs. Collective

One such domain relevant to my concerns is the domain called social realm. It contains three further categories: persons, roles, and collectivities. If my earlier observations were correct, the computer program should yield higher frequencies for the category persons in Shakespeare's text, but lower ones for the categories roles and collectivities, while the opposite should hold for Brooke's text. The rationale for this prediction is that in Shakespeare's drama the emphasis is on personal values and on the individual involvement of the two lovers, while their roles in their families are relevant only insofar as they form an obstacle to their love. In Brooke's version, by contrast, my earlier analysis had revealed a far greater emphasis on the social roles the protagonists, as members of their families and the collective ideology, have to play. The results of the computer analysis are to be found in Table 1 below.

I have used capital letters throughout to denote categories isolated by the computer program.
Table 1
Percentage of Word Frequencies in the Domain of "Social Realm"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>SHAKESPEARE</th>
<th>BROOKE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PERSONS</td>
<td>10.58</td>
<td>5.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROLES</td>
<td>5.99</td>
<td>8.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLLECTIVITIES</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( \chi^2 = 490.17 ; p < .005 \)

As can be seen, the category of collectivities scores very low and does not discriminate between the two texts. For persons, however, the difference is large and in the predicted direction. The same goes for roles: here, as predicted, it is the Brooke text which scores highest. As the \( \chi^2 \) test reveals, the differences are unlikely to be the product of chance. Here, then, we have a first corroboration of the results that the my intuitive analysis had yielded before. Part of the central message of Shakespeare's text refers to the singular value that persons in a love relationship occupy and the primacy of persons over their conformity to the social group they belong to. This is indeed detected by the program and the systematic differences between the two textual versions, as picked up by a more traditional text analysis, return rather unambiguously in the results generated by a computer analysis.

4. Male vs. Female Roles

The *Harvard Psycho-sociological Dictionary* also has some further subcategories for roles, i.e., male, female, neutral, and job roles. The latter two are irrelevant to our present investigation, but the former two can be linked to traditional text analysis. There it was found that in Shakespeare's text Juliet plays a much more prominent role than in Brooke's version: she is quite a match for Romeo's advances (e.g., I, v, 96-105) and regularly takes the lead in psychological action (e.g., in II, ii, 43-49; II, ii, 109-111, 113 and 118), while on another occasion (I, v, 109) she cuts Romeo down to size and reproaches him for his adherence to social conventions and empty rituals. If that analysis holds, it should be reflected in lower frequencies for (traditional) female roles in Shakespeare's text — and higher ones for male ones — while the frequencies for both categories should be higher for Brooke's text, which portrays both protagonists as more conventional. Of course, we should also take into account that the two lovers are not the only male and female characters. One could argue, for instance, that in Shakespeare's play the Nurse does not really adhere very much to a female role. However, it seems more difficult to give such a view a solid underpinning. At the same time, one could argue that the character of Mercutio is also deviant in a number of respects, so that male and female deviance in non-protagonist characters may

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2 Since the numbers in Table 1 are percentages, barring the application of the \( \chi^2 \) statistic, the calculation was made on the basis of the number of words for the various categories in the total text. The same applies to all subsequent statistics.
cancel each other out. It may be significant that no such obvious deviations from traditional roles emerge from a reading of Brooke's text.

Table 2 below summarizes the results of the computer analysis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SHAKESPEARE</th>
<th>BROOKE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>4.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( \chi^2 = 53.16; p < .005 \)

Again, the results are quite clear: all predicted relations are corroborated. Both male and female roles have higher frequencies in the Brooke text, although it should be admitted that here, too, the female characters are less stereotypical than the male ones. The distribution is such that the lowest frequency, that of female roles, is still above the highest frequency for the male roles in Shakespeare's text, making the overall difference quite outspoken — the result of the \( \chi^2 \) test bears this out. Second, the roles are significantly less conventional in Shakespeare's text than the male ones, exactly as the traditional text analysis had observed.

The analysis also revealed that in Shakespeare's text Juliet's role becomes more salient as the play progresses and that her adherence to the female role model diminishes as the text goes by. Romeo similarly undergoes some change in the course of the play and his behavior may be interpreted as less and less male oriented. In Act III, scene i, after Mercutio has been slain by Tybalt, he even exclaims in desperation:

O sweet Juliet,
Thy beauty hath made me effeminate
And in my temper soften'd valour's steel. (115-17)

In Brooke's text, by contrast, no such pattern in Romeus's behavior could be detected.

To test whether there were more objective indications for this view, I ran the program for role again, this time for each of the five acts separately. I divided the Brooke text in five equal parts and ran the same program over each of these parts. The results of the analysis are found in Figure 1 (see Appendix).

As can be seen, the top of the graph is consistently taken up by characters in the Brooke text, attesting to its superior traditional role descriptions. Second, the male characters in Brooke are generally described as more traditional than the female ones, who occupy an interesting low point in the middle part, approaching the female profile in Shakespeare's text. The latter's position is lowest all
through the play, with that of the male characters occupying a middle position, but constantly below that of male characters in Brooke. More importantly, there is a pattern of antagonism in the development of male and female characters over the five different parts in Brooke, indicated by the lines moving out of phase. By contrast, the lines representing characters in Shakespeare's text do drop somewhat over the course of time, evincing a decrease in conformity to traditional role models, especially in the case of Juliet, as had been predicted.

5. Male vs. Female Theme

So far, the results have shown straightforward evidence for the claims made in the more traditional approach to the texts. However, we would like to have some data on the validity of the computer analysis. If the instrument is prone to mono-method bias, we would have less reason to trust the evidence gathered so far. Note that threats to validity do not come from sampling errors in this case, since we have in effect screened the whole population (i.e., all words in both texts). Hence the major threat has to come from bias in the method of analysis employed. In an effort to overcome this methodological problem, a similar analysis was run with another program that ALEXIS offered, i.e., the Regressive Imagery Dictionary (RID; as developed by Martindale [1975, 1990]), the construct validity of which has been demonstrated in studies such as Martindale (1977) and West, Martindale, Hines and Roth (1983). This program likewise consists of a dictionary with thematic categories. It establishes the degree to which a text displays Primary Process Thinking and Secondary Process Thinking, as proposed by Martindale (1981, 1991) and Dorpat and Miller. As a by-product of this analysis, the program also records words falling in several other categories, among which are located the male theme and the female theme. The results of this analysis were extracted to be matched to those of Figure 1 (see Appendix). The procedure was the same as in the previous analysis. Table 3 summarizes the results:

Table 3
Percentage of Word Frequencies for "Male" and "Female" Theme According to the RID

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SHAKESPEARE MALE</th>
<th>SHAKESPEARE FEMALE</th>
<th>BROOKE MALE</th>
<th>BROOKE FEMALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Segment 1</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segment 2</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segment 3</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>1.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segment 4</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>5.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segment 5</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

($\chi^2 = 1213.59; p < .005$)
Here, the same pattern as before emerges: most top values are to be found in the Brooke text, with the male and female theme again being out of phase, perhaps indicating some antagonistic movements of the sexes. Moreover, the female theme in Shakespeare almost always shows the lowest values, while both male and female themes decrease slightly in value over the course of the text. In general, then, the results of this analysis support the conclusions drawn from the one carried out with the *Harvard Psycho-sociological Dictionary*. Both results point in the direction of a higher traditional role model functioning in Brooke’s text, which therefore make it appear as ideologically more conservative. The development of male and female role models seems to be one of decreasing conformity to such conservative forces in the course of the development of Shakespeare’s play, while the model in Brooke seems to be one in which the sexes move in opposite directions.

6. Discussion

The data presented here may perhaps not explain why Shakespeare’s text is in the canon, but it does throw some light on Herrnstein Smith’s claim that texts are selected on their closeness to ideologically prevailing views. Clearly that claim, i.e., 2.1, has been falsified by the computer analyses. However, we now have a problem, for earlier in this article I claimed that 2.1 must be false — because 2.2 must be true if one accepts 3.2 as true. How are we to solve this problem? Basically, my argument is that the claims presented under 2 are not really exclusive, and that the subclaims falsely create an impression of opposition which is, however, without basis in reality. Why would aesthetic values have to oppose political ones (or vice versa)? Is it not conceivable, for instance, that political views are presented in a more persuasive way when they are "wrapped" in aesthetically pleasing formulations? Roman Jakobson’s famous example "I like Ike" comes to mind immediately. Or why would anything made with an aesthetic purpose, such as works of art, fail to link up with the world at large, with human concerns and political issues? The dichotomy that is often presented in a form resembling claims 2.1 and 2.2 rests on a misunderstood or misrepresented relation between two aspects of artistic works which emphasize different experiential dimensions of life, but which need not conflict with each other. In the case of Shakespeare, it is obvious that many of his plays revolve around matters that are undeniably political in nature, yet are formulated in language that is distinctly aesthetic. Thus, the question remains: why is it that ultimately more readers and spectators, more actors and directors have turned to Shakespeare’s text and not to Brooke’s? Obviously the data presented here do not permit a causal reconstruction of such a process, and the thesis submitted here has all the

3 For a similar — and much more elaborate — argumentation, see Carroll (1993).
shortcomings of being tentative. Yet it would seem difficult to deny the extent to which both texts differ in their ideological alignment.\(^4\) Apparently, there is a strong preference, at least in Western cultures over the past four centuries, for texts in which heterosexual love relations are depicted as centered around individual, not collective, values. There is good empirical evidence, provided by Hofstede that cultures usually differ in their preferences on an "individual"/"collective" dimension, and that most (present-day) Western cultures are significantly more often situated on the individualistic side of the scale.

It could be reasonably argued that this state of affairs in Western countries is a result of cultural and political processes that have been set in motion since the Renaissance and have been intensified since the Enlightenment. At least some of Shakespeare's dramas take part in shaping the new awareness of the individualistic ethic, and *Romeo and Juliet* certainly is one of them. The content of the play was hardly new, and Arthur Brooke's version was but one of many Elizabethan adaptations of what was originally an Italian novella by Bandello. Yet, the way Shakespeare shaped this material anew makes it run an entirely different course. The tension between individualistic and collective values is now painted with a deep sympathy for the authenticity of individual commitment and responsibility. A political view this undoubtedly is, but it certainly went against the grain of the prevailing ideology of the time.

The present investigation has some obvious shortcomings. It deals with only one case, for instance. The only conclusion it allows is a falsification of the claim of Herrnstein Smith, especially with regard to the word "always" in the passage I quoted from her book. The present article establishes that it is possible for texts to become canonical in spite of their political incorrectness at their time of production. Whether this is generally the case remains to be seen, and certainly requires more investigations along this line. The initial difficulty exists in finding pairs of texts that allow a comparison of the kind carried out here. Difficulty, however, is not impossibility — so there is no reason why not to embark on such an investigation. Other analyses may be carried out, and I certainly have not exhausted the possibilities that current computer programs may offer. With the increasing power of such programs, and the ever greater availability of texts in electronic form, there may be good reason to systematically carry out such textual analyses. The greatest challenge awaiting us here is not electronics, but the development of insights and hypotheses that may be put to the test. In that respect, we have not even begun to think about literary evaluation from an empirical perspective.\(^5\)

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\(^4\) I would venture that the two texts also differ dramatically in their aesthetic achievement; see Van Peer (1996) for further arguments.

\(^5\) In this respect, I would like to recommend the work by Harald Fricke as an excellent starting point; see especially 147-67.
Works Cited


Appendix

SHAKESPEARE

--- : Male
--- : Female

BROOKE

Δ : Male
○ : Female
Reading and Literary Landscapes: Experience and Action from Self-Oriented and Spectator Perspectives

1. Introduction

Reader reception processes reflect an interaction of text properties and the set, attitudes, or goals of the reader. Bruner has distinguished two kinds of text properties; the "landscape of consciousness" and the "landscape of action." The former focuses on what actors "know, think, or feel" and the latter concerns "story grammar" and addresses "agent, intention, or goal, situation, instrument" (14). Cupchik and László used a comparable distinction in their research on responses to two texts that represented the protagonist's "experience" and two others that focused on unfolding "action." The findings generally favored the experience of texts which were liked more, and judged to be more emotionally intense, interesting, richer in meaning about life, and more difficult to understand in comparison with action texts. Personal relevance mediated the reading process with experiential texts being read more slowly and action texts being read more quickly. A second study contrasted the effects of passages from James Joyce that involved explicit emotional themes with others involving descriptively dense passages (see Cupchik, Oatley, and Vorderer). Emotionally loaded passages were more potent than descriptive passages at eliciting intensely pleasant emotions, and emotional memories. These studies show that experientially and emotionally loaded texts engage readers in different ways than do action and descriptively oriented texts.

The sets or attitudes with which readers approach texts can also have powerful effects on the reading process. Reception researchers have been particularly interested in how best to characterize relations between readers or viewers and characters in literature, drama (see Zillmann 1991) and television (see Vorderer). The traditional psychodynamic view holds that audience members identify with characters that enable them to feel more powerful, at least temporarily, or with events that provide an opportunity to vent pent up emotion (see Scheff). With regard to audience response to film and television, some scholars have argued against the psychodynamically loaded notion of identification and, instead,
described the viewer of a film as a "witness" who feels empathy toward a sympathetic protagonist and experiences hopes and fears in accordance with the unfolding action (see Zillmann; Tan; Vorderer, Wulff, and Friedrichsen). The identification and sympathetic witness concepts lie along a dimension that ranges from total absorption in a text or character to a kind of sympathy from a safe "aesthetic" distance. Presumably, further along this dimension lies a wholly subjective response that may be triggered by the text but is very much focused on the reader/viewer. Thus, a contrast can be drawn between the kind of absorption in a text typically associated with "identification" and a focus on the self typical of detachment; these are the two poles of aesthetic distance.

In the Cupchik and László study, readers were instructed "to identify with the characters and focus on what they may think or feel" or to focus on the outcome, "what the characters are doing and how the story will end." These identification and outcome or action oriented sets enhanced the readers' absorption in the texts (as indicated by a slower rate of reading) depending on how they were perceived. Identifying with characters increased absorption for passages that were "rich in meaning about life," while focusing on action enhanced involvement for passages that "evoked images." A clear contrast between identification and sympathetic witness sets was examined in the later study (Cupchik, Oatley, and Vorderer). In the identification set, subjects were asked to "imagine yourself to be" and "feel what it is like to be the protagonist," while, under a "witness" set, subjects were instructed to "be a spectator" and feel "sympathy" for the protagonist. Results showed that being a spectator to emotional scenes encouraged self absorption as reflected in subjective emotional experiences and pleasant personal memories. In contrast, identifying with characters in descriptively rich passages made readers more responsive to descriptive and connotative language in the texts and evoked fresh emotions without personal historical content.

The findings of the experiments discussed above suggest that subjects can be responsive to texts and characters or digress into their own personal experiences. People can experience emotions because, as social beings, they feel empathic toward a character in a text or on the screen. Alternatively, people can experience emotions because they focus on themselves, recalling personal experiences or applying what they see or read to their own lives. This is equivalent to a distinction between what could be called the ego-emotional versus the socio-emotional dimension of aesthetic involvement. An ego or self-orientation would favor positive emotions, while the socio-emotional or sympathetic spectator orientation would be open to negative emotions as well.

The present study was more explicit in encouraging subjects to be either sympathetic toward the main character or self-oriented in the way they approached the reading episodes. In the Sympathetic Spectator condition, subjects were instructed to focus on the main character's circumstances, experiences, and actions, as well as on the outcome, while in the Self-Oriented condition, subjects
were asked to focus on their own personal reactions and responses. These modes of reading were applied to the experience and action loaded texts used in the study by Cupchik and László. Would the two modes of reading interact with text type to modulate perceptions of the text (complexity, richness of meaning, liking and knowledge of the main character) and personal responses (experiences of involvement and suspense, desire to continue reading, and personal meaningfulness)?

2. **Experiment 1**

2.1 **Method**

2.1.1 **Subjects and Design**

Forty-eight undergraduates at the University of Toronto, including an equal number of males and females, participated as part of a course requirement in Introductory Psychology. The between-subjects variable was gender and the within-subjects variables were story type (Action, Experience) and reading mode (Sympathetic Spectator, Self-Oriented). Story type and reading mode were counterbalanced with order (Forward, Backward), yielding 8 subject groups to which 3 males and 3 females were assigned.

2.1.2 **Procedure**

All subjects were run individually. Depending on the assigned group, subjects were given booklets with instructional sets indicating how to approach the story and the main protagonist. Under the Sympathetic Spectator condition, subjects were instructed to "focus on the experiences and actions of the main character, his or her circumstances, and what happens to the character." Under the Self-Oriented condition, subjects were told to focus on themselves "in relation to what is happening in the story" and to "be aware of his or her own reactions and personal responses."

The short story excerpts were divided into three equal segments and subjects paused after each segment to rate how involved they were in the story, as well as how suspenseful and rich in meaning they found the segment. After reading each complete short story excerpt, subjects indicated how much they would like to continue reading the story, how personally meaningful the story was to them, how much they liked the main character, how complex they felt the story was, and how well they thought they knew the main character. A 7-point scale was used for all ratings with 1 indicating a low rating and 7 a high rating.

2.2 **Materials**

The literary texts — the same as in the study by Cupchik and László — were approximately two page long excerpts (about 400 words on average) from four short stories, two by Margaret Atwood ("The Salt Garden" and "Hurricane
Hazel") and two by Alistair McLeod ("Grandmother" and "Scott"). Two texts focused on the description of physical Action ("Hurricane Hazel" and "Scott"). The two Experience texts focused on the character's experiences, thoughts, and emotions ("The Salt Garden" and "Grandmother"). The following segments from Atwood's "Hurricane Hazel" (Action text) and from "The Salt Garden" (Experience text) give an impression of the differences between the text types:

I was supposed to be going out with Buddy, but at the dinner table my father said that I should reconsider: Toronto was about to be hit by a major storm, a hurricane, with torrential rain and gale-force winds, and he didn't think I should be out in it, especially in a car like Buddy's. It was already dark: the rain was pelting against the windows behind our drawn curtains, and the wind was up and roaring like breakers in the ash trees outside. I could feel our house growing smaller. ("Hurricane Hazel," Action text)

Alma steps into the elevator and is carried up. Weightlessness encloses her. It's a luxury; her whole life is a luxury. Theo, opening the door for her is a luxury, especially his skin, which is smooth and well-fed and darker than hers, which comes of his being part Greek, a generation or two back, and which smells of brisk sweetish chemicals. Theo amazes her, she loves him so much she can barely see him. Love burns her out; it burns out Theo's features so that all she can see in the dimmed apartment is an outline, shining. She's not on the wave, she's in it, warm and fluid. This is what she wants. They don't get as far as the bedroom, but collapse onto the living-room rug, where Theo makes love to her as if he's running for a train he's never going to catch. ("The Salt Garden," Experience text)

2.3 Results

Analyses of variance were performed treating type of text (Experience, Action), mode of reading (Sympathetic Spectator, Self-Oriented), and reading segment (3 segments) as within-subjects variables, and gender as a between-subjects variable for ratings of richness of meaning, suspense, and involvement that were performed after reading each of the three segments. Analyses of variance were also performed without the segments variable for ratings given at the end of each short story excerpt on five scales measuring desire to continue reading, complexity and personal meaningfulness of the excerpt, as well as liking and knowledge of the main character.

Significant main effects were found for richness of meaning, $F(1, 46) = 14.35, p < .001$, and Involvement, $F(1, 46) = 8.95, p < .01$, in the repeated measures ANOVA (see Table 1, Appendix). Subjects found the Experience texts to be richer in meaning and more involving than the action texts. Significant main effects were also found for the measures of complexity, $F(1, 46) = 18.93, p < .001$, desire to continue reading, $F(1, 46) = 6.88, P < .05$, and liking of the main character, $F(1, 46) = 6.79, p < .05$. The data in Table 1 (see Appendix) show that subjects liked the main characters more and wanted to continue reading the Experience excerpts that they found more complex than the Action texts. These results replicate those obtained in the Cupchik and László experiment.
where the Experience texts were found to be richer in meaning, more difficult to understand, and liked more than the actions texts. No significant effects were found for the set manipulation, which may reflect a fatigue effect as this experiment was run immediately after the second experiment described above (see Cupchik, Oatley, and Vorderer). Having to shift between reading sets may have become tiring for readers.

3. Experiment 2

3.1 Method

3.1.1 Subjects, Design, and Materials
Sixty subjects, 30 females and 30 males, all students at the University of Music and Theatre in Hannover, Germany, participated in the experiment. Type of Text was a within-subjects variable with the mode of reading and gender treated as between-subjects variables. The short story excerpts were translated into German.

3.2 Procedure
All subjects were run individually. Depending on the assigned group, subjects were given the same booklets as in Experiment 1 translated into German. Subjects rated the short story excerpts on a series of 7-point scales. In contrast to Experiment 1, ratings were not given at the end of the three segments in each short story excerpt. The same instructional sets were used in Experiment 2. Subjects were instructed to "focus on the experiences and actions of the main character, his or her circumstances, and what happens to the character" (Sympathetic Spectator condition) or were told to focus on themselves "in relation to what is happening in the story" and to "be aware of his or her own reactions and personal responses" (Self-Oriented condition).

3.3 Results
Analyses of variance were performed treating type of text (Experience, Action) as a within-subjects variable, with mode of reading (Sympathetic Spectator, Self-Oriented) and gender as between-subjects variables. Subjects found the Experience texts to be more involving, $F(1, 56) = 5.39, p < .05$, and Liked the main characters more, $F(1, 56) = 8.83, p < .05$, than in the Action texts. This replicates the findings of Experiment 1. Significant interactions of type of text and mode of reading were found for four of the dependent measures: motivation to continue reading, $F(1, 56) = 4.27, p < .05$, personal meaningfulness of the text, $F(1, 56) = 4.35, p < .05$, knowledge of the main character, $F(1, 56) = 10.35, p < .01$, and suspensefulness of the text, $F(1, 56) = 7.09, p < .01$. 
The results in Figure 1 (see Appendix) reveal that encountering Experience texts from a self-oriented viewpoint motivated subjects to continue reading. Personal meaningfulness was highest when subjects read the Experience texts from a Self-Oriented vantage point (see Figure 2; Appendix). Together these results show that reading is stimulated when subjects are encouraged to resonate subjectively to texts that describe the experiences of characters.

As illustrated in Figure 2 (see Appendix), subjects felt that they knew the main character least when they read the Action texts from a Self-Oriented vantage point (see Figure 3; Appendix). This finding is consistent with the idea that Action texts provide less information about the internal experiences of characters and that focusing on the self makes the reader less tuned to the main character. It is therefore not surprising that readers would feel that they know the main character less under these circumstances.

Adopting the perspective of a Sympathetic Spectator modulated the experience of suspense in response to the two types of text. Suspense was lowest when subjects read Experience short story excerpts as Sympathetic Spectators (see Figure 4; Appendix). Focusing on the main protagonist's experiences distracts the reader from the unfolding plot, thereby reducing the experience of suspense. On the other hand, focusing on one's own emotional experiences maintains a level of suspense regardless of text properties.

4. Discussion

The results of the two experiments clearly show the evocative and absorbing qualities of the Experience compared with the Action passages. They were perceived to be more complex and richer in meaning than the Action passages. This was further reflected in the fact that subjects felt more involved, liked the main characters more, and wanted to continue reading the Experience loaded passages. But it was the interaction of mode of reading with text type in Experiment 2, where it was the Experience texts in particular that provided the highlight of the research project. When subjects focused on their own reactions to the Experience texts, they found them more personally meaningful and wanted to continue reading. Not surprisingly, when subjects were Self-Oriented they had less knowledge of the main characters in the Action passages which described unfolding events rather than the experiences of the protagonists. An unexpected finding was also obtained to the effect that acting as a Sympathetic Spectator toward characters in the Experience passages reduced suspense. Focusing on the experiences of characters would appear to distract attention from the "landscape of action" and thereby reduce the experience of uncertainty and the resulting suspense.

What do these experiments tell us about how modes of reading mediate responses to different kinds of texts? Of course texts embody information about the experiences of characters as well as about storyline and outcomes, with just
the relative proportions varying. The experiences of characters in different situations provide something to which readers can resonate, while uncertainty about where a story is headed absorbs the reader in a desire to know how events will resolve. But the way that readers approach the text will govern the nature of their responses. A primary concern for the correct appreciation of a text will lead readers into the kind of empirical detachment characteristic of New Criticism. But if the text is seen from the outset as indeterminate (sensu Iser) and the polyvalence convention applies (sensu Groeben; Schmidt), then readers play an important role in the search for interpretive meaning. Barthes has described how readers find meaning in modern "writerly" texts which are indeterminate and therefore subject to multiple interpretations.

In conclusion, while much of the current debate about reader relations to the text have focused on "identification," this study showed the powerful effects of having readers focus on themselves. When readers are instructed to identify with characters in a story they can see situations through the eyes of the protagonist and are responsive to the evocative and descriptive qualities of the text (see Cupchik, Oatley, and Vorderer). Scheff has argued cogently that readers will spontaneously experience "identification" and related catharsis of emotion when the episode is reminiscent of events from their own lives. However, when selecting stimulus materials for use in a study, it is difficult to ensure that the narratives will be evocative for all readers. The important point is not the act of identification, but rather, the subjective experience of resonance with the text. For this reason, asking subjects to focus on their own emotional reactions provided clear support for the notion of reader as author in the sense that personal meaningfulness governed the desire to continue reading and actually prompted readers to step back from the text and digress into their own lives.

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Table 1. Scale Ratings of Experience and Action Texts

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<tr>
<th>TEXT TYPE</th>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rich in meaning</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>3.86  ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involved</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>4.10  **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>3.07  *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to read</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>4.14  *</td>
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<tr>
<td>Like the main character</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>4.20  *</td>
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Experiment 2

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<td>Involved</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>3.48  *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like the main character</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>3.58  **</td>
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</table>

* p < .05
** p < .01
*** p < .001
Figure 1. How much would you like to continue reading?

- Action-text
- Experience-text

Self-Oriented vs. Sympathetic Spectator

5.0
4.8
4.6
4.4
4.2
4.0
3.8
3.6
3.4
3.2
3.0

Self-Oriented

Sympathetic Spectator
Figure 2. How personally meaningful is this story to you?

- Action-text
- Experience-text

Self-Oriented  Sympathetic Spectator
Figure 3. How well do you think you know the main character?

- Action-text
- Experience-text
Figure 4. How suspenseful do you find this story?
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY
A Selected Bibliography of Works in The Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature and Culture

This bibliography contains works following the theoretical and methodological premises and postulates established in Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of the Literary Field (champ littéraire), Itamar Even-Zohar's Polysystem Theory, Niklas Luhmann's Systems Theory when applied to literature, and Siegfried J. Schmidt's Empirical Study of Literature (Empirische Literaturwissenschaft). Selected seminal works of Jacques Dubois's conceptually related Theory of the Literary Institution (l'institution littéraire) are also included. Based on their conceptual affinities and similarities, I designated these approaches in English as The Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature and Culture (1993-). The bibliography is aimed at the English-language and principally North American literary scholarship where these approaches are less known but now emerging (on the North American theoretical landscape, perhaps the "contextual" approach comes closest to the postulates of these frameworks). The bibliography is tightly selected in order to provide a basic corpus of works for scholars not familiar with these approaches to literary study. It comprises principally theoretical and meta-theoretical studies while applications of the frameworks are excluded. However, selected works, where a substantial amount of theoretical discussion precedes an application, are included. Attention has also been paid to balance important early works of the approaches with those published more recently. The bibliography contains works published in English, French, and German only. However, it should be noted that there exists a large corpus of works in Dutch-, Swedish-, Russian-, Hungarian-, Spanish, Portuguese-, etc., as well as, in smaller numbers, in Japanese-, Bulgarian-, Korean-, Czech- and Slovak-, Chinese-, Italian-, Romanian-, etc., language scholarship.

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