Book of abstracts (April 8th)

International Association of Literary Semantics (IALS) 8

University of Iceland, Reykjavík
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The Wor(l)ds in Climate Change Fiction: Immersive and Political Effects
Jan Alber, RWTH Aachen University, Germany

This paper presents the results of a pilot study of an empirical investigation that seeks to determine how the words and worlds in climate change fiction impact on readers. More specifically, it looks at the connection between absorption and the recipients' subjective belief in behavioral consequences. The paper argues that climate change fiction is particularly immersive if the represented world is realist (as opposed to estranging) and includes the possibility of hope (as opposed to hopelessness). Also, the more immersive the narrative, the higher the likelihood that readers will believe in subsequent political action or other forms of engaged citizenship.

Wor(l)ds of illness and disability: (De)familiarization and the representation of changed bodies, selves and perceptions in (auto)biographical medical narratives
Catherine Emmott, University of Glasgow, Scotland

Accounts of serious illness and disability often refer to the idea that traumatic bodily changes prompt radically altered perceptions of an individual’s self and the world (e.g. Carel 2016). I examine (auto)biographical works which aim to represent medical conditions which are largely beyond the ordinary comprehension of those without experience of these conditions and hence are difficult to explain in everyday words. Illness/disability autobiographies and medical case studies can illustrate defamiliarization (Shklovsky 2012 [1965]) because, during serious illness, those who are ill may view their own bodies in an entirely different way from normal and see even the most mundane aspects of the world around them differently. Extended narratives enable readers to at least partially enter the world of the ill and disabled and potentially empathise with them. Hence, these narratives also offer a process of familiarization with a different experiential world. Some accounts of illnesses and disabilities may specifically aim to educate readers about highly unusual medical conditions, so that, for example, unfamiliar sensory experiences or deficits become more familiar to the readers.

In this talk, I will build on my previous work on illness and disability narratives (e.g. Emmott 2002, Emmott & Alexander 2014). I will look particularly at neurological illnesses and disabilities, as discussed in published autobiographical accounts, as well as phenomenological biographical studies by doctors. I will use stylistic analysis to examine the inter-weaving of experiential descriptions and medical details which together aim to explain altered engagement with the world. My interest is particularly in how experiences of paralysis and sensory impairments (e.g. loss of the so-called “sixth sense”, proprioception) are conveyed in these narratives, even though these experiences may be difficult or almost impossible to communicate. Current cognitive literary and linguistic theories place considerable emphasis on how metaphors have an embodied dimension, but how is metaphorical language used to describe experiences of illnesses and disabilities which involve “disembodiment” (e.g. Cole 2016)?
Programmed wor(l)ds: Writing your way into a virtual dimension
Hannes Högni Vilhjálmsson, University of Reykjavík, Iceland

The computer sits there, waiting for instructions. We write something, in a language the computer understands, and feed it to the hungry machine. What happens next may feel like magic: A portal opens into a world governed by the simulation we have set in motion. What we write, defines the rules of that simulation. What exists in that world, was written by us. And now, with the latest advances in virtual reality technology, we can step into that world ourselves. Perceive it as real and be part of it. Anything is possible. Why would we ever leave?
A Review of the Validity of the Sapir–Whorf Hypothesis, Using an African Drama as a Case Study

Temitope Adekunle, Durban University of Technology, South Africa

This research assessed the validity of the Sapir Whorf hypothesis in relation to the linguistic and cultural notions of Yoruba and isiZulu language speakers (of Nigeria and South Africa respectively) via the evaluation of the culture enriched drama text *The Lion* and *The Jewel* by Wole Soyinka. The study queried both the hypothesis’ *strong* version, (language governs thought: linguistic classifications restrain and influence mental classifications); and its *weak* version, (linguistic classifications and their use influence thought as well as some other classes of non-linguistic activities). Participants were purposively selected and their ages ranged from 16-46 years. Thirty-eight participants (18 Yoruba and 20 isiZulu speaking) were selected for the study from the Durban University of Technology (DUT). They all speak both English and Zulu (isiZulu speaking participants) and English and Yoruba (Yoruba participants). The mixed methods approach was used to collect data. With the use of open-ended questionnaire and interviews and a thematic analysis of the responses, some of the findings provided partial support for the validity of the linguistic relativity hypothesis. Findings also revealed that linguistic influence on cognition is not limited to different language users, but same language speakers- per level of exposure to other languages and concepts.

The meaning of form: Icelandic alliteration

Kristján Árnason, University of Iceland, Reykjavik

Alliteration has played an important role in Icelandic poetry from the very beginning. Already in the middle ages the use of alliteration was to some extent symbolic, as reflected in the reverence with which the staves are treated by the medieval scholars, but it still had a formal function of signalling constituent structure in poetic texts. This is emphasised by Snorri Sturluson in his Edda and Ólafr Þórðarson in his third grammatical treatise, and it had a connection to rhythm in Eddic poetry, and to some extent in skaldic verse as well. When new poetic genres developed, borrowing foreign metrical forms, alliteration was applied as a matter of course, but the connection to rhythm became looser as time passed on.

In modernist 20th century, regular rhythm and rhyme were abandoned in much of serious poetry with the advent of free verse, and a new genre developed in lyrics to popular music. In both cases, the resilience of alliteration has proven to be remarkable: many poets use alliteration in their free verse, and the same goes for writers of popular lyrics. The function of alliteration in these genres seems to be mainly symbolic. The Icelandic culture still identified itself, and in that context alliteration came to serve a broad, symbolic function as a part of poetic style. For many 20th century poets, alliteration is part and parcel of writing poetry irrespective of other formal features, and it is commonly used in lyrics of popular music. The two functions described above, the formal one, which follows stringent rules regarding the placing and number of the alliterating staves, and the symbolic one, which some poets take as an obligation, following the heritage, have limited the use of free alliteration as an expressive tool, conveying extra meaning, as in many other cultures. It seems that some changes may be under way in poetry from the 21st century. Poets sometimes follow the tradition and adhere to the formal restrictions, but sometimes the rules are ignored totally, which may be opening the way for expressive use of alliteration.
Children’s Fiction as a Polydiscourse
Elena Beloglazova, St.Petersburg State University of Economics, Russia

Children’s fiction is viewed as a key instrument of socialization at the society disposal: few of us live to read about social science, while normally the majority of us are exposed as children to the default corpus of literature, which is endowed with the task of forming our worldview – the ideas, ideals and values fundamental to the society and imposed on each of its members-to-be.

The author argues that the ideological aim of the addressee socialization results in a peculiar discourse structure of children’s fiction, which comes to include elements of a relatively stable set of discourses. Being ideologically conditioned, this set of discourses is regularly reproduced in the newly created texts of children’s fiction forming its polydiscourse (CFPD).

In understanding discourse, the author follows the French school of discourse analysis, rooted in M. Foucault’s socio-ideological theory of discourse [1]. Another key notion underlying the research is that of addressee, that is the “Model Reader” of U. Eco [2], the “Other” of M. Bakhtin [3] representing the end of the communicative chain subject to exposure to discourse. This CFPD is characterized by certain features:

1. Its structure is conditioned by ideology, i.e. the dominant pedagogical doctrine.
2. Its composition consists of two major discursive blocks: (a) appealing to the adult educator and (b) appealing to the child reader. This reflects the dual nature of the children’s fiction addressee, including both the adults selecting books and their young audience.
3. Being relatively stable, it demonstrates variation in space and time, which proves its direct link with the society’s dominant ideology. The discursive composition varies from culture to culture and from epoch to epoch.
4. It also varies depending on the age of the child addressee: both the set of discourses and their presentation is conditioned by the interests and capabilities of the readership.

The discursive approach reveals the fundamental nature of children’s fiction, which falls into a certain schema (a principle first identified by V. Propp for folktales [4]). At the same time it vividly demonstrates the uniqueness of cultural literary schools and their evolution.


Human internal organs as a possible and textual world
Natalia Belozerova, University of Tyumen, Russia

Ever since Shakespeare had sent a fat king to go a progress through the guts of a lean beggar (W.Shakespeare. Hamlet. Act IV, sc.II) human internal organs started to serve as a textual locus in fiction and non-fiction, or a subject in a possible world. Their presentation varies
depending upon the purpose, the form and the style of writing, semiotic modalities of their exposition, as well as the epistemological development of knowledge. These varieties come under the umbrella property known as “the possibility of the impossible” (J.Joyce). In such possible world a cat can walk in the brain as if it were his apartments (Ch.Baudlaire, “Le Chat), or together with children travel through the whole system of human internal organs (Carol Donner. The Magic Anatomy Book), or a concerto could be designed for neurons and synapses (Manoucher Parvin. Out of the Gray: “A Concerto for Neurons and Synapses”). In scientific articles, a textual world takes the form of topographic maps and models, including semantic distribution (Huth et al. “Natural Speech Reveals the Semantic Maps that Tile Human Cerebral Cortex, Nature 2016). With this in the mind, we state the purpose for this paper to classify the types of textual “chronotops” (in a Bakhtinian sense) that characterize fictional and nonfictional loci of human internal organs. We also aim at stating the type of dependences that provide narrative shapes to a possible world inside a human body. For the analyses we attract among others M. Bahtin’s theories of the “carnival poetics” and “Chronotop”, and Yu. Lotmon’s theories of “semiotic textualization” and “semantic intersection”.

We state as our hypotheses that a blend of epistemological knowledge, personal involvement of the authors into any sort of scientific experiment and an educational goal determine the type of the deixis or “chronotop”, the major semiotic modality being “SAVOIR”-TO KNOW (in the Greimasian sense).


Eat Me - A Confusion of Appetites: What Metaphors of Cannibalism could say about our Emotions

Nora Bentler, University College Roosevelt, Utrecht University, Netherlands

Strangely, the idioms “I could just eat you up” and “I swallow people like you for breakfast” mean two very different things, namely love and threat of violence. Yet, they derive their image from the same source domain: cannibalism, one of humanity’s last remaining taboos. This paper attempts to deconstruct the process of meaning making of metaphors about eating human meat. Given that a source domain perceived as extremely negative, grounded in a near-universal taboo, inspires metaphors with target domains either reflecting this negative connotation or subverting it into a positive metaphor makes imagery about cannibalism complex and interesting, as it invites the inquiry what the underlying psychological motivation for such a figure of speech might be. To what extent are metaphors reliant on cannibalism inspired by a literal desire for eating people? The purpose of this research is to address a gap in the literature and suggest an interpretation of what people mean and why when they use cannibalistic phrases. An inquiry into several forms of metaphors, such as
monsters in literature (e.g. Hannibal Lecter), everyday idioms (e.g. “to eat someone out”), and cultural metaphors (e.g. the Christian communion) suggest that cannibalism is used either as a metonymy to describe extreme cruelty - or as a surprisingly cannibal veiled figure of speech addressing the desire to absorb the other, becoming one with them, out of love, lust, or worship. If metaphors about violent taboos reflect repressed fantasies, translating them to the seemingly abstracted realm of metaphor is merely a farce. By using figurative speech to distance the implication from reality, users of cannibalistic imagery might originally mean it literally, or at least more literarily than is commonly assumed. This paper thus aims to add to the understanding of meaning construction, focussing on cognitive metaphor.

Translating linguistic creativity: An assessment of strategies for building words and worlds

Martin Boyne, Trent University, Canada

My ongoing project is the investigation of the translation of linguistic creativity from English into other languages. I am seeking to explore the ways in which translators try to preserve the foregrounded and deviant features of the source language but reshape those features to fit the requirements and distinctive nature of the target language. Analysing these processes involves examining the translation of both words and worlds, since fictional-world projection in the case of linguistically creative (or deviant) works is integrally bound up in how words are coined, (re)structured, interpreted, and reanalysed.

While I am broadly interested in a range of lexically and syntactically creative works, I am particularly interested in two fairly recent translations of the post-apocalyptic novel *Riddley Walker* by Russell Hoban (1980). Despite the author’s assertion that the work is inherently untranslatable, translations have appeared in Spanish (Dudo errante, 2005) and French (Enig Marcheur, 2012). Like the original, the two translations violate the rules of standard Spanish/French orthography in particular, imitating the lexicosemantic blends of Riddley Walker and attempting to capture the same types of wordplay that enabled Hoban to construct the futuristic but eroded world and language of his novel.

I draw upon a range of cognitive stylistic theories (e.g., contextual frame theory and fictional-world theory) in my analysis of the original, and I aim to explore the extent to which these theories can be similarly applied in the translated versions. I also draw upon literary and stylistic approaches to translation, specifically the translation of style, to determine whether the translated works are successfully creative in their own right, in their own language, or whether they are “merely” translations of the original. Can a work that reconstructs English in particular and establishes a very English landscape ever be translated into another language without being simply derivative? My initial findings suggest that it can – implying that Hoban’s original is as much about the past and future of English as it is about the universal nature of language itself.


The World of the Courtroom in 19th Century Fiction
Joe Bray, The University of Sheffield, UK

This paper examines how the world of the courtroom is created in early nineteenth-century fiction. Courtroom scenes, I will argue, often invite a heightened readerly participation and involvement, as the reader is positioned alongside the judge and jurors in assessing the characters on trial. Investigating the shorter fiction of the early nineteenth-century author Amelia Opie in particular, I will examine how her many courtroom scenes encourage a fluidity and flexibility of perspective which challenges traditional conceptions of the relationship between individual and group consciousness. As the reader moves between the roles of observer and participant, the process of judgement, such a staple of realist fiction, becomes highly complex and fraught. Opie, herself a regular attender of the assize courts throughout her life, wrote that courtrooms are 'epitomes of human life, and their walls, within their bounded space, contain beings full of the passions, infirmities, resentments, self-deceits, self-interests, fears, hopes, triumphs, and defeats, incident to our common nature, and the proofs and results of which are there painfully brought before us' (Brightwell, 361). This paper analyses how this 'bounded space' can be made malleable by the complexity of narrative perspective in Opie's fiction, and how in her representation of the courtroom emotion can transcend material detail. The bold experimentation of Opie's courtroom scenes anticipates, I will claim, the great trial set-pieces of the later nineteenth-century novel.


‘Burn it.’ Reader-response stylistics and the ambient worlds of Theresa May
Sam Browse, Sheffield Hallam University, UK

On Saturday 6th October, 2018, shortly after the British Conservative Party conference, The Observer newspaper published an opinion piece by the Conservative Prime Minister, Theresa May, entitled ‘Labour voters should look afresh at the Conservatives’. There followed a public furore of angry responses from committed Labour supporters to the article itself, but also The Observer’s relatively uncritical front page coverage of the piece (the newspaper is known as a left-liberal publication).

Whilst critical forms of stylistics and discourse analysis have examined the role of emotion in political discourse, there has been no systematic examination of the emotional responses of real readers (although, see Browse 2018). Conversely, reader-oriented accounts of emotion are becoming relatively well developed in cognitive poetics (e.g. Whiteley 2011, 2016).

In this paper, I use Stockwell’s (2014) cognitive poetic model of ‘ambience’ to investigate Labour supporters’ emotional responses to Theresa May’s opinion piece. Participants were shown one paragraph of May’s article at a time and asked to provide their immediate response in a comment box underneath the text. There were 14 paragraphs and 39 respondents yielding a corpus of 546 comments.

In Stockwell’s (2014) framework, ambience is created through the combination of the speaker or writer’s ‘tone’, and the ‘atmosphere’ of the text-world (see Gavins 2007) created in the mind of the reader as they engage with the text. To account for features of the data, I
advance the concepts of a ‘proffered’ and ‘readerly’ tone and atmosphere – that which the reader assumes the writer intended, versus the tone and atmosphere that readers actually construct. The paper therefore develops existing cognitive poetic accounts of affect in reading whilst filling a gap in the existing research on political discourse and emotion.


The Language of Julia Donaldson: Rhetoric, style and cognition
Michael Burke, University Colleeg Roosevelt, Utrecht University, Netherlands

Julia Donaldson has been a highly successful children’s author over the past twenty-five years. She has published more than 100 books and many of her works have been translated from English into other languages. In 2011 she received an MBE for services to literature and she was the Children's Laureate from 2011-2013. She has received honorary degrees from Bristol University in 2011 and from Glasgow University in 2012. In addition to being a writer of children’s books, Donaldson is also a playwright and a performer. She has worked closely over the years on many of her stories with children’s book illustrator Axel Scheffler. The number of books they have sold together runs into the millions. A pertinent question therefore that this study will address is just what it is that young listeners (and perhaps readers) are drawn to in the stories of Julia Donaldson? Is it just the plotlines, the characters and the illustrations or might something else also play an important role, for example, the style, the rhythm and rhyme, the narrative and the rhetorical arrangement in general. Moreover, might the embodied cognition that underpins these literary and linguistic phenomena, triggered by both text and images - also tell us something about what might draw young listeners (and perhaps readers) to the works of Julia Donaldson? This question is what this study sets out to investigate by means of rhetorical, stylistic and cognitive poetic analysis.

Verbal imagery and mental picturing in poetry: an intermedial and empirical approach
Davide Castiglione, Vilnius University, Lithuania

Traditionally classified as a literary device, the notion of imagery has recently been grounded into the theory of embodied cognition and reconceptualised as a complex resultant of textual, readerly and contextual variables (Kuzmičová 2014). Adopting the related but less terminologically inflated notion of mental picturing, Toolan (2016: 132-196) has stressed the optionality and maximal vagueness of the text-derived pictures that readers hold in their minds when reading a narrative text.
Both the studies cited take narrative fiction as their prototypical testbed when it comes to theorising about imagery. Poetry has yet to profit from such advances, in spite of the fact that its model-making potential largely hinges on imagery (Cardilli 2018: 7). So, while critics have discussed the relationship between poetry and the visual arts (e.g. Sweet 2003), the underlying notion of imagery has barely moved away from the appraisal of the single critic. What is needed is a systematic approach allowing for (1) a mapping of stylistic techniques onto visual ones, and (2) an empirical validation of such pairings. My paper is a contribution in both directions.

I will draw on Kress and van Leeuwen’s Reading Images (2006 [1996]) to explore the imagery potential of poems. These authors propose a fine-grained mapping of visual meaning-making resources onto grammatical ones. For instance, vectors (i.e. connecting lines) relating represented participants correspond to transitive verbs involving a semantic Actor and a Goal. In this paper, I test the following hypothesis: Generic reference (e.g. through unmodified or weakly modified plural noun phrases) will create an effect akin that of long shots. I will present an association task whereby poetic images must be matched to one out of a set of pictures taken at various distances from the target. The hypothesis is that lines such as Strand’s ‘A man walks towards town’ would correspond to a long shot, for both a man and a nearing town would be mentally pictured. By contrast, Eliot’s ‘The silent man in mocha brown’ would tend to be associated with a medium or close shot, focusing on the man’s pensive facial features alluding to his silence.


**Fictional Worlds as Artefacts. Literary Semantics in Conversation with Artefactualism**

Elzbieta Chrzanowska-Kluczewska, Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland

My presentation, theoretical in nature, raises the question about the ontological status of fictional text worlds as artefacts. Artefactualism as an analytical philosophical approach (Thomasson 1999, 2009, 2015; Brock & Everett 2015) has listed literary fictions and fictional individuals among conceptual artefacts, treating them as works of human creative activity. However, the issue of the position of fictional worlds has not been discussed in more detail within this current (cf. Hamel 2010). In Chrzanowska-Kluczewska (in print) I analyse the problems with the double-sided, hybrid nature of text worlds as both conceptual and verbal products. Artefactualists assign the status of a genuine artefact only to such creations of human intellect and imagination that have been placed within a social practice. This exposure of authorial textual artefacts to the completion by their receivers makes out of them co-created entities. Not without reason does Thomasson invoke Roman Ingarden’s (1931/1973) phenomenological notion of concretization as one of the roots of her theory.
The issue that is of special import to me, however, is the status of private worlds of fiction, not (yet) made public by their authors (cf. Eco’s remarks on the meticulous construction of the fictional world underlying The Name of the Rose before putting it into words of a particular natural language). Artefactualists would deny them the position of true artefacts, yet – in the light of the semiotic theory of Jurij Lotman (1990) – the very act of imagining a fictional entity (in the language of the mind) makes it a part of the semiosphere. I would like to defend the thesis that private literary worlds, upon entering the semantic/logical space in the process of what I call 1st order semiosis, become undisclosed artefacts (either as conceptual structures or as texts of a natural language unpublished or non-distributed). Whether and in what shape they become public as monomodal or multimodal realizations is a different problematic.


Walking Simulator Video Games – A New Digital Storytelling Artefact - Transportation, not flow

Heidi Colthup, University of Kent, UK

In the past decade a new genre of video games has emerged; with little action or traditional gameplay this new form has been described as audiovisual novels, ‘freeform unstructured narrative’ (Heron & Belford, 2015), ‘narrative avant-garde’ (Koenitz, 2017), ‘walkers’ (Muscat et al., 2016), ‘literary games’ (Ensslin, 2014), or ‘Walking Simulators’ which was added to the Urban Dictionary in April 2014 as a pejorative description of games where the main purpose appears to be walking around. This new genre has its antecedents in text adventure games, Point and Click adventure games, digital fiction, and art games, yet defining the Walking Simulator as ‘simply’ a game is an unproductive argument in itself (Fest, 2016).

Aims and research questions: How do we categorise Walking Simulators? How should we analyse them? What can we find out from that analysis?

Taking a broadly representative sample of Walking Simulators published in the past ten years (most have received critical acclaim and also won BAFTA and similar awards) some common features were identified. Sidestepping (but not ignoring) a definition of ludicity based in game coding and mechanics, and instead exploring how this genre offers narrative experiences that are closer to that of reading is a more productive and effective approach to understanding this new genre (Heron & Belford, 2015, Fest, 2016, Ensslin, 2014).
Using an empirical cognitive poetic stylistic analysis developed by Bell, Ensslin, van der Bom, and Smith in 2018, this paper will examine Campo Santo’s 2016 BAFTA award winning game, Firewatch, as a case study to show how Walking Simulators offer transportation and immersion more commonly found in fiction texts rather than the flow of a video game. Player forums on the Steam platform have been used as an anecdotal qualitative sample of responses as a testing-ground for the possibilities of developing an empirical reader-response study in the future.

This is an emerging and dynamic field of research which will continue to expand as more Walking Simulators are published. The results point to ongoing analysis and exploration of this new genre to firmly establish the Walking Simulator as a new digital storytelling artefact that is accessible to a wide range of player/readers. It is also hoped that by setting out a clear working definition for this new genre together with suggested analytical frameworks that there will be wider interdisciplinary scholarly interest.


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**The spirit of a place: a geological analysis of Richard McGuire’s Here**

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This paper examines the ecocentric nature of *Here* (2014) and argues that its aesthetics of relinquishment of the narrative persona illustrate Buell’s Gaia Hypothesis (1995). In her essay ‘Zooming In and Out: Panels, Frames, and Sequences, and the Building of Graphic Storyworlds’ (2013), Silke Horstkotte claims that panels can convey complex temporal structures. She owes to Groesteen’s idea of braiding (2007), in which the graphic narrative ‘puts every panel in a potential, if not actual, relation with every other’ (41). In this paper, I will suggest, by taking her conception of braiding, that we can read beyond *Here*’s ‘banal’ narrative storyline and chronologically correct stories.

I will draw on the geological representations of time in the graphic novel and their relation to ‘meaningless human actions’ seen in the panels. Shifts of verb tenses, philosophical questions and commands will refer to the role of memory and loss. They contrast with the immobile Edenic looks in the distant past and future – between 8,000 and 20,000 - and are juxtaposed with an ecological cataclysm that occurs in recent years. More broadly, I contend that *Here*’s non-anthropocentric self illustrates Buell’s Gaia Hypothesis, created by narrative features including the dissolution of the plot, ‘a diffusion of centers of consciousness’ and ‘a multiplicity of subject positions’. I believe *Here*’s protagonist is the place. Whilst McGuire’s family pictures of his childhood home in Perth Amboy made their way through the book and are anchored in space and history, the worlds are universal and McGuire gives nature a voice that humans cannot totally grasp. My paper will conclude with the idea that *Here*’s braided
‘earth talk’ implies our desire to return to an original state of harmony with the ecosphere in which the relationship between the human and nonhuman foregrounds a sense of kinship.

The Totalitarian Rhetoric of Replacement

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The goal of this research is to study linguistic and meta-linguistic representations of ideologically tailored rhetoric. The investigation focuses on ideology-driven semantic, stylistic, and content transformations of public discourse as manifested by the means of communication that reach multiple recipients through both mass media and extensively published (read: ideologically approved) (non)fiction.

A working hypothesis of this research is that the ultimate aim of the totalitarian ideological machine was to alter people's mentality so that it complied with the logic of totalitarian ideology. With this aim, the totalitarian system strived to reshape the language imagery of the world by affecting the language expression and ultimately unifying and simplifying the people’s worldview. By setting the goal of studying linguistic and meta-linguistic representations of ideologically tailored public discourse, we consider the attitudinal aspect of communication and single out what Littlejohn termed as intentional communication: “Those situations in which a source transmits a message to a receiver with conscious intent to affect the latter’s behaviors” [1, p. 3; 8]. Such understanding of the communication process substantiates the methodological ground to interpret the linguistic phenomena behind communication components, their interaction, and manipulations.

It has been observed that ideologically conditioned manipulations force formerly peripheral concepts into the core of the communication medium, with newly created meanings characterized by Pocheptsov [2] as the concept warfare, whose mechanisms consist in reinterpretting facts to the interpreter’s advantage, designing new mechanisms of thinking, and – by producing a long-term impact on the whole population – ultimately changing the whole world model.

We presume that our research procedures, reproduced on a broader scope of linguistic material, can lead to systematic findings that will serve as the conceptual keys and workable tools for solving a wider range of theoretical and practical problems connected with the outer intrusion into the original text.


The “dissolving margins” of fictional worlds into autobiography: Fictionality, Authorship and Elena Ferrante’s Neapolitan novels

Alison Gibbons, Sheffield Hallam University, UK

In Elena Ferrante’s *My Brilliant Friend*, the first novel in what has become known as the ‘Neapolitan Quartet’, the narrating-character Elena Greco describes what her friend Lila reportedly calls a sensation of “dissolving margins” in which “the outline of people and things suddenly dissolved, disappeared” (2012 [2011], p.89). For Lila, such episodes are experienced...
as psychic disturbances, yet the concept might equally be used to describe the blur or indeterminacy of fictionality that has characterized readers’ reception of, the publicity and marketing for, and reporting on both the author Elena Ferrante and her Neapolitan novels. The novels are exactly that; novels, with the generic classification of fiction. Yet readers and critics often read an autobiographical trace, interpreting the books as autofictional, or at least partially autobiographical, and thus revealing of experiences from Ferrante's own life. Such a biographical impulse is all the more complex in light of the fact that 'Elena Ferrante' is a pseudonym and the biographical details of her life are therefore unknown or ambiguous.

Using Elena Ferrante and the Neapolitan novels as case study, this paper investigates two forms of ontological distortion: readers’ (mis)classification of the novels' genre with regards to fictionality or referentiality (that is, reading autobiographically) and the problematic posed by the author's pseudonymous identity. In doing so, the paper explores the dissolving margins between fictionality and referentiality in reception - that is, how readers identify, navigate, and even confuse or reject the fictionality or referentiality of a text. I adopt a cognitive stylistic and narratological approach, primarily using Text World Theory (Werth 1999; Gavins 2007) and mind-modelling (Stockwell 2009, 2016). I argue that such an approach offers the greatest insight into how readers form their interpretive judgments of fictionality and experience fictional texts and their authors as autobiographical and thus vicariously real.


Words and worlds in Siegfried Sassoon’s retelling of war experience
Marcello Giovanelli, Aston University, UK

In his own words, the First World War soldier and poet Siegfried Sassoon found it difficult to resist his ‘queer craving to revisit the past and give the modern world the slip’ (Sassoon 1938: 140). In fact, significant amounts of his six prose autobiographical novels written and published between 1928 and 1945 are based on material from his war diaries, letters and poems that detailed his experiences at the Front. There exist, therefore, multiple retellings of the same events in Sassoon’s literary and non-literary output.

This paper explores Sassoon’s retelling of his 1917 poem ‘Lamentations’ (Sassoon 1918) in his second ‘Sherston’ novel Memoirs of An Infantry Officer (Sassoon 1930). I compare the poem and its subsequent revision by examining Memoirs as autofiction (Doubrovsky 1977), a genre where the transparent conflation of author and main protagonist-as-narrator gives rise to a series of ontological distortions, combining the recounting of real events, places and characters with various degrees of fictionality. I subsequently argue that Memoirs, rather than being a sanitized, detached representation of the experiences detailed in Sassoon’s poems and diaries (see for example Thorpe 1966), actually offers a more complex treatment of those events, viewed from the distinctive vantage point that Sassoon’s shifting concerns and reflections on his experience between 1917 and 1930 allow. This paper therefore aims to
provide a stylistic analysis of Sassoon’s language across the two versions integrated with a contextualized account of the possible influences of *Memoirs* and a consideration of the affordances and role of autofiction in the reframing of traumatic events.


**Comic timing in prose fiction**

Alice Haines, University of Nottingham, UK

Humorous passages in literary texts, particularly those with a joke-type, set-up and punchline construction, can convey a sense of change in pace at the punchline. This would seem to be a similar effect to the ‘comic timing’ that is often seen to be at the root of a performer’s ability to elicit appreciation of humour. In spite of the frequency of this claim, there is very little research into what constitutes ‘comic timing’ and how it affects the success of humour. Attardo and Pickering (2011) separate temporal factors from other coinciding effects and define timing as changes in speech rate and length of pauses. They hypothesise that these will occur around the punchline of successfully performed jokes but find no difference in these factors compared with unsuccessful performances. Norrick (2003) proposes, instead, that the perception of tempo in comic performances comes about through the rhythm of performance which, in turn, is determined by features such as hesitations, repetitions and the fluency of the performance. It is possible, therefore, that ‘comic timing’ has more to do with the impression of the passage of time than actual timing itself. Norrick’s proposal has parallels with Simpson’s (2014) model of narrative urgency in that the sense of narrative pace is brought about through stylistic patterns that can be seen as the textual equivalent of features of performance.

In this paper, I use Simpson’s model of narrative urgency to examine perceived pace changes in humorous passages from a variety of novels. I also draw on aspects of Langacker’s (2008) Cognitive Grammar to assess how a reader’s construal of the source of humour is affected at points of pace change. I question whether any perceived change in pace is integral to the construction of humour, or whether it is a coincidental secondary effect and that there are other primary effects (such as the foregrounding effect of surprise) that are involved in a reader’s recognition and appreciation of humour in a text.

The representation of character perspective plays a key role in our experience of the TV adaptation of *The Handmaid’s Tale* (Hulu 2017). Unlike the book, ‘which invites us to consider the individual experiences of a very well realized character, Offred’ (Wisker 2010: 9), the TV series in contrast presents multiple perspectives that move between the focalisations of various characters and the point of view of an external narrator. Repeated style choices form narrative ‘chains’ (Forceville 2002) which blur together these various focalisations across the series, and this conflation of point of view in turn creates what Forceville (2002: 133) labels as ‘cinematic free indirect thought’ or discourse.

Cognitive stylistics offers a renewed focus on readerly or audience interpretation, but while cognitive stylistic tools have been applied in the investigation of literary texts, their application to TV, film and screen has been more limited (Toolan 2014). This paper aims to examine the blurred construal and shifting levels of subjectivity through a cognitive stylistic analysis of both the linguistic and the non-linguistic elements of *The Handmaid’s Tale* series. Drawing on a range of data from across *The Handmaid’s Tale* adaptation, including voiceover transcripts and key scenes and sequences, this study explores the use of shallow focus shots, containment schemas and metaphor chains, in particular, to consider firstly, the stylistic representation of cinematic free indirect discourse; and secondly, how an audience experiences both limited and comparatively more unrestricted focalisations throughout the narrative.


*The Handmaid’s Tale Series* 1, Hulu (2017), April 26th - June 14th, 2017.


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**Conceptualisation of old age in English: an interdisciplinary approach**

Snizhana Holyk, Uzhhorod National University, Ukraine

Old age, ageing, golden age, the third age, the fourth age – these are the notions that have become very common in literature, in the media and in the world of academia in recent years. In anthropology, there exists a traditional paradigm of fixed life cycles. Accordingly, old age is viewed as one of the stages of life marked by degeneration, decreased mental functioning, illness and, finally, leading to death. However, the social concept of old age fosters a more optimistic perspective. It challenges the bodily understanding of ageing as a natural decline. Longevity is viewed as an achievement, older citizens lead active fulfilling lives, continuing to make contributions to their societies, having the opportunity to travel and further education. This research aims at revealing what old age is and how ageing is categorised and described in relation to the cultural context and its values. In this presentation I will highlight the definitions of old age in English and compare different discursive models of ageing conceptualisation. Firstly, the concept of OLD AGE as a mental unit is analysed. It appears to be a multicomponent structure representing the period or time in life when one is old, the person or the group of persons who are old and the state or condition of being old. Furthermore, the paper aims to explore the conceptualisation of old age in fiction and in psychological and sociological academic discourses. This predetermines the need for the
interdisciplinary analysis, integrating the methods of conceptual analysis and discourse-analysis. Thus, old age is approached in multiple dimensions, not only as the biological phenomenon with psychological and social consequences, but also as a sociocultural phenomenon with a complex cognitive structure represented in discourse with normative, axiological, stereotypical, figurative and symbolic components.

Critical analysis of old age and ageing notions, as well as the attitude towards them in society will result in establishing the theoretical foundation and cognitive basis for the linguistic concept of OLD AGE.


Surface text & the characterisation process: A case study of Wyrd Sisters by Terry Pratchett

Sara Ingham, University of Huddersfield, UK

This research seeks to highlight and resolve the issues created when using cognitive models to analyse how language and style combine with reader knowledge during the characterisation process. I aim to refine Culpeper’s (2001) model of characterisation, which lacks detail regarding how surface text is processed, using linguistic and stylistic analysis, supported by corpus data. Models of comprehension based on cognitive theories like Culpeper’s tend to ignore relevant linguistic and stylistic features from the original text through proposition formation. Such features are, I will argue, retained during processing to a greater extent than current models allow. Although Culpeper does include linguistic and stylistic features in his wider text analysis, the model itself fails to specify how these influence comprehension beyond the initial processing of surface text. This issue is highlighted further when we consider theories of narrative and literary processing. These include Emmott & Sanford’s (2012) theory of rhetorical processing, which places stylistic features at the centre of processing due to their ability to control reader attention. In addition, Zwaan’s (1996) work has found an increased reliance on surface features in fictional texts when compared to non-fiction. Finally, both Culpeper and Emmott & Sanford have suggested that visual mental models may be more accurate than propositions for representing what happens when we read a text.

My research addresses these issues using Sinclair’s (2001) ideas regarding units of meaning and Taylor’s (2012) mental lexicon theory. This recognises that comprehension is more than the application of linguistic rules and definitions. Instead, it sees meaning as spread across multi-word units and draws attention to the ways in which stylistic features and intertextual links, often essential to the characterisation process, are created linguistically. An
analysis of Terry Pratchett’s witch characters, chosen for the unusual ways in which they interact metatextually with their character roles, aims to incorporate these ideas in the existing characterisation model.


**Using historical corpora to study linguistic change across genres**

Tinna Frímann Jökulsdóttir & Anton Karl Ingason, University of Iceland, Reykjavík

We demonstrate how a parsed corpus can be used to study style shift across genres. We show that during the change from OV to VO word order in Icelandic, religious texts are more conservative than narratives, consistent with them being associated with formal style. While the religious texts participate in the change, their relatively conservative nature reflects a type of stylistic social meaning.

The Icelandic Parsed Historical Corpus (IcePaHC) is a parsed corpus (treebank) that contains manually corrected syntactic annotation. The corpus spans almost ten centuries, containing 1 million running words from around 60 texts ranging from the late 12th century to the beginning of the 21st century. The annotation scheme is mostly compatible with the Penn parsed corpora of Historical English (Wallenberg et al. 2010; Rögnvaldsson et al. 2012; Santorini 2016).

IcePaHC is designed to serve both as a tool for language technology and as a syntactic research tool (Rögnvaldsson et al., 2012). Along with PaCQL (Parsed Corpus Query Language), "a novel query language for carrying out research on parsed historical corpora" (Ingason 2016:51) and a web interface, available at www.treebankstudio.org, linguists and others who are interested in examining Icelandic texts, can investigate patterns of interest. In addition to getting the examples in question the system facilitates quantitative analysis, for example relating a result to the time of writing, text genre etc.

We will introduce IcePaHC as well as its query language and web interface to accentuate how it can be used to examine and compare various linguistic patterns and their relationship with text genre. We will present a study of the development from OV to VO word order in historical Icelandic and the relationship between this change and differences between more formal religious texts and less formal narratives. We show how the religious texts are in general more conservative and relate this to the sociolinguistic notion of style shift (Labov 1972).


“Even a donkey from Bolivia can fully understand a donkey in Macedonia.” On Þórbergur Þórðarson, esotericism and biosemiotics
Bergljót Soffía Kristjánsdóttir, University of Iceland, Reykjavík

What does an Icelandic author borne in the 19th century, inspired by theosophy, Eastern studies and socialism, have in common with authors that have been associated with biosemiotics? This talk is about one of the outstanding Icelandic writers in the 20th century, Þórbergur Þórðarson. He was borne in 1889; for a time he was a cook on a small boat but changed jobs and lived in poverty. Still, he managed to learn comparative philology at the University of Iceland, became acquainted with theosophy and yoga, became a socialist and an ardent spokesman for esperanto. I will also discuss what is known about his knowledge of linguistics, including scholars like the theosopher Madame Blavatsky, the philologist Max Müller and the linguist Otto Jespersen. It will be shown how Þórbergur’s understanding of symbols has parallels with ideas expressed by the founders of biosemiotics, Charles Sanders Peirce, Jakob von Uexküll and Thomas Sebeok. Examples will be drawn from the book *The Stones Talk*, which is the first in a series of four books that Þórbergur wrote, based on his childhood in a farm in the southeast corner of Iceland, at the roots of Vatnajökull. Reference will be made to studies of the works of Þórbergur that are linked to Eastern studies and theosophy (cf. Bergljót S. Kristjánsdóttir 2017, Álfdís Þorleifsdóttir 2018 and Stefán Ágústsson 2018).

Understanding the textual world of Daniil Kharms: mythological reality
Olga Kukarskaia, Tyumen State University, Russia

Drifting into sleep, one cannot but notice the elusiveness of the moment as the dream ensues. The so-called ‘dreamwork’ is what the Russian language seems to have no proper equivalent for, yet it is precisely the term describing the seemingly absurd world of Daniil Kharms’ (1905 – 1942) sketches/plays/stories/poems, all rolled into one.

Unveiling the intricate workings of the mind, he, alongside some other prominent 20th century writers of the absurd, endeavored to recreate the reality of the subconscious. Resorting to collective archetypes and pre-logical thinking are but a few of ingredients for Kharms’ universe. It is the rules of the subconscious that govern the textual world, link the ‘unlinkable’, determine the chronotopial relations between objects and breed absurdity in the eyes of an unaccustomed reader.

To get by in the reality of Kharms, one has to adopt certain playfulness, or rather be engaged in peculiar language game. The author of the article highlights that what Kharms’ texts revolve around in the ability of a language sign to affect the object itself thus altering the reality around and creating myth that is known to stretch and expand in a fractal-like pattern. The author of the research approaches Kharms’ texts with the sole purpose of unearthing the principles of structuring the reality of the absurd. That is why scientific findings from the following fields have been attracted:
• from semiotics: to work out the symbolic or iconic nature of signs in the make-believe world, with an emphasis on the theory of semiotic signs.
• from pragmatics: to decide on the type of narrator and the plausible target audience, primarily focusing on the theory of speech acts and examples of inconsistent dialogues.
• from psycholinguistics: in order to study texts with features closely imitating those of a psychotic discourse.
• from mythology: to explain the ubiquitous use of archetypes and anthropomorphism.
• from narratology: to categorize characters into groups and assign functions a fairy tale is likely to have.

A multi-faceted approach to exploring the textual world of Daniil Kharms is then illustrated by the author of the paper. The analysis of an excerpt is viewed as an attempt at working out a system of decoding similar texts.

‘That which I am, you shall also be’: the text worlds of Masaccio’s Trinity
Ernestine Lahey & Hans Bloemsma, University College Roosevelt, Netherlands

This paper is the first to apply Text World Theory (Werth 1999; Gavins 2007) towards an analysis of a visual artwork. Masaccio’s 15th-century fresco of the Holy Trinity in the church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence is widely regarded as one of the earliest examples of the use of linear perspective, which allowed for the illusion of three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface. In our paper we consider how Text World Theory might augment current art historical thinking on the work by providing scholars with a rigorous and retrievable account of the deictic and epistemic worlds evoked by the painting. We also address viewer immersion in the work, specifically in relation to the figures of the patrons, whom some have conceptualized as ‘surrogates’ of the (historical) viewer (Goffen 16). Our broader aims are: (1) to examine the usefulness of Text World Theory for art history generally; (2) to provide independent non-linguistic evidence of the psychological reality of a text-world theoretical process of meaning construction; and (3) to consider what linguistics and stylistics might stand to gain from accounts of non-verbal art forms.


Manipulating the reader: playing with narrative dimensions in The French Lieutenant’s Woman
Marina Lambrou, Kingston University, UK

Readers of literature will have expectations of how plot and characters progress based on their schematic knowledge of literary fiction and their genres. For example, readers of Victorian fiction are likely to expect plots that follow the literary conventions of the time (of publication) with endings that lead to a happy union for its main characters. However, not all works of fiction follow convention and could be said to manipulate readers through a range of narrative techniques that include the use of authorial intrusion to create a deliberate transgression between narrative levels. Described as metalepsis’ and defined as ‘any intrusion by the
extradiegetic narrator or narratee into the diegetic universe’ (Genette, [1972] 1980: 234–35) the resulting effect is often comical or fantastic, whereas ‘author’s metalepsis’ when ‘an author (or his reader) introduces himself into the fictive action of the narrative’ (Genette, [1983] 1988:88) can disorientate the reader. Other transgressive devices include manipulating the plot to offer several plot options that gives rise to the ‘forked path’ (Borges, 1999) and the triggering of counterfactual storytelling, which are in turn become disnarrated (Prince, 1988) when one plot path is (explicitly) chosen over another. These playful storytelling strategies and narrative dimensions are explored in The French Lieutenant’s Woman, a contemporary novel set in the Victorian era and written in a style associated with novels of that time. The talk also suggests that characters in their storyworld have consciousness to be able to enact their hopes, wishes and desires over and above the author and narrator’s will (Lambrou, 2018).


Painters’ Worlds in John Berger’s Words (on the conceptual structure of the essays on art)

Tetyana Lunyova, Poltava V.G. Korolenko National Pedagogical University, Ukraine

The research is devoted to revealing the conceptual structure of John Berger’s essays on art. Highly praised for their deep and innovative insights into the nature of art and meanings of artworks, John Berger’s essays constitute an intriguing object for semantic analysis since the meaning of each essay evolves as an intricate interplay between the presentation, on the one hand, of some specific details and descriptions of particular material objects as well as scenes which can be perceived directly with the human organs of perception and, on the other hand, the discussion of the abstract ethical and aesthetic concepts.

This study is focused on determining the principles of co-working of the language units with the concrete semantics and those with the abstract semantics within Berger’s essays on art as they contribute to the overall meaning of the essays. The aim of the study is to model the conceptual structures that underlie Berger’s essays on art, in particular those which are used to represent artists and explain their artworks.

The research is methodologically rooted in the cognitive approach to the study of the language semantics and is based upon the assumption that language semantics is both motivated by some cognitive structures and gives access to their study. The main research tools used for modeling the conceptual dimensions of the semantic structure of the essay are those of the frame and the concept.

The study reveals that despite their various structural, compositional, narrative differences, Berger’s essays on art are grounded in a number of basic frames with the following ones being particularly important: “Artist’s apprenticeship”, “Artist’s search”, “Artist’s struggle”, “Artist’s work on a painting”. These are frame structures that bring together the abstract
concepts (e.g., “innovation”, “tradition”, “choice”) and concrete ones (e.g., the concepts of specific colours, lilies, trees, fields etc. as depicted objects).


The textual geopolitics of Brigid Brophy’s In Transit (1969) and Steve Katz’s The Exagggerations of Peter Prince (1968)
Andrea Macrae, Oxford Brookes University, UK

Steve Katz’s The Exagggerations of Peter Prince (2017 [1968]) and Brigid Brophy’s In Transit: A Heroi-Cyclic Novel (2002 [1969]), published a year and an ocean apart, are both radically experimental multimodal novels. The former expresses the anxieties of a cold war America newly ensconced in capitalist commodification and media spectacle. The latter is a polylingual, multigenre, transgender narrative of flux in the face of globalisation (set in an airport), climaxing with a dystopian, feminist, trade unionist revolution. This paper examines how multimodality of these novels functions to serve their postmodern metafictional and ideological ends.

The paper draws together aspects of theory of textual multimodality and genre (Genette, 1997; Gibbons, 2016) and philosophy of space (Bachelard, 2014 [1964]). These ideas are used to analyse the ways in which Katz and Brophy exploit the affordances of the material space of the page and the conceptual space of the storyworld to disrupt the conventions, and conventional boundaries, of those spaces as part of their metafictional deviation. Analysis of selected extracts illustrates how Katz blurs the physical, material text and the conceptual diegesis and extradiegesis to construct and collapse a Chinese-box-like ontological structure. The ontological structure of Brophy’s narrative, on the other hand, is formed into a cycle, while its narrative progression is made plural. The analysis supports an argument for renewed critical appreciation of the literary and cultural significance of these novels.


In-between Words and Worlds: Virtual 'Queen', 'Imagine Dragons', and Digital Textuality
Olena Marina, Kyiv National Linguistic University, Ukraine

The 21st century is marked as the era of 'hybrid or borderline text' (A. Kirby). Inevitable death of postmodernism has generated multiplicity of terms to label a new period in history, culture, film making, and literature. It caused terminological chaos as every scholar or artist suggested their own view of a new reality constructed in various brand-new labels, mostly of a hybrid,
paradoxical character. For instance, altermodernism (N. Bourriaud), metamodernism (T. Vermeulen, R. van den Akker) and digimodernism (A. Kirby).

Is it (im)possible to immerse the multimodally sophisticated audience of the 21st century in a literary wor(l)d(s)? The presentation focuses on the study of a biopic of Queen frontman Fredy Mercury – ‘Bohemian Rhapsody’, a soundtrack to the original motion picture ‘Ralph Breaks the Internet’ by Imagine Dragons – ‘Zero’, and some instances of the 21st century (non)digital poetry. Contradictory reviews, hybridity of music, viewers leaving a cinema in the middle of a film, and computer-coded poetry. What comes next? What words, codes, pictures, designs, sounds or their intersemiotic transformations would be able to challenge recipients’ minds absorbing them into multiplicity of digi- and metamodernist worlds?

The paper argues that various manifestations of paradoxicality, including hybridity and in-betweenness, underlie the construction of impossible worlds in multimodal discourses (film, musical videoclip, digital poetry) able to immerse their recipients. The ubiquitous, interdisciplinary nature of paradoxicality is globally recognized. There is a growing number of research in the fields of cognitive poetics, cognitive semiotics, literary criticism focusing on absurd, nonsensical (J. Gavins), surreal (P. Stockwell), impossible, unnatural (J. Alber, M. Ryan), ambiguous (O. Vorobyova), uncreative, unoriginal, and anomalous (K. Goldsmith) facets of contemporary literary (multimodal) discourse.

The worlds constructed in the discourses under analysis are metaleptic in their nature. Their construction is based on the following mechanisms: ontological contradiction or incongruence of literary worlds that prompts their clash, flicker or immersiveness; distortion of literary worlds’ boundaries, which causes absorption of non-fiction worlds by fiction; blurring the boundaries of literary worlds caused by compression of virtual non-fiction worlds constructed by means of the Internet search engines; discrepancy between state of affairs in literary and real worlds.


An Imperial Affliction: Recognising and missing references, intertextuality and reader identity

Jessica Mason, Sheffield Hallam University, UK

Drawing on the concepts of narrative schemas and dummy narratives (Mason 2014, 2016, forthcoming), this paper offers a cognitive account of how readers make, perceive and respond to intertextual references, focusing in this instance on references in, and to, literary texts. It first outlines different levels of visibility with which authors can embed references in their works and explores the ways this can influence whether readers notice and comprehend them, as well as how they might respond. In particular, the paper examines the practice of spotting, or failing to spot, instances of intertextuality through the lens of reader identity. It proposes that every intertextual reference represents a potential challenge for the reader to measure themselves against the type of reader that they want to, or think that they ought to, be. Recognition can result in feelings of pleasure, expertise and even smugness, but being lost as to a reference’s origins can lead to alienation from a text, and doubt in one’s own accomplishment and knowledge.

Cognitive stylistic analysis will then be used to explore the phenomenon of ‘dummy narratives’ (Mason, forthcoming) – works referenced by an author that do not actually exist outside the world of the text. To explore this surprisingly common practice, an analysis will
be presented of John Green’s (2013) Young Adult novel The Fault In Our Stars, which makes extensive intertextual reference to the protagonist Hazel’s ‘favourite’ book, An Imperial Affliction by Peter van Houten, with Green even quoting van Houten in the novel’s epigraph. This instance of authorial trickery offers an excellent space for investigation of the role of intertextuality in reading experiences, and the ways in which recognising or missing references can affect a reader’s sense of identity.

Postpositions in Eddic poetry and the distinction of the ljóðaháttur metre
Tinna Jóhanna Magnusson, University of Iceland

This paper will discuss certain syntactic and prosodic features of Eddic poetry, particularly in regards to the ljóðaháttur metre, explaining the key findings of my undergraduate study and detailing further research I am currently doing for my MA thesis. The main purpose of my BA thesis was to describe the use of postpositions in Icelandic poetry, the Eddic poems in particular, focusing on case government and the position of postpositions within the structure of the metre.

The corpus used for the research were the 29 poems of the Codex Regius manuscript (GKS 2365 4to), our primary source on Eddic poetry. Certain syntactic restraints seem to govern the use of postpositions in Eddic poetry. The postpositions are always stressed and occupy the last lift of the line, unlike prepositions, which are typically unstressed in Icelandic. A postposition cannot occur in the place of a preposition, but by inverting the prepositional phrase the preposition becomes intonationally free so it can carry stress and form a catalectic end of a line. It seems, therefore, that the preposition and its complement are inverted at least partly for metrical purposes. Furthermore, if a postposition is accompanied by a genitive construction, the genitive attribute must occur before the noun it refers to, possibly to create consistency in the placement of syntactic heads. Interestingly, postpositions more commonly occur in the ljóðaháttur poems of the Codex Regius. This prompts questions on other remarkable features of the ljóðaháttur metre, making it a worthy subject of further study. For my MA-theis I am looking at the characteristics of the ljóðaháttur metre in particular, both syntactic and prosodic. Here, my intention is to consider the ljóðaháttur poems of the Codex Regius as well as other contemporary poems, both Eddic and non-Eddic, in the same metre.

Can a Minister of Religion be a Thief? A Case in PT Mtuze's Indlel' Ecand' Intlango
Zilibele Mtumane, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

This paper aims to examine P.T. Mtuze's illustration of how a minister of religion could be a thief in the novel Indlel' Ecand' Intlango. It discusses this aspect with regards to Ntobeko Ndleleni, who is presented as the cleric of the Anglican Church. Ntobeko, who is the main character in the narrative, steals money from a wallet that has been left (by mistake) by a congregant at church. His act of stealing the money leads to the death of an elderly female church member as the minister has winnowed her tablets from the wallet while taking the money for himself. In the paper it is also indicated what pushes this clergy to steal money at church. The causes to be revealed include the minister's being pressurised by his in-laws to bring the dowry he has not brought yet and poverty at home.

The qualitative research approach is adopted for this research. It includes reading and analysing the novel, focusing on the theme that is the topic of the paper. To authenticate the observations and findings of the paper, published and other sources will be referred to.
Imaginative wor(l)ds in children's literature: a corpus-based approach
Soichiro Oku, Kanto Gakuin University, Japan

Children's literature can be characterized as the verbal path into imaginative wor(l)ds. The language and its wor(l)ds are also suitable and readable for children whose reading ability seems limited. Following the conference theme, I focus on the ‘wor(l)ds’ of children’s literature. My aim, therefore, is to explore the linguistic characteristics of popular children's literature with a view to understanding the stylistic effects generated. I also argue that a corpus approach includes quantitative and qualitative methods. In this sense, it is intriguing to explore the characteristics of the language which make the wor(l)ds so imaginative. Referring to two classical and remarkable pieces of literature (Lüthi 1942, Rodari 1972), I reexamine those stylistic features as reflected in children's literature. Lüthi’s goal was to "identify what makes the folktale a folk tale as the essential laws of the genre." The abstract concepts as a set of stylistic features for defining the folktale are one-dimensionality, depthlessness, abstract style, isolation plus universal interconnection, sublimation and all-inclusiveness. Rodari illustrated numerous and wonderful techniques for creating stories. He discussed these specific techniques in the context of the imaginative children's stories, cognitive development, and education. My data will be based on some fantastic stories for children literature such as Phillip Pullman, focusing on frequently recurring word sequences, lexico-grammatical patterns, modality, adjectives and adverbs for examining these features. Finally, this presentation and analysis reveals that imaginative wor(l)ds possibly are achieved by the grammatical word choices for children.


Pathetic Fallacy: a display of emotions
Kimberley Pager, University of Huddersfield, UK

Pathetic fallacy is a subtle literary technique used in art and literature to convey emotions through natural elements (Ruskin: 1856). This technique has been researched mostly from a literary point of view, but no linguistic model exists to define it. It is difficult to identify it precisely or universally since definitions and uses vary, and it is often seen as personification. After taking a survey of English teachers to sense what they thought pathetic fallacy was and what texts features this technique, it is obvious that an updated definition is needed to identify pathetic fallacy clearly and point out why and how it is used, but also to consider its impact.

In this paper, I consider pathetic fallacy as such: used to build characters’ emotions and portrays them to the reader through a “projection of human emotion” onto nature (Lodge: 1992), and personification as the attribution of human characteristics to inanimate objects (Cushman & Cavanagh: 2012). I will argue that pathetic fallacy is distinct from personification and that it is used more than it is discussed on the academic stage. It is
therefore worth giving it a clear definition and worth researching how this technique contributes to characterisation and affects the reader overall.

In this paper, I will highlight the differences between pathetic fallacy and personification, as well as present my current model for identifying pathetic fallacy. I will also point out the potential it has to impact on characterisation using a short textual example: an extract of *The Hound of Baskerville* (Doyle: 1859). I chose to take a stylistics approach to analyse the extract. From this research, three main purposes of pathetic fallacy emerge. It can be used to express explicitly an otherwise implicit emotion; to illustrate clearly and universally what the narration does not, and most of all it influences how the reader perceives characters.


**Reader Knowledge Worlds, Possible Worlds Theory and Counterfactual Historical Fiction**

Riyukta Raghunath, Sheffield Hallam University, UK

Ryan (2006) points out that "whether [counterfactual historical] fiction presents the fate of the world as determined by human decisions at certain strategic points or shows it to be the product of forces too numerous and too complex to be controlled, the purpose of such thought experiments is to invite reflection on the mechanisms of history, and the real world always serves as an implicit background" (657). As Ryan states, the purpose of such fiction is to draw attention to the actual world and the significance of such texts is understood only when a reader uses their knowledge of the actual world to interpret the text. An ontologically centred theory such as Possible Worlds Theory that focuses primarily on the ontological mechanics between the different domains created by the text and their relation to the actual world is a suitable methodology with which to analyse this type of fiction. However, in my application of the theory to Dick’s *The Man in the High Castle* (1962), a counterfactual historical fiction text that explores a world where Germany has won the Second World War, I found that while existing theory can successfully reduce the text into different ontological domains, it does not account for how readers process such fiction.

To resolve this issue, I develop a model that builds on Ryan's (1991) Possible Worlds framework to more accurately theorise how different readers use their different levels of knowledge to interpret the counterfactual world. In particular, I introduce an ontological domain, which I am calling RK-worlds or reader knowledge worlds, to label the domain that readers use to apprehend the counterfactual world. I also show why it is important to demarcate RK-worlds from the actual world that serves as an epistemological template for counterfactual historical fiction. The revised Possible Worlds model that I offer is especially important for the analysis of counterfactual historical fiction, because unlike other genres, understanding and interpreting the significance of such texts is directly linked to the kind of knowledge world that readers bring to the text.


**Talk to Text: the stylistics of devised theatre**

Jeremy Scott and Jonathan Fitchett, University of Kent, UK

Oddey (1996) characterises devised theatre as ‘[originating] with the group while making the performance, rather than starting from a play text that someone else has written to be interpreted. … A devised theatre product is work that has emerged from and been generated by a group of people working in collaboration.’ An integral part of the process of devising is improvisation, often centred on exercises, the playing out of scenarios and more free-form work to develop characters. Theatre has its distant origins in these kinds of processes; as Barker (2002) argues, devised theatre has ‘always been there’. Indeed, it could be argued to some extent that ‘the cult of the author’ and ‘the sacred script’ are a relatively modern deviation from theatrical tradition. More recently, director/writers such as Mike Leigh have taken these modes of theatrical process (devising/improvisation and scriptwriting) into a combined methodology in work such as *Abigail’s Party* (1977) and *Naked* (1993).

This paper will discuss a current and on-going theatre project, *The Plant*, which makes use of similar techniques. It will describe the creative processes involved (initial character sketching, improvisations, scripting), and then go on to analyse the results (video excerpts from rehearsals and the completed script) using a novel combination of Text World Theory and stylistics frameworks which analyse characterisation (Culpeper 2001, McIntyre 2014). The central research question will be: can these theoretical frameworks highlight moments of what will be termed theatricality, and do they help account for ‘authorial’ decisions made in the crafting of the final script?


**When words become artwork: the multimodal texts by Y.Ono and C. Damrauer**

Yulia V. Sergaeva, Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia, Saint Petersburg

The article explores the domains of multimodal linguistics – a new field in language studies that focuses on multimodal/polycode texts, interconnection of different semiotic systems and synthesis of arts. The author analyses works of art and literary texts by Yoko Ono and Craig Damrauer, conceptual multimedia artists and writers representing different generations, artistic methods, views and yet having one thing in common – their books are easily converted into paintings and vice versa (see Damrauer, 2006 and Ono, 2000 as an example).

The idea of using words and texts as a part of art objects has been used for centuries and became the main artistic method for many contemporary artists from Joseph Kosuth and Sol
LeWitt in the 60s to former illegal graffitists, now respected artists Ben Eine and Steve Powers. However, Yoko Ono and Craig Damrauer can be equally seen as authors of semiotically complicated texts and as artists producing text-based paintings. While exploring their works, our focus of analysis is on 1) how verbal and non-verbal multilevel means of communication can be explicitly and implicitly interwoven in the process of meaning-making; 2) how the Author and the Interpreter interact in space and time at different perception levels. The research in this field expands the boundaries of a multimodal text which, in Russian scholarly tradition, is usually termed as a *polycode text* or a *creolized text*. The three terms are also compared and discussed in the article. A study reveals the peculiarities of “Author - Interpreter” relations in the texts in question. It is concluded that the role of the interpreter in the explored texts ranges from that of an observer to a co-author without whom a work of art cannot be completed. Multimodal texts of this kind require high-order receptive and interpreting skills, as well as co-creativity and action.


**Concept of ambiguity in semantic structure of Koan texts**

Nataliia Shcherban, Kyiv National Linguistic University, Ukraine

The concept of ambiguity is not foreign to Japanese culture, with an adjective “aimai” – “ambiguous”, “dubious” “doubtful” – expressing an essential part of Japanese lingvoculture with its tendencies to avoid answering a question directly, but rather alluding and hinting at something without giving information to an inquirer definitively. This research investigates linguistics means employed to induce a specific state of a reader’s mind, called Enlightenment, in the Zen Buddhistic texts, Koan, through the lens of cognitive semantics and the Japanese cultural concept of ambiguity – aimai. The creation of new meaning behind the words, sentences and dialogues between an adept and a mentor, with the last ones having little to no apparent logic or causation, are of particular interest to this study. The said dialogues define a common communication strategy and are often full of paradox and have a very particular ending – a capping phrase (着語/箸語 jakugo). A capping phrase is often a part of another religious or secular text, thus, transforming into an intertext. Due to this, the context, within which a reader should understand a capping phrase, and the semantic field of its constituents expand. Furthermore, a reader’s perception of the whole koan undergoes some core changes: the usual cognitive pattern of narrative recognition is broken, allowing a reader to deepen the process of semiosis provoked by the interruption in the pattern and effect of defeated expectancy. This in turn offers a peculiar contrast to the architeconics of koan is strict and allows not deviation from its genre tradition, especially form-wise. Intra- and translevel language means that aid in the process of achieving satori – an immanent personal experience of understanding of true human nature through “a state of one thought” maxim, constitute the interest of this research.

**Language and Style in post-Joycean Interior Monologue**

Bernardo Silva, University of Nottingham, UK

This paper offers a comparative analysis of Interior Monologue (IM) in fictional texts by major authors writing in the mid to late 1920s and 1930s. The goal is to study the evolution of
IM as a literary technique diachronically, a topic lacking in current research (with notable exceptions). The invention of IM is often ascribed to Édouard Dujardin in Les lauriers sont coupés (1887) but it was James Joyce’s Ulysses (1922) which became the ‘locus classicus’ of the technique (Cohn 1983: 217). Problematically, critics and scholars have termed IM ‘stream-of-consciousness’, borrowing the phrase from Henry James’ The Principles of Psychology (1890), and often mistaking IM for what is actually Free Indirect Style (FIS), another technique which rose to prominence as a means for portraying fictional minds in Modernist literature. Because FIS precedes IM in its invention and use as well as in being studied, this terminological confusion has led to IM being comparatively under-researched as a technique in its own right. My paper draws on the only analytical model developed in a book length study of IM (Tumanov 1997) and complements it with more recent stylistic-narratological research on consciousness representation (Rundquist 2017) and the cognitive enactment of stream-of-consciousness (Nuttall 2018). I analyse texts by William Faulkner, John Dos Passos and Thomas Wolfe, highlighting divergences and convergences in their IMs and drawing on the revisions of their manuscripts and other available biographical data as evidence for their intentions in experimenting with IM. My approach is also historical in that I contrast the findings of my analysis with those of Tumanov, who studied IM exclusively in pre-Joycean European fiction not written in English, and others who have researched the links between IM and FIS in the Modernist period (e.g. Sotirova 2013). My historical approach is motivated by the facts that not only did the three writers under analysis actively read each other, they were also confessed admirers of Joyce and influenced later practitioners of IM such as Jack Kerouac. Assuming a historical perspective, I will propose, allows for a richer and more nuanced understanding of the semantics of IM to be reached.


Semantics, Gender Analysis, and The Big Bang Theory
Larry Stewart, The College of Wooster, USA

The Big Bang Theory, now in its twelfth and final season, is still one of the more popular sitcoms in the United States and also is aired in the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada; however, despite its longevity as “the longest running multi-camera comedy in history,” it is also the subject of some stinging criticism. It seems to have become “a critical punching bag” as one analyst says, most often for what many consider its use of sexist and anti-feminist tropes and for its lack of character development that leads to repetitive plots. The leading males—Sheldon, Leonard, Rajesh and Howard—are all intelligent, highly educated, and, in some sense, endearing characters. They are largely responsible for what Jonathan McIntosh, calls the “adorable misogyny” of the show. Although several of the female characters—Amy and Bernadette—are also highly educated scientists, it is Penny that
is frequently referenced as supplying the “blonde bimbo” trope. As well, nearly all of these characters are viewed as relatively static with the comedy of the show resulting from a repetition of stereotypical traits.

This paper uses corpus linguistic analysis to determine what such an approach may add to gender analysis or whether it may supply a competing theory and a somewhat different interpretation. Most gender analyses suggest that in Lola Türker’s words “The Big Bang Theory supports traditional gender roles in relationships, in which the male is dominant and the female subordinate [and shows] divisions between sexes both in spatial and emotional terms.” These analyses frequently claim that the male characters, though purportedly representing a “nerd” culture, actually portray traditional male gender roles. However, some analyses go further by arguing that this portrayal of “nerds” acting out behavior we usually associate with stereotypical “macho” males results in the humor of the show. However, portraying misogynistic behavior in a humorous way simply makes light of such behavior. A semantic analysis of the 654,257 words of dialogue in the first eleven seasons of the show supplies further evidence for an examination of these interpretations.


**Multimodal Lives of Proverbs - A Case of Paremic Demotivators**
Grzegorz Szpila, Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland

The study of paremic demotivators (defined, in Szpila 2017b, as “demotivators which contain a proverb”) offers a unique opportunity of analyzing proverbs in multimodal contexts. Although the term multimodality does not surface in the index of subjects in Mieder’s bibliography of phraseological and paremiological research (2009), interest in the interface between oral/written proverbs and visual resources used in their actualizations in everyday communication has not developed recently. For example, the genre of (paremic) demotivators can be traced to the tradition of wall tapestries, painting, cartoons and (motivational) posters, to name just a few separate genres and traditions of embedding proverbial wisdom in pictorial/visual contexts. This paper continues the author’s research of paremic demotivators in Polish (Szpila 2017a, b). The aim of this presentation is to shed some more detailed light on possible characterizations of the verbal and non-verbal resources of meaning making in the Internet genre of demotivators. Based on recent studies of demotivators as hybrid texts (cf. Kudlińska 2014, Ozga 2014, Piekot 2012, Szpila 2017, Tarsa 2017), the author tries to develop a classification of pictorial elements of demotivators based on their contribution to the paremic event/situation. The author would like to examine the roles of pictures and their multifarious functions in providing context for paremic actualizations in demotivators.
Fairy text worlds in a narrative perspective
Alla Tsapiv, Kherson State University, Ukraine

The research focuses on the analyses of the text worlds in fairy narratives. Stylistic tropes and narrative techniques in the creation of the text worlds in fairy narratives have been studied. In terms of Elżbieta Chrzanowska-Kluczwksa all stylistic tropes are classified into microtropes, macrotropes and megatropes (Chrzanowska-Kluczwksa 2013). The functions of narrative irony, simile, metaphors and other tropes demonstrate a special way of “furnishing” text worlds in fairy tales. To narrative techniques we refer play models of narration (comprising a definite type of narrator, a special narratee, a plot and a composition structure). Case study of the research is Frank Lyman Baum’s fairy tale The Wonderful Wizard of Oz. Considering the fact that a child reader has not got a good life experience and deep encyclopedic knowledge the author uses child-oriented linguistic means (stylistic tropes and narrative techniques) to make a fairy tale interesting, easy for child’s comprehension. Children project everything they know about the universe, people, nature into the text world, they combine items from the real world with the fairy text world to create a holographic picture in their mind (Ryan 1991, Semino 2009). In fairy tales even logical impossibilities are quite natural and realistic for children (space travels, magic transformations, witches, a speaking scarecrow, a tin woodman and a lion). The world of a fairy tale is the world created by adult writers for children. The factor of the addressee is considered to be dominant in the narrator’s choice of language means to “furnish” fairy worlds. It is assumed that fairy text worlds are inhabited by anthropomorphic characters (Dorothy) and fairy/animalistic/floristic characters with anthropomorphic features (a scarecrow, a tin woodman, a lion, witches, speaking mice). In fairy tales two worlds coexist: a fairy text world (the Land of Oz) and actual world (Kansas prairies). These two worlds coexist and create a fairy “universe” (Elena Semino 2009).

If one reads the Hebrew Bible, especially the prophetic books, one cannot but notice the recurring personification of the city of Jerusalem. Daughter, wife, mother, sister, whore, she is all of it. Scholars have given various reasons for this striking image: a ritual background with a statue of a city-goddess (cultural-anthropological), the result of the female gender of the word ‘city’ in Hebrew (linguistic), or the use of a literary metaphor with a peculiar ring to it in a patriarchal society (literary-cultural). Whereas these studies focus on where the idea originates from, they pay little to no attention to a possible cognitive origin of the image. This paper aims to offer such a view, considering THE CITY IS A WOMAN as a dominant conceptual metaphor in the Hebrew Bible with specific effects on the meaning making process of a reader. Relying on metaphor and framing theory, the paper will show how the metaphor works in a selection of texts. It will discuss both its linguistic construal and the consequent advantages for meaning production. These include but are not limited to introducing relationships (family-based and other, legitimate and illegitimate relations) and exploring the (female) body (mobility, but also procreation). The paper concludes that God, or at least the writers of the biblical text, had ample reason to present Jerusalem as a woman.


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The World of the Short Story
Rúnar Helgi Vignonsson, University of Iceland

Editing an international short story anthology is never an uncomplicated or innocent practice. One might set out to find a bunch of brilliant stories but when it comes down to putting together a book, all kinds of internal and external criteria come to the fore and demand attention. The editors’ view of the world, their very connection to past and present, their background, such as in languages, all this is bound to influence their scope and hence their
selection. Geographical location leaves a lot of invisible or latent markers that have had a lifetime of settling in. Even if the starting point is ‘world literature’, a concept that is most commonly associated with Goethe but has become increasingly value-laden, it is culturally conditioned to the West and its hegemony. For the longest time, or until late last century, world literature was synonymous with western literature which means that one has to be conscious of tendencies that sneak in and prepared to deconstruct them.

As one of the editors of global anthology of short stories, I have read hundreds of stories from all over the world in the past two decades. Ours is the first proposed anthology of its kind in Iceland and it is hard to find another one worldwide that is as systematically structured as ours. Three volumes of the planned five have already been published, the North American, the Latin American one, and the Asian and Australasian one, to critical acclaim in Iceland. The fourth, which is dedicated to Africa, is due in the fall of 2019 and work has already started on the European volume. Each of these volumes has created its own internal logic, but the basic concept remains the same, to include exceptional short stories from as many countries as possible.

In this paper, I will discuss the selection process and the numerous problematic issues that the editorial board has faced. How we came to define the focus of each volume, the time span, the multicultural representation, how gender equality issues influenced our selection of both stories and translators and how aesthetic values complicated our selection of stories from certain parts of the world.

Worlds in Amerindian proisaic texts: cognitive semiotic and narrative perspectives
Svitlana Volkova, Kiev National Linguistic University, Ukraine

A handful of Native American novelists – Navarr Scott Momaday (Kiowa), Leslie Marmon Silko (Laguna Pueblo), Louise Erdrich (Ojibwa), Linda Hogan (Chicksaw) – constitute the material of investigation. The objective of the abstract is two-fold due to the existing of two worlds in the space of literary text – mytholoric and literary itself.

The paper integrates cognitive semiotic and narrative methods showing the net of mind and language in highlighting ethnocultural concepts, values and way of thinking, embedded in the mytholoric characters, which constitute mytholoric world of proisaic text. Mytholoric world is defined as a space that incorporates different mytholoric images (human being, animal being and artefacts).

In cognitive semiotic perspective I state that the space of mytholoric world co-exist with literary world in semantic space of the text due to embedding into its narrative such elements as Native American myths and legends, ethnocultural symbols (plants, animals) and artefacts, which help to draw the borders between two worlds and at the same time interpret the mytholoric nature of the main hero, who is always in the center of narration as embodies the person living in the present day American society. Such character is classified in the abstract as author’s mytholoric. Author’s mytholoric character is a cumulative cognitive and semiotic textual construal, which reflects behavior and deeds of the person who stands for the ethnocultural values in present day American society and tries to adapt to the rules of existing in that new world. Semiotic and cognitive analysis makes it possible to construe the BUTTERFLY model of his image.

In narrative perspective I reveal that metamorphosis and reverse perspective are effective narrative tools in creating and interpreting the mytholoric world in literary text and revealing ethnocultural implicatures of the author’s mytholoric image. The abstract suggests linguistic and cognitive mechanism of reverse perspective in literary text as narrative technique, which is the basic method for interpreting the main character as ethnocultural image. The abstract
gives the narrative models, which configuration is determined by the genre of the literary text and eclecticism of the images. Among them are the following: triptych model and step-by-step model.

**Verbal Holography, Music, and Emotions in Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Malvern Hills*: Creating a Multidimensional World**

Olga Vorobyova, Kyiv National Linguistic University, Ukraine

The growing interest of literary linguists to artistic effects generated by the interface of multimodality and intermediality in contemporary fiction has been recently enhanced by the focus on verbal holography as a textual mechanism of creating a multidimensional fictional world. Melopoetic motifs in Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Malvern Hills* (an aspiring guitar player, composer and singer seeking ‘fame and fortune’, an ageing couple of musicians on the verge of family collapse, the rotten atmosphere of London musical auditions, and the inspiring aural and visual environment of the hilly West-England countryside), punctuated by the emotional fluctuations of bliss and anger (a glorious feeling, a sweeping view, the most beautiful place in the world vs livid with anger, hatred for the old dragon, rigid with rage) as well as splashes of multimodality (I could almost taste the ideas for new songs), unfold against the background of a verbally highlighted clash between the claustrophobic showbiz London (dying on its feet) and nearly unlimited openness of the airy countryside (I aimed my voice at the horizon, sending echoes around the hills). The effect of multidimensionality achieved by the play of verticality and horizontality, of bounded and open spaces, of visual and audial, of sublime and profane, of decline and revival, of spring and summer, of urban and rural, of emotional crescendos and nostalgic quietness, of youth and maturity makes the story a true ode to imagination (giving it just that edge it needed) and creativity (There must be a suggestion of outdoors. Of air, of echo) where music becomes an ecological dominant conceptualized as the idiosyncratic primary metaphor CREATIVE IS NATURAL.


**Invitation to a Semantic Disintegration: An Analysis of Vladimir Nabokov’s Literary Language of Artificial Objects and Processes in *Invitation to a Beheading***

Aleksandra Vulic, University of Cambridge, UK

In the works of Vladimir Nabokov, frequently, inanimate, artificial and/or mechanical objects and processes are extensively described and seemingly humanised in ways that provide a distinctive texture for the frequently absurd, existentially destabilised worlds he constructs. As has been remarked by numerous scholars, among them Bodenstein (1977), Alexandrov (1995) and Księżopolska (2016), Nabokov’s literary fiction provides particularly pervasive and detailed descriptions of solid objects, including furniture, household items and appliances, and
mechanical toys. Additionally, as has been remarked by Księżopolska (2016), often, these objects can be described as, in some way, displaying eerily human qualities. However, in spite of the rise, over the past few decades, of post-humanist discourses, among them Thing Theory (Brown, 2004), that examine the role of the artificial, inanimate and/or mechanical object or process in contemporary culture, the literary and linguistic functions and framings of such objects and processes remain largely underexplored, in general and in the context of Nabokov specifically. This is perhaps particularly evident in the case of one of Nabokov’s earliest and most linguistically interesting pieces of literary fiction, as well as the one he himself held in “the greatest esteem” (Nabokov, 1967) out of all his works, the originally Russian-language Приглашение на казнь/Priglashenie na kazn (1935-36), later translated and reframed, by Nabokov himself, along with his son, Dmitri Nabokov, into Invitation to a Beheading (1959).

In the latter, Nabokov’s linguistic inventions, among them the “nonnon,” the “absolutely absurd object,” and choices, profuse with objects such as shadows, mirrors and tools that are able to “pause,” “start,” “stop,” “run” and “take off” and “nonsense” sentences that state a process has occurred, then immediately negate it, paint a rich, disorienting, existentially destabilising literary landscape. It is therefore the purpose of this paper to provide a detailed literary linguistic analysis of Invitation, employing a number of stylistic tools, including point of view, perspectivation/deixis and speech and thought presentation, as well as incorporating theoretical frameworks such as Thing Theory, in order to elucidate the ways in which Nabokov is able to use words in order to destabilise world(s).


‘I’ & ‘You’: the case of a dramatized reader and an overly dramatic narrator

Ella Wydrzynska, University of Nottingham, UK

The relationship between author, narrator, character(s) and reader was perhaps best laid out by Wayne C. Booth’s (1961) concept of the implied author, which easily delineates the teller and receptor roles at different narrative levels. In the case of Pseudonymous Bosch’s The Secret Series, however, these roles are conflated, with versions of Bosch appearing in each of the teller positions. As well as being the published name on the cover, he predominantly acts as a first-person narrator inside the novel who is visibly writing the book as it goes. This ‘I’ narrator frequently addresses the reader directly, primarily with extensive use of the second-person but also through ongoing metafictional reference to the act of reading. In this way, the reader is brought into the world of the text, positioned alongside the ‘I’ narrator, and dramatized as a fictional narratee. These strategies are typical of postmodernist writing, as demonstrated by Patricia Waugh (1984) in her list of characteristic features. What makes Bosch’s novels particularly interesting – and perhaps even more complicated – is that they are actually aimed at children.

Terms such as ‘postmodernism’ and ‘metafiction’ are traditionally absent in academic criticism of children’s literature, perhaps, as Geoffrey Moss (1990) acknowledged, because
they tend to be considered too difficult for children to handle. Yet Robyn McCallum (1996) later identified that such concepts were becoming more mainstream. This trend has certainly continued, with the vast majority of contemporary junior fiction (for readers aged 8-12) now drawing on these strategies with relative frequency, although the corresponding academic awareness remains comparatively underdeveloped. Through an examination of Bosch’s novels, I aim to fill this gap, demonstrating how the postmodern roles of narrator and reader become by-products of each other, and how a successful reading of the text relies on the reader embracing this invitation into the world of the text at the very beginning.

**Beckett, Grice, and the Fragmented Mind**
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Griceans propose to explain the semantic properties of linguistic expressions directly in terms of speakers’ or authors’ communicative intentions. Thus, what an expression means in the language is nothing over and above the particular cognitive effect speakers of that language generally intend to have on an audience by its literal utterance or transcription. Asserting that \( p \), for instance, is partly defined in terms of the intention to produce in some target audience the belief that \( p \) (perhaps via producing the belief that the speaker believes that \( p \)). A standard objection to this theory is that it appears to make no room for non-communicative uses of language. Surely, the objector will hold, language is used to talk to oneself and such self-directed speech cannot be explained in terms of intentions to produce beliefs in the audience, because the speaker is her own audience. Samuel Beckett, in his 1953 novel *The Unnamable*, seems to illustrate this problem beautifully and perfectly. The protagonist ‘cannot speak’ and ‘cannot think’ but still ‘must speak’ and must ‘therefore perhaps think a little’. What communicative intention could possibly be attributed to this fictional speaker, who has no audience at all but themself? In this paper, however, I argue that the objection is seriously misguided. Communicative intentions must be attributed to speakers, for otherwise we have no plausible explanation of their behavior at all. And this applies to self-directed speech as well. The only difference is that we must also assume that human minds are easily fragmented such that one part can make one act on intentions to communicate to some other part. The best argument for this is provided by recent work in empirical psychology on the nature of auditory verbal hallucinations, namely, that such hallucinations are best understood as arising from errors of attribution. The subject produces a self-directed utterance but fails to correctly identify herself as the source of the utterance. This would help to explain why hearing voices is so often described, by voice hearers, as having their mind populated with a familiar group of intentional agents.

"The Book of the Illusion": On the writings of Þórbergur Þórðarson
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Thórbergur Thórdarson (1888-1974), is one of Iceland’s greatest and most innovative writers and best known for his autobiographical novels. They give an insight into the author’s own life and that of the people he associates with, generally in a humorous light. Thórbergur has been perceived as a stylistic genius, but at the same time, his thinking was often seen as rather naïve and eccentric. I believe however that, above all else, he was a visionary. Thórbergur’s worldview is largely based on his enthusiasm for theosophy and Indian philosophy, as well as his roots in romanticism. This was the basis of his interest in socialism, spiritism and Esperanto.

The aim of this lecture is to demonstrate the recurrent theme of illusion in Thórbergur’s writings, how in fact, the mundane world of material desires turns out to be one gross illusion, and how the way to break free from it is not through reason, but through intuition or “mature imagination” as he himself calls it. My main focus will be on Thórbergur’s first full length autobiographical novel, Íslenzkur aðall (e. Icelandic Nobles/In Search of My Beloved) from 1938, which is based on his life in the summer of 1912. Although this is a first person narrative, there is a clear distinction drawn between the young and the mature protagonist. Thereby he sheds a new and humorous light on his own character as a romantic young man, illuminating his perception of reality, and the changes that gradually occur within him. It is the inner growth of his character, along with other clues within the text, that reveal his deep connection with the theosophical way of thinking. With this in mind, the same trend can be found in Thórbergur’s other autobiographical writings, in various shapes as well as being an essential part of his aesthetical ideology.