Proceedings of the International Conference

The Communication of Certainty and Uncertainty: Linguistic, Psychological, Philosophical Aspects

University of Macerata (Italy)
3rd – 5th October 2012

Under the auspices of the University of Verona (Italy)

Edited by
Andrzej Zuczkowski
Ramona Bongelli
Ilaria Riccioni
Carla Canestrari

University of Macerata

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Preface

From the 3rd to the 5th October 2012 at the University of Macerata (Italy) was held the International Conference "The Communication of Certainty and Uncertainty: Linguistic, Psychological, Philosophical Aspects", organised by me, Ramona Bongelli, Ilaria Riccioni, Carla Canestrari (University of Macerata), prof. Sibilla Cantarini (University of Verona, Italy) and prof. Anita Fetzer (University of Würzburg, Germany).

In addition to the three invited speakers prof. Werner Abraham (University of Wien - Austria & Ludwig-Maximilians University of München), prof. Elisabeth Leiss (Ludwig-Maximilians University of München), prof. Jan Nuyts (University of Antwerp), there were 134 speakers coming from 32 different Countries of all the 5 Continents: Germany, Austria, Belgium, Sweden, Hungary, France, Romania, United Kingdom, Finland, Switzerland, Ukraine, Russian Federation, The Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Norway, Italy, Canada, Colombia, México, Brazil, South Africa, Tunisia, Lebanon, Turkey, USA, Japan, China, Morocco, Australia, Argentina, India.

The speakers were divided in 23 Sessions (plus a poster Session): Religion, Specific Languages, Music, Media, Law, Multimodality, Communicative Interaction, Scientific Writing, Theory of Mind, Interaction at School, (Un)Certainty across Age, Decision making, Humour, Politics, Literature, Second Language and Contrastive Studies, Academic-Institutional Discourse, Doctor-Patient Interaction, Philosophy, Argumentation and Persuasion, and three Sessions specifically devoted to Italian, German and French Languages.

A selection of the submitted papers is being published in different collections. In the present volume are included some papers in English and French concerning the following five main topics: *communicative interactions* (both in ordinary and professional contexts); *literature* (mainly French)*; media* (TV, web, magazines)*; L1 and L2* (German, Italian, Japanese etc.); *Philosophy* (Wittgenstein, Kaplan, Peirce etc.).

We wish to thank Prof. Edda Weigand, Prof. François Cooren and Dr. Pierre-Luc Chabot for their support and assistance before and during the editing process.

Chapter 1
Communicative Interactions

Mediation and the Uncertainty of Meaning

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1. Introduction

Mediation is a form of conflict resolution in which a third-party neutral works with the disputing parties in an effort to achieve a resolution of their dispute. Mediators do not have the authority to rule on the merits of the dispute, but must use their skills to assist the parties in arriving at an agreeable resolution. As such, mediation lies between negotiation, where only the disputing parties (and perhaps their advocates) are present and engaged in the discussion, and adjudication, where a judge is present (and perhaps a jury) who has the authority to decide on the merits of the case. Today, mediation is used successfully in a variety of areas such as disputes between union and management, divorcing couples, community arguments, medical malpractice issues, and insurance claims.

There are several types of mediation, although all involve a neutral party (or parties) without authority to decide on the dispute. There is Problem Solving Mediation, where the mediator probes the parties' positions and suggests alternative resolutions, sometimes suggesting what is in store for the parties if they don't reach agreement. There is Facilitative Mediation, where the mediator asks questions, validates the parties point of view, searches for underlying positions but does not make a recommendation, does not give advice, or predict what a court would do. There is Evaluative Mediation, where the mediator, prior to a court appearance, points out the strengths and weaknesses of each parties' position, predicts what is likely to happen court, and makes recommendations. Concern here is with the parties' legal rights, not their interests. And finally, there is Transformative Mediation, where the mediator attempts to empower the parties, have the parties recognize the other's needs, and encourages the parties to take responsibility for the outcome but does not pressure them to settle.

In this paper I am focusing on the use of uncertain language in Problem Solving Mediation, in particular, how it is often used in divorce disputes. The structure of the mediation usually consists of a three-way meeting of the parties with the mediator, where the ground rules are established and the individuals' current positions are presented. This is then followed by individual meetings with each party to assess their positions (what they say they want) as opposed to their interests (what they really want), discussions with them on the strengths and weaknesses of their positions, on what issues

there might be room for compromise, predictions of what might occur if a settlement is not reached, and the like.

Throughout all of this discussion, it is critical that the mediator control the process by being a Transactional Leader, one who sets forth the rules in a clear, direct fashion, provides a sense of a goal, orchestrates the moves the parties make, and determines when there should be contact with each other. This requires direct language with unequivocal meaning.

On the other hand, it is critical that the mediator be an interested, sympathetic, and trusting associate of both parties, insuring that they hear and consider the ideas set forth by the other without undue push-back. As such, the mediator is a Transformational Leader, selling ideas and proposals, suggesting tradeoff, in essence negotiating with each parties to bring them closer to the other's position. This requires indirect language with uncertain meaning: ambiguity, hedges, mitigation, questions rather than statements, and the like.

2. The Case

The following illustrates both of these styles of language during a post-divorce mediation where the parties (the former husband and wife) are disputing over the adherence to the custody agreement for their 17 year old son, David. The mediation and the dialogue has been adapted for this paper.

Jack and Susan were married for 18 years. Jack is an insurance salesman and Susan is an executive at Staples, Inc. They were divorced 6 months ago for irreconcilable differences and they have sought mediation because of arguments over the adherence to the Custody Agreement for David, their 16 year old son.

The relevant part of the Custody Agreement is the following:
1. Mother has custody of the son except: a) every other Sat and Sun; b) one month during the summer; c) whenever the son wants to visit his father.
2. The rules for David in each home are to be jointly negotiated, are to be flexible, reasonable, and may be changed as needed.

3. The Initial Meeting

The mediator, as a Transactional Leader, greets the parties, asks them to get comfortable. He then proceeds:

> *"I want to acquaint you with the ground rules for this mediation. After hearing the guidelines, I will ask you to agree to abide by them".*

The mediator then states:

"First, there will be no yelling or insulting. Second, each of you will be limited to 2 minutes per turn. I will stop you at that point. Third, one person talks at a time and there will be no interrupting. Fourth, everything that is said here is strictly confidential. Do you agree? Fifth, after a brief joint meeting to hear your sides, I will talk to you separately. Sixth, after two hours of trying to make progress, we will assess the situation and will decide if we should continue. If we decide not to continue, I will refer this case to the court for adjudication. Do we have agreement on all of this guidelines?"

There is no doubt that the mediator is in control. His language is clear, direct, and unambiguous. Then the mediator asks both parties to state the nature of the dispute as they see it. The mother, Susan, responds saying that Jack simply can't following the rules of the Custody Agreement and it's driving her crazy. She gives examples:

"He doesn't come on time to pick up David; He sends him back to her with dirty laundry, one time including one of his own dirty t-shirt; He has a girlfriend stay over and she frequently walk around the house scantily dressed; He lets David watch TV programs to all hours of the night and it affects his school; He permits David to use the Internet unsupervised; He doesn't insure that David does his homework; He permits David to go out on school nights; He refuses to get a membership in the golf club for David".

When the father, Jack, is asked his position, he says that his former wife, Susan, is unhappy, needs something to complain about, and most of what she is asserting is simply untrue.

The mediator then sends each party to a separate room and begins talking with the wife, Susan.

Mediator: That's quite a list of issue you recited just a few minutes ago. Tell me, what do you hope to achieve in this mediation. [Politely asking Susan for her agenda, whatever it is at the moment. Gives her some control over their conversation]
Susan: I want Jack to live up to the Custody Agreement.
Mediator: What does he say when you raises these issues? Incidentally, are they all spelled out in the Custody Agreement? [Casting doubt on her alleged violations]
Susan: He says I'm just being a bitch. Yes, I suppose they all aren't explicitly stated in the Agreement. [Giving a concession that there is room for interpretation of her charges]

Mediator: Do you think it's possible that the information you have been receiving is erroneous or exaggerated? [Raising the source of the information] And do you think Jack might believe that he is living up to the Agreement? [Questioning whether Jack is deliberately annoying her]

At one point the following conversation occur:

Susan: Also, Jack sends his dirty laundry back with Davids.
Mediator: What does the custody agreement specify about David's laundry?
Susan: That I do it. Jack doesn't have a washing machine.
Mediator: And when David brought his laundry back with some of Jack's with it, was it a lot?
Susan: No, actually it was only t-shirt.
Mediator: And how frequently does this occur?
Susan: Well, it only occurred once, about 3 months ago.
Mediator: And it hasn't occurred since then. Did you say anything to Jack about this.
Susan: No. I just washed the shirt and sent it back.
Mediator: So, maybe this is an issue that not very serious, given all the other issues?

Later, the follow colloquy occurs:

Susan: Jack has a girlfriend, Sandy, who stays over and who walks around scantily dressed.
Mediator: Tell me, how did you happen to learn this?
Susan: I overheard David talking to a friend about Sandy walking to the Condo pool.
Mediator: So she presumably had on a bathing suit that would pass muster with the Condo people where Jack lives.
Susan: Yes, I suppose so.
Mediator: And how old is David. Seventeen and a senior in high school?

Still later after Susan asserted that Jack does not enforce David doing his homework and lets him watch TV and go out on school nights, the following occurs:

Mediator: Incidentally, how are David's grades in school. He's a senior, no?
Susan: David's doing great. All A's both semesters. High Honor Roll.
Mediator: Well, does it seem that he is being hurt by watching TV or going out with friends?
Susan: I never allow it and I was not allowed to go out on school nights.

Mediator: Is it possible that you and Jack have slightly different levels of tolerance for what's permissible now.
Susan: I suppose so.

This type of fact finding continues, with the mediator constantly asking questions or making comments that will cause Susan to be less certain of her position.

4. Flow of Mediation

The mediator then moves to the husband, employing the same technique: asking questions and making statement that are aimed at casting doubt on the accuracy and/or seriousness of the alleged infractions, and making tentative suggestions of how each could be put to rest. The Mediator is being a Transformation Leader, moving from party to party, seeking to gain their trust by sympathizing with them and proposing solutions to the individual disputed areas.

At one point, Jack loses his temper and threatens to leave, whereupon the mediator reverts to his role of the Transactional Leader, telling Jack in unequivocal language with an authoritarian voice the unpleasant consequences which might arise in court, should the mediation fail. Jack immediately calms down and the mediation continues.

In the end, Susan concedes that her concerns were not as serious as she originally contended. Small adjustment are made in the details of the agreement, and Jack agrees to get a membership for David in the golf club.

5. Conclusion

All Problem Solving Mediations do not proceed as the one just described and sometimes a resolution is not reached, even after multiple mediation sessions. However, in each case, a successful mediator has to move from the Transactional leader to Transformational leader and back in order to keep the process of the mediation intact. By using direct, unequivocal language and keeping a viable resolution in plain sight, the mediator guides the parties towards a goal. By using language which is sometimes vague, ambiguous, and subject to more than one interpretation, the mediator gives the parties room to find their best position. In the end, the mediator must return to being the Transactional Leader as the parties negotiate the end result.

Does conversational humor have to be funny?

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Abstract

Koestler's bisociation theory (1964) has been taken into account as the cognitive framework focusing on the ability to make inferences in humor production. Though high elaborative inferences are considered as a 'value-added', it happens that verbal humor is also recognized when it appears as lacking of meaning. Actually, humor is present in everyday conversations, but sometimes it is not assured (i.e. certain) how to detect any humorous gist, especially for outsiders.
Through a qualitative analysis, verbal humor in conversation has been explored to highlight its most and less certain aspects. The main purpose of this paper is to point out clues for fun recognition and appreciation in various forms of verbal humor, where the inferential dynamics shifts towards different functions.

Keywords: Humor, inferences, conversation, pragmatic functions

1. Introduction

The general question of my paper (or, better, of these notes) arises from the observation that while humor can be found in many sophisticated varieties, in the form of puns, jokes, witticisms and so on, it can also be recognized and appreciated in some uses of language which seem to be completely devoid of wit and even of discernible meaning. This semantic weakness is frequent in the ordinary, everyday conversations which I have examined, as well as in many examples analyzed in the psychological and linguistic literature on humor.

The main aim of much research in pragmatics and discourse studies is to identify and analyze the functions that humor serves in everyday interactions. Of course, in this framework humor different relational functions are more prominent, though the cognitive effort to produce and to understand humor is not taken into account. In this regard, I may say that a large number of the examples I have observed are not very so clearly identifiable and often seem almost unintelligible.

The question posed in the title, highlighting the fact that issues regarding humor recognition and appreciation in conversation are not clear-cut, can serve to condense some of my own certainties and uncertainties concerning humor recognition and appreciation. It can thus serve as the focal point for an exploration of some instances of humor in everyday talk. I will start from some points on humor that seem fairly evident and go on to others that are more debatable and less clear-cut. One reliable point concerns the cognitive dynamics of *bisociation*, according to Koestler's well known theory (1964). This psychological theory focuses on the cognitive ability to make inferences in humor production and other sorts of creativity. Starting from this relatively solid ground, I attempt a qualitative analysis aiming to explore different forms of humor in everyday exchanges in which the inferential dynamics seems to slide in various directions. As a matter of fact, humor is an activity that usually takes place in the presence of others; people seem to be pleased when others participate. And it is this at second level of analysis that most of the uncertainties emerge.

The examples I discuss are excerpts drawn from a corpus of recorded and transcribed conversations in Italian (approximately 2 hours), gathered over the last five years with the general aim of exploring various conversational strategies, some of them unrelated to humor. The participants are native speakers ranging in age from 25 to 65. Translating jokes can be highly problematic, but for the sake of discussion I propose approximate equivalents in English accompanied by glosses. Transcription rules have not been applied.

2. Inferences and bisociation

Humor comprehension involves inference processes by means of the bisociation mechanism, which, in Koestler's definition, is the simultaneous mental association of an idea or object with two fields not ordinarily considered to be related. The incongruous meaning inferred through this process is assumed to be adequate and true, though unexpected. Or rather, all too true, that is to say false, since it emerges from an unusual logical mechanism: a meaning which appears clear and certain and, at the same time, elusive and uncertain.

Of course, not all the inferences involved in discourse comprehension entail humor. Humorous inferences hinge on meanings which are unusual and intentionally not immediately accessible. The more distant the mental fields or scripts (Raskin 1985; Attardo 2001) involved in the bisociation process, the more difficult the inference. The more distant the scripts linked in the bisociation, the more sophisticated the humor, presumably. Thus inferences that are either too obvious or too obscure (i.e., requiring too much cognitive effort) may fail as humor.

In everyday interactions, inference accessibility depends mainly on the contextual coordinates of the interaction, such as the participants' shared knowledge and what has already emerged during the conversation. The 'value-added' component of humor inferences may derive from their accessibility only to privileged participants, i.e., by exclusivity, at the cost of running the risk of being misunderstood. In fact, some inferences are taken to be funny only because they exclude outsiders.

The first example (1), for instance, would be virtually incomprehensible to anyone lacking the participants' shared knowledge. A stayed up late with her colleagues the night before and she is complaining about her boyfriend's comments. B's reply alludes to a famous phrase in Mel Brooks' movie "Young Frankenstein" (1974), a favorite quotation of these friends:

(1)   *43. A : allora mi ha detto che avevo la faccia stanca con le occhiaie*
        44. B : gobba… quale gobba… (sorride)
        45. A : esatto (sorride)

        43. A : and then he told me that my face was tired with dark circles under my eyes
        44. B : hump… what hump (*smiling*)
        45. A : exact (*smiling*)

It can also be observed that in everyday conversations humor is not always based on inferences that are unexpected and new. Old, familiar jokes retain their enjoyable effect, like jack-in-the-box or well known story and nursery rhyme for children.

The persistent comic effect arising from a familiar joke can be seen as rather amazing and paradoxical; if the joke is known and expected, why should it be found funny? This suggests that the cognitive components in such cases are less important than surprise or other emotional components. In certain respects, this kind of pleasure reactions could be regarded as analogous to primary emotions, including the difficulty in controlling them. I am especially referring to the emotion of fear, as in this small example of a trivial experience that can happen to anyone. Even when we know that the dog living in the house next door is harmless, we always become frightened when, as usual, it barks suddenly from behind the fence. In the same way, the humorous reaction can precede our rationality and it can be dissociated from our previous knowledge.

It is however more common for old jokes to be simply taken for granted and as not really considered as funny. Nevertheless, this kind of humor can be relevant in conversation, since it underlines a shared ground between participants; in this sense, it functions as a relational device allowing the speaker to move close to the addressee (i.e., solidarity, positive politeness). In these cases, it is the pragmatic function of humor that comes to the

foreground, although the cognitive effort is weak, as we can see in Examples (2) and (3). A (a professor) and B (a PhD student) meet in their Department courtyard:

(2)   *9. A : wow! ma è il tuo bimbo?*
        10. B : l'avevo portato dal dottore… e mhh…adesso… l'ho portato
            qui…
        11. B : ma com'è diventato grande! (sorride) Sarà iscritto
            all'università (leggera risata)
        12. A : sì è cresciuto…(leggera risata)

        9. A : wow! is this your little boy?
        10. B : I took him to the doctor… and mhh…now… I've brought
            him here
        11. C : how he's grown! (*smile*) he must be enrolled university ?
            (*light laughter*)
        12. B : yes he has grown (*light laughter*)

Example (3) is an excerpt drawn from a popular Italian TV quiz (*L'eredità*, September 2012), and features a quizmaster (QM) and a player (P). It illustrates how even rather feeble humor may be effective in bringing to the foreground pragmatic functions of humor, which may include social control, affiliation, politeness and the like. In this case, the humor lies in an untranslatable play on words - "Cipro" (Cyprus, the answer the contestant is proposing) and "ci provo" (I'm trying/guessing, in the phonological expansion ci + pro + vo):

(3)   *QM : allora la risposta… qual è la risposta?*
        P : cipro… provo! Ci…pro…provo(ridacchiando) ci… provo…
        QM : ok cipro…viamo (ride) ci… proviamo (leggera risata)

A freely rendition conserving both meanings:

        QM : so the answer… what's the answer?
        P : Cyprus I'll try! I'm guessing (*amused voice*) I'm… trying
        QM : ok cyprus we'll try…(*laughter*) let's… try (*chuckle)*

Encoding her answer as a pun, P employs a verbal joke based on assonance both to cope with her awkwardness at being uncertain about the correct answer and to elicit a sympathetic response from the addressee, QM, and the audience. And in fact, P's move achieves the goal: her pun produces a positive reaction. QM not only adopts the same assonance, but he extends her joke emphasizing his sharing through the use of the inclusive plural first person (i.e., "we"). This instance shows how humor can serve more than

one intra- and interpersonal functions, such as releasing tension, defending the self, creating solidarity.

3. A pragmatic perspective

In the *General Theory of Verbal Humor* (1991) Raskin and Attardo distinguish between the Semantics of Humor and the Pragmatics of Humor. A further distinction made by Attardo (2001) differentiates between Humor Competence (HC) and Humor Performance (HP). HC regards the speaker's ability to recognize and to understand a sentence as funny (i.e., the semantic, cognitive level); this level is connected with the humor mechanism. HP takes into account the humorous intentions and its uses by actual participants in a given interactional context as well as their reactions (i.e. the pragmatic level).

On the pragmatic level, the functions of humor in the interaction are crucial. We know in fact that in everyday conversations humor may serve various functions (Attardo 2001), including group affiliation, rectractability, social control, de-commitment and the like. As noted by Brown and Levinson (1987), Holmes (2000) and Stame (2010, 2012[1]), humor in conversation may function as both positive and negative politeness.

Besides humor's functional aspects, a pragmatic analysis needs to take into account the contributions of all the participants in the conversation, not only that of the one who delivers the humor. Participants' reactions are also embedded in a conversational sequence. Contextual, verbal and non-verbal markers can suggest to participants that an act should be assumed to be funny, although some (e.g., laughter or a lack of reaction) can be rather ambiguous and difficult to decode. And contrary to the common view that laughter is elicited by external stimuli, in conversation participants are frequently to laugh after *their own* utterances. Laughter (or smiling) is often only a paralinguistic device by which the speaker shows that the utterance is meant to be humorous. The same metalinguistic function can be recognized in a hearer's laughter (or smiling), when it signals that the speaker's utterances have not be taken seriously. (Jefferson, Sacks, Schegloff 1987; Hay 2000).

According to Hay's four-stages model (2008), *recognizing* humor, on the one hand, is not always the same as *understanding* it: speakers' non verbal markers can lead hearers to realize that an utterance is intended as humorous even when they do not actually understand it. On the other hand, recognizing humor and understanding it do not necessarily entail *enjoyment* and *acceptance*: the person who complains that a sarcastic joke is not amusing has obviously recognized it as something that was supposed to be funny.

Assuming the speech acts perspective, Attardo (2001) argues that humor recognition means that a participant has recognized the *humorous intention* of the acts of another or others. Recognition, however, does not necessarily involve an agreement to cooperate in the ongoing conversational level (i.e. humor). Humor *acceptance* means that a participant agrees to cooperate actively at the same discourse level proposed by the other participant(s). Attardo calls this cooperative attitude *mode adoption*. In his account, mode adoption concerns the participant's willingness to share the same script or Mental Model (MM) (Johnson Laird 1983) adopted by other participant(s). Along with the notion of MM, Context Model, the construct proposed by Teun van Dijk (1997; 2006), is particularly useful in discourse analysis. According to him, Context Models refer not only to actual spaces, to "observable" situations, but also to inner context representations, that is to say, the mental interpretation of specific contexts (Stame 2012[2]).

In short, these mental structures provide people with relevant information about peculiar elements and conventions of a given entity and on how it is dynamically organized. They concern not only the certainty of the ordinary objects and events of the real world, but also the uncertainty of imaginary worlds. Of course, acceptance of a "possible world" requires participants' temporary "suspension of disbelief" without regard to its plausibility (Coleridge [1817] 1985, 314).

Mode adoption is frequently expressed by participants when they extend a joke in subsequent turns, e.g., when they come up with variations on the same theme. Willingness to extend the humorous exchange is one way of acknowledgement and expressing appreciation of the humor. This kind of cooperative agreement between participants is evident in both Example (3) above, and even more notably in Example (4) below.

Mode adoption through the extension of humor is typically present in the conversational phenomenon called *Comical Hypothetical* (CH) (Winchatz, Kozin 2008). CH is a kind of humorous discourse co-produced during the conversation where one or more participants share in the creation of an imaginary world, as they do in Example (4). CH requires of course participants' temporary "suspension of disbelief".

The following example (4) is an excerpt drawn from a telephone call. It shows how interlocutors can collaborate by displaying shared cultural and relational knowledge to co-create an imaginary situation. The background of this exchange is the fact that V's son is not completing his degree as quickly as she hoped:

(4)   *32. S : mi ha detto che l'ha fatto*
        33. V : guarda… quando si laurea giuro che vado a San Luca a piedi…
        34. S : in ginocchio…

35. V : in ginocchio ci vado…e… sui…ceci…compro un sacchetto di
    ceci quelli secchi e
36. S : e poi ci mangiamo un sacco di panelle a cena sabato
37. V : così mi portano all'ospedale

32. S : he told me that he passed it [*his examination*]
33. V : look when he graduates I vow I'll go on foot to San Luca
34. S : on your knees
35. V : on my knees…and…on…chickpeas…I'll buy a bag of
    chickpeas the dry ones and
36. S : and then we'll eat a lot of panelle for dinner on Saturday
37. V : so that I'll be taken to hospital

S starts off with reference to a real-life event, V's son passing his last exam, a step towards his degree. V (33) responds wryly, inventing an unlikely scenario: that when her son graduates, she will carry out the traditional way of expressing gratitude for grace received, making the long uphill trek to a local church. She thereby shifts from a real event to a hypothetical one. S collaborates by raising the stakes of improbability: V will not merely go on foot but on her knees, S's response is consistent with the unlikely scenario invented by V: i.e., she uses mode adoption. V further raises the stakes with an even more absurd addition to the imaginary scenario (35): kneeling, once a punishment for misbehavior, could be made even more painful with dry chickpeas. S (36) promptly steps up the absurdity by bringing panelle, a dish made with chickpea flour. This takes the exchange to yet another level (or mode), which is immediately adopted by V (37) and raised again, to a hospital emergency.

4.   Conclusive remarks

Bisociation has been taken into account as the main inferential mechanism underlying humor in conversation. Due to this cognitive specificity, humor can also be seen to be a cooperative activity aimed at eliciting amusement among participants in talk. However, while it easy enough to identify frequent instances of humor in everyday conversations, it is often more difficult, especially for an outsider, to detect any real comic content. That is to say, it would seem that conversational humor can succeed without actually being very funny.

This paper identifies specific discourse strategies which, along with verbal and non verbal markers, are the necessary clues that permit the recognition and appreciation of humor. When humor is strictly context bound, as it often is in conversations, stylistic strategies can evoke, clearly or less explicitly, suitable cognitive structures for producing and

understanding humor, such as scripts or MMs. These strategies are functionally analogous to the typical metalinguistic strategies which provide a reader/hearer with the adequate frame in various kind of narratives. According to Attardo (2001), humor enjoyment depends not only on sharing the MMs evoked, but also on adopting them. The cooperative creation of imaginary worlds, i.e., the *Comical Hypothetical* phenomenon (Winchatz, Kozin 2008), has been considered here as a variation on the mode adoption theme.

These discursive strategies and the cooperative nature of humor come to the fore especially when other interactional functions are prominent, such as group affiliation, social control, negative or positive politeness. This might be regarded as a sort of conclusion tying together my certainties on conversational humor touched on short review. But uncertainties remain.

Although it happens less frequently, people may also react to jokes even when they are alone, especially in the presence of emotional factors such as intense surprise. However, if caught in the act of enjoying jokes by themselves, people are usually embarrassed and feel obliged to account for it: like soliloquy, solo laughter appears socially suspect (Goffman 1981). One could suggest that any individual, 'monologic' situation actually includes the presence of others. Like irony, humor might well be considered as "polyphonic" (Bakhtin 1963; Mizzau 1984). But all this needs to be verified with regard to the enjoyment of humor. To appease my sense of uncertainty, I would like to suggest that, in one way or another, humor is most suitable and appreciable when shared. Veale (2004) argues that social beings are by nature adapted to seek humor wherever it is possible. This predisposition towards humor in advance might be the reason why in conversation humor is so frequently preferred as a strategy for achieving many relational functions, making it a kind of 'value-added' component.

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Development of motor communication skills at school

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Abstract

Although it is not a specific school curriculum subject in France, communication is a crucial educational challenge in the perspective of the achievement of social skills and the preparation for future life. Physical Education classes and especially during group activities, students learn to communicate and interact with their bodies. This form of motor communication develops through motor and cognitive learning. We present the findings of a study conducted in high school in the field of collective sport: communication is the fundamental element of the game structure, because uncertainty is indeed manipulated by opponents. Our results show that both communication and counter-communication are major educational objectives, and progress in this field is fundamental.

Keywords: Motor communication; physical education; collective game; communication skills.

1. Introduction

Communication is at the center of collective activities where the achievement of a task requires adjusting to the behaviors of others. In this sense we refer to interaction or reciprocal relationships requiring communication. According to Abric (1996), communication can be defined as all processes whereby exchanges of data and meanings are conducted between individuals in a social situation. The situation of communication involves the presence of two persons, but who are not merely a transmitter and a receiver, as Shannon specified in his theory of information (1952). Indeed, the reciprocal relationship induces mutual dependence, thus requiring an accommodation of people engaged in an interaction.

Although it is not a specific school curriculum subject in France, communication is a crucial educational challenge in the perspective of the achievement of social skills and the preparation for future life (Simonpoli 1991). Communication is a central issue at school, through interaction, adaptation to others or expression of ideas. Most of the time, it is written or

oral. However, another, more original form is taught: body communication. As early as infant school in France, expressing oneself with one's body appears to be a fundamental issue (school curriculum, 2008). Indeed, in Physical Education classes and especially during group activities, students learn to communicate and interact with their bodies. This form of motor communication develops through motor and cognitive learning because it is necessary to process information, based on which an appropriate decision is made which should lead to the performance of the desired action. Abric (1996) indicates that communication is a complex system, as we will meet many difficulties. Motor communication is an enhancing factor of difficulties since it involves all the errors that stem from the realization of actions. Even if motor learning is the leading pedagogical purpose of physical education, decision-making is equally important, mainly in collective activities where the communication of decisions is specific: information can be effectively transmitted, but it can also be hidden or distorted.

Here we focus on learning which takes place in collective situations (social situation), where the player is not alone, but is in the presence of opponents or partners (Parlebas 1992). These situations are experienced in interaction, that is to say the subject adapts his or her own behavior to the behaviors of others, and vice versa. It would be irrelevant for a player not to consider the other players. Success in these activities depends on the development of cognitive and motricity skills; this type of learning is defined as students' ability to communicate certainty to their partners, and uncertainty to their opponents (Ripoll 2008) in a situation constrained by the rules of the game. However, this ability to communicate involves both very rapid decision-making as regards motor action, and its implementation with respect to communication codes which are specific to the game.

We here present the findings of a study conducted in high school in the field of collective sports. We investigated in the development of non-verbal communication skills in physical education classes. Since in team sports the goal is to defeat the opponents, the instructor teaches students to convey certainty towards partners, and uncertainty towards opponents by spreading false information or delaying signs announcing their intentions. All the communicative actions of players are listed and classified after deferred observation of their motor actions to cooperate or oppose. Student progress is then assessed after eight sessions. Our results show students made progress in achieving the skills defined by the curriculum through better communication. For instance, we observed more motor actions to communicate intentions to partners (aid, support…) and to create uncertainty to deceive opponents. Body communication and ability to "read" the bodies of others are fundamental aspects of learning. Even if motor action is decisive to success, it is also essential to give information about or to conceal one's intentions.

2. Skill development in collective games

First, game learning is collective. Students cannot learn on their own, because they need to adapt their own behaviors to the behaviors of others, while playing by the rules of the game. In physical education classes, students act in restrained groups which define themselves as structured sets of people. These individuals have the ability to perceive themselves in their environment and to interact directly by participating in a collective activity, with a rule system and formal or informal standard system (Abric 1986).

Skill development in collective sports is located within this framework. Students interact in order to score more points than their opponents and eventually win the game. However, interactions are mainly carried out through body movements; these actions make sense for others. We are located here in a semantic perspective. Learning in small groups at school requires taking major constraints into account. These are represented by the rules and the necessary adaptation to other players to achieve an operative goal. The adaptation requires communication between players, which falls into two categories: first, the communication of certainty actions between members of the same team; then, communication of uncertainty between members of opposing teams.

This variance is essential, since it arises from the internal logic, from the essence of collective sports: these are collective activities where cooperation within a team serves a common opposition purpose. The goals of the two teams are contradictory: it is crucial to impart one's game intentions to partners and feint them or hide them from opponents. The control of the game and the achievement of a skill level defined by school curricula govern this motor communication. In these collective activities with cooperation and opposition, uncertainty is indeed manipulated by opponents: ambiguity underlies adverse actions to hide intentions, mislead or delay information.

The involvement of uncertainty in team sports can be described in three different perspectives (Mario 1992). First of all, uncertainty can be temporal, that is to say players try to conceal when exactly they will act from their opponents. Then, uncertainty is spatial; players do not know where the action will occur on the sports field. Finally, the action itself is uncertain, since players do not know what specific type of action will occur. These three types of uncertainty are constantly manipulated by the two teams. They deceive their opponents as they do the best to inform their partners about the following events. According to Menaut (1998), uncertainty is a pivotal element of all life activities. However, it remains the fundamental element of the game structure, which accounts for the fact that uncertainties encountered in the game reach a level of uncommon intensity.

3. Analysis of player's decisions

We conducted a study grounded on research in praxeology by Parlebas (1981). This science of motor action allows us to define the situation, actions, gestures and signs of individuals based on their roles and sub-roles defined by the game. Then a detailed analysis of the situation is indispensable to understand individual decisions. Everyone has a freedom of action in the game, but this freedom is developed in a specific context defined by the rules, rights and duties of each player in accordance with their specific role.

In this collective context, it is essential to fully understand the communication network which is specific to the game: Bavelas (1948), then Abric (1986) and Parlebas (1981), notice that all group phenomena are determined by the properties of a communication network. This network is represented by the set of channels allowing for data transmission (see figure 1).

Team A   Team B
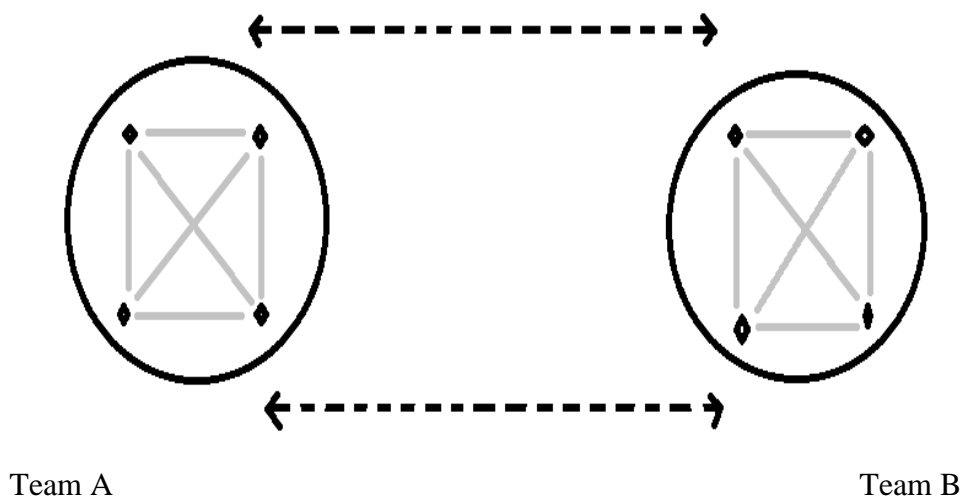
Figure 1 : the network in the collective sport.

Caption 1:
⬡ : Player
_____: cooperative relationship between members of the same team.
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _: adversarial relationship between members of opposing teams.

Collective sports involve a symmetrical communication system excluding paradoxical relationships, i.e. each player always communicates certainty

with the same people and uncertainty with the others, without possible change during the game[1].

This communication network diagram can be applied to all sports; it allows us to understand the actions of the players: for example, communication will differ according to who interprets or is reading the message. For instance, a player will show signs of a pass to his partner and at the same time he will try to delay these signs or hide them from his opponents by playing faster.

The observation of players in action can convey an impression of disorder, but the trajectories and gestures of each one of them follow the logic of the game. They are reflective of the evolution of the game, and especially of the players' roles. Everyone is trying to communicate with other players in terms of the configuration of the game at any specific time.

Students' assessment during the game was complex to achieve. Questions arose which determined our study design. The most crucial involved the nature of the indicators which could allow us to effectively estimate their level and their progress considering the variety of actions performed.

We present a study which we conducted in order to accurately appraise students' progress in team sports, mainly in their ability to communicate with their partners and counter-communicate with their opponents: in other words, we endeavored to describe communication actions and locate them in space and time, because an important element is to communicate the appropriate information at the right place and at the right time.

4. Methodology

We detail an example of a high school class (16-year-old pupils) in France: these students realized a basketball sequence of eight sessions. We filmed them during the first and last sessions to observe all actions performed by each player according to game situation. The teams were the same in these two sessions: they were mixed and homogeneous in level of play.

To measure student skill development, we built an observation grid identifying all motor actions displayed during the game. We were inspired by the work of Dugas (2006) and Oboeuf (2010) who investigated communication in collective games and provided insight into all possible communication actions. We identified all actions as being favorable to the

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[1] In some traditional games, however, such paradoxical relationships can be involved so that a participant may choose to play in cooperation with or opposition to the other players throughout the game and may modify his choices regarding these relationships at any time in the game. Such game features induce high uncertainty.

game (see table 1); these actions aim to keep the ball, or to recover it for the team that does not have it.

	Toward opponent	**Toward partner**
Direct communication	Winning a duel Shooting in a favorable position Getting the ball back after an opponent shooting Intercepting the ball	Passing Getting the ball after a partner shooting Dribbling to keep the ball
	Getting a lost ball back	
Indirect communication	Preventing opponent pass Being in the way of opponent Hampering a shooting Taking up position in defense Taking up position to get the ball back after an opponent shooting Feinting	Moving in a free space Taking up position to get the ball back after a partner shooting

Table 1: Favorable actions during the game, between partners or opponents.

We identified four different categories among these favorable actions:

1. Direct communication: these actions are defined as contacts with another player which directly involve the ball. These actions are generally viewed by the spectator because they are located in the space near the ball. They can be oriented:
   a. Toward an opponent, in order to take his ball or score a point.
   b. Toward a partner to keep the ball and progress toward the target; this concerns dribbling, passing, recovery after a missed shot.
2. Indirect communication: it occurs next to the main action, and relates to the game without the ball. These actions can be oriented:
   a. Toward an opponent when the player hinders information, prevents an opponent from passing the ball, or prepares a more direct action.
   b. Toward a partner when the player moves to help his friend with the ball, to keep it and approach the target.

Observation and statement of actions of each player were deferred for delayed observation. This allowed watching slow motion pictures, which could not be possible by direct observation.

Then, in order to measure development of skills and progress, we differentiated actions in favor of continuous play (successful actions,

efficient indirect communication) and actions leading to inefficiency or failure (loss of ball, inappropriate movement). Then, unfavorable actions are being defined (see table 2).

	Toward opponent	Toward partner
Direct communication	Offence on player Lost duel Shooting in unfavorable position	Intercepted pass Badly parametrized pass Infringement of rules of play Loss of ball control
Indirect communication	Lack of defense Inactivity on opposite shooting Lack of sensible placement or movement in defense	Lack of attack Lack of sensible placement or movement in attack.

Table 2: Communication actions which are unfavorable to the game.

Records of each player's actions take into account the efficiency of an action in the larger framework of the game. Since every act of communication takes place at a specific time and place, these parameters are essential for judging whether it is appropriate or not. Consequently, we used wide shots to locate the action at all times and reveal its full meaning.

5. Results

For the whole class we observed significant progress between session 1 and session 8, which varied according to type of communication.

The number of actions in each category is calculated for the whole class and compared between the two sessions so as to provide a vision of progress (see figure 2). We noted that students made more progress in indirect communication actions, that is to say, in the game without the ball. Those are actions which do not seem essential at first sight. Sometimes they give uninitiated people an impression of disorder. These mainly concern movements during the game.
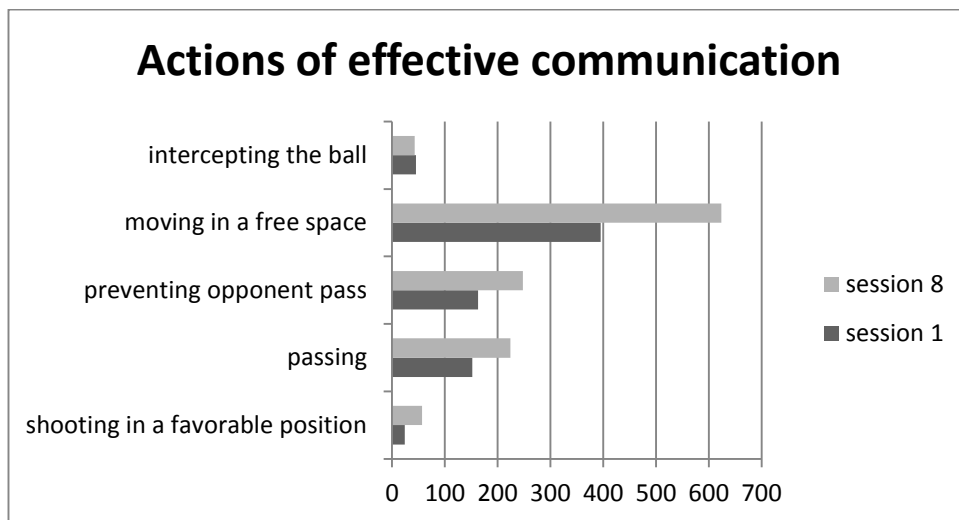
Figure 2: Examples of communication actions which are successful during the game.

This figure (2) shows that students' progress varies in extent according to the types of communication involved. We noted that movement in offensive game, which pertains to indirect communication, is paramount and occupies a lot of space in the game. Progress in this field was also important: efficient movements in attack rose from 395 to 624. Likewise, the number of interceptions and shots diminished. Still, this can be explained by the fact that interceptions are much more difficult to achieve since progress in movement and effective aid for partners was important. Students took up better positions to receive the ball, and interceptions were thus more difficult to anticipate for the defenders. Indeed, the number of passes increased by 47% (from 152 to 224 passes) and the number of passes intercepted or lost remained the same, which reflects a more efficient placement and movement of the players.

By contrast, in the area of basket shooting, which is the central element of the game, there was no progression. Indeed, the number of successful shootings increased slightly (from 22% to 24%); however, the total number of shootings increased significantly, from 44 to 94. A detailed analysis of our results allowed us to find that it was specifically before shootings occurred that pupils' progress was most remarkable. Students moved about in a more effective fashion, understood each other better and thus managed to successfully deceive opponents. Increase in the number of scored points did not depend on more effective shooting but on better communication between players.

We also sought to determine whether the number of unfavorable actions had diminished or progressed (see figure 3).
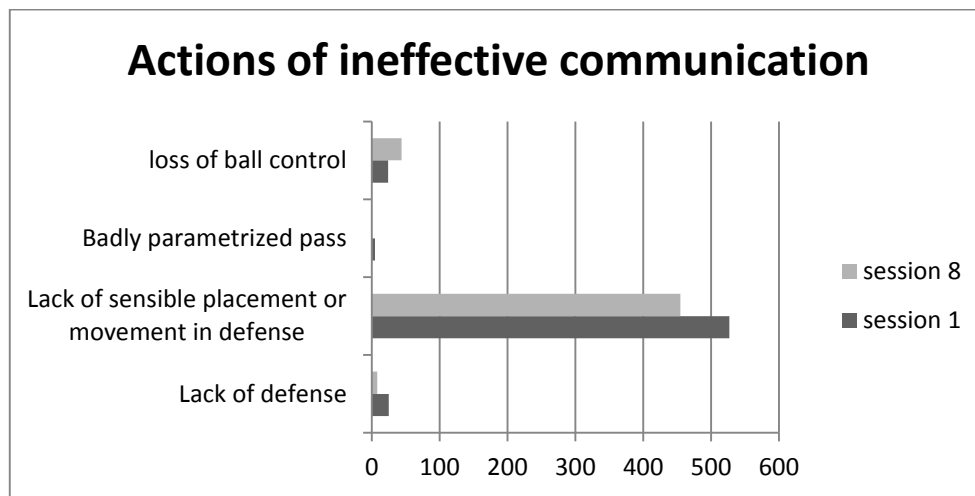
Figure 3 : examples of communication actions which are ineffective during the game.

In view of those results, we may be tempted to draw inaccurate conclusions. For example, there is a sharp increase in ball loss after poor control of the ball (from 24 to 44): one may indeed wonder whether this is not indicative of poorer level of play. However, the inclusion of another parameter is necessary, because the total number of actions increased greatly; the game is played faster, and there is an increased defensive pressure. It requires faster decision-making and more rapid actions, causing more errors in player coordination.

Indeed, the total number of motor actions increased from 2,320 to 3,026, which represents a 30% increase for the same amount of playing time. Finally, depending on the nature of communication actions, the students' results and progress differed. We can observe a significant increase in actions conducive to a continuous play, but also an increase in direct actions unfavorable to the game. The greater density of actions brings difficulties in terms of information and decision-making, causing more errors (ball control, shooting in a disadvantageous position with a better defense).

We conducted a chi-square test of independence (χ^2) on the evolution of students' assessed levels: results show very significant progress in all actions (p = 0.001). However, those differences are most remarkable in the reduced number of adverse and indirect communication actions. This concerns a decrease in movements inappropriate to the situation, in attack and defense.
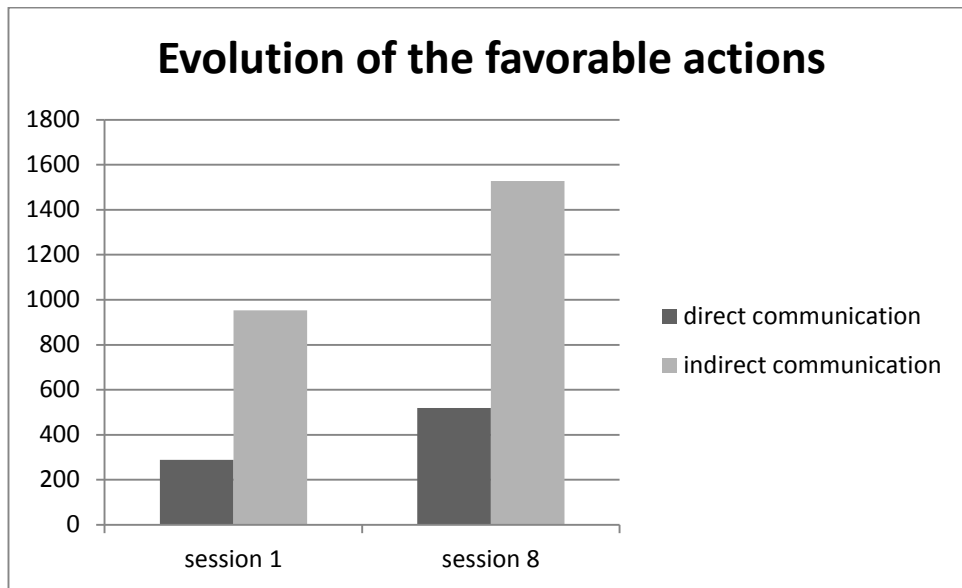
Figure 4 : Evolution of communication actions favorable to the play; results in number.

We can observe an increase in the number of effective actions (see figure 4), both in direct and indirect communication. The number of favorable actions in the game is larger at the end of the learning sequence, reflecting students' progress. This information can be related to the assessment of unfavorable actions.

Another results show us that the number of ineffective actions decreased but only as concerns indirect communication (see figure 5).
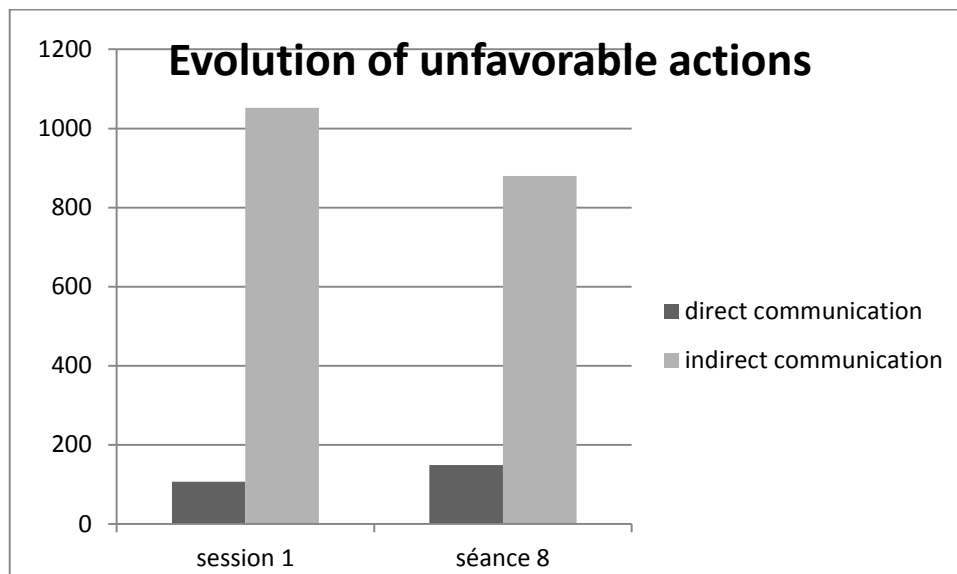
Figure 5 : Evolution of unfavorable communication actions; results in numbers.

Players' positions and movements, when they do not have the ball, are more numerous and more effective. Nonetheless, the number of direct, unfavorable actions also increased. This is a surprising result, which seems to stand in contradiction to the others. But although this increase can be perceived as indicative of regression, it reflects a more effective game.

However, these direct, unfavorable actions were not numerous enough to allow us to consider the evolution to be significant. As we saw earlier, the increase in direct game errors is mainly attributable to a faster game.

6. Discussion

The use of a communication based on certainty or uncertainty is inherent to collective games, as appears from an in-depth analysis of the different forms of communication in such contexts. Grandjouan (1951) considers that uncertainty, far from harming the game, is its pivotal element. The game would be impossible otherwise. The development of the relevant communication skills is partly contradictory, because it is necessary to communicate our intentions to our partners and at the same time to hide them from our opponents. All behaviors are communication actions.

As argued by theorists from the Palo Alto school such as Watzlawick, it is not possible not to communicate. Even the lack of willingness or the willingness not to communicate with others are signs of communication. The latter does not have an inverse, which is especially true of team play.

Indeed students who do not participate in attack or defense show others signs of disengagement.

Communication actions are either effective or ineffective. Inefficiency results from an inappropriate decision or a desire not to communicate, but this behavior is a sign that we can interpret. We find these behaviors with players who do not move or do not participate in attack or defense. Refusing to participate is a form of communication that we considered in our research. We noted progress in this respect for our players, with fewer passive conducts in session 8.

The fact that we cannot escape communication is a real problem when we want to communicate with partners and simultaneously conceal – or delay – the same information from our opponents. Here lies the challenge of group games: both communication and counter-communication are major educational objectives, and progress in this field is fundamental to achieve the skills defined by school curricula.

Pupils' progress is far from being the mere consequence of improved motricity, even if the latter is an essential factor. It also stems from an enhanced ability to read or decode information transmitted by others, and to communicate or hide intentions by body movements. Although we do not notice progress in motor actions like dribbling or successful shooting, results are positive mainly in the game around the ball. Movements are part of motor learning because they are not trivial but meaningful in this context. Our results show significant progress as reflected by an increase in defensive movements to stop opponents and movements to help partners in attack situations.

Unfortunately, indirect communication actions are not the main focus of spectators and the media. Indeed, search statistics to assess the level of top teams in team sports is not very productive; apart from number of goals, successful passes, differences in score, all the available statistics concern the game with the ball. But in a football match with twenty-two players, for how long does each player retain the ball? Is it technique with the ball that defines a talented player? Is there no other requirement to analyze effectiveness in a team? In view of the results of our study, learning to play without the ball is fundamental, and one obviously cannot ignore ball position. Any movement is operated within a specific context, around the position of the ball.

The difficulty of collective games is that the pressure of time is very important, which represents constraint for players. It is fundamental to decide and act quickly to constantly adapt. The originality and difficulty of learning are related to appropriate decision-making and its implementation in a very short time frame.

An individual acting in game situation is compelled to act immediately; the *in vivo* observation allows us to identify skills spurred into action by relevant decision-making. Thus, the group is essential to allow each

individual to learn. The psychosocial perspective of learning, reflecting interaction between players (Zajonc 1968), places the group in the center of the device. For Lewin (1948), the group must be considered as a set of interdependent people; the group situation influences individuals' behaviors. An individual within a group is different from an isolated individual because a group is subject to a system of forces. In team play, students constantly adapt to the context in deciding at any given time how to communicate nonverbally with others. The study of informational processes and decision-making in interaction situations is fundamental and helps to define learning objectives and then to evaluate progress.

The interest of games to study the mechanisms of communication is multiple: according to Abric (1987) the game is a situation which often leads to conflicting incentives between teams. This is always the case in modern sports (handball, basketball, football…) where two teams compete under the same rules, with the same rights and duties. The situation of these games is often simple, but produces differentiated behaviors. Moreover, the game allows to determine an objective interdependence between the players (Apfelbaum 1967), which is defined by the rules and the matrix of gains. This enables to distinguish between behaviors resulting from the situation and those arising from the interaction. The game is a situation of social interaction and as such, is well-suited for analyzing human behavior. Pascal and Fermat already studied games, in1654 (Tannery et al. 1891-1922) in the perspective of the uncertainty of game probability in the decision. The game is indeed an ideal object to study and observe. Choices and available time are limited by the formalization, that is to say the strict context which allows observation and analysis of behavior.

Then, uncertainty is in the center of games, and it is the object of specific learning processes at school. We can only find this specificity in physical education. Generally, in everyday life, people try to overcome the uncertainty. People want to control events, but the development of communication skills requires taking into account the creation of uncertainty, which then allows pupils to read or decode the actions of others. Here is an important challenge in the education of children; it concerns the control of the body, and the knowledge of the meaning of motor actions. The stake in team games is communicational, in a defined frame.

However, the development of communication skills is not limited to the specific context of the practice of modern sports in physical education classes. Other situations are favorable and more open like traditional games. Possibilities in terms of communication actions are much more important, because the rules of the games are less defined and they allow a freer expression of the self. Interactions are also more interesting and richer, from an educational perspective.

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Counseling and reduction of uncertainty.
Some educational perspectives

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Abstract

This paper investigates, on the side of counseling, the theme of the uncertainty of a piece of information communicated by a speaker.

This uncertainty derives, according to Carl Rogers, perhaps the most influential figure in the modern conception of counseling, from a difficulty that a person experiences in communicating first to himself, then to the others, his own visceral and deep emotional reactions connected to a certain situation perceived as being problematic.

This paper aims to examine how a particular counseling relationship may reduce this uncertainty. This can be proved by reinterpreting the counseling relationship in the light of the epistemology of complex dynamic systems and of Sander's psychoanalytic approach inspired by this and by highlighting the educational implications.

Keywords: Counseling, relational field, Self decentralization/re-centering

1. Counseling: a new / old practice

In this first section the main aspects of counseling and its history will be highlighted. From them definitions and perspectives essential for further investigation will come.

Giving an unambiguous definition of counseling is not easy. The etymology of the word coming from English "to counsel" and, in turn, from Latin "consulere" and has many different meanings (Fulcheri and Savini 2011): to consult, to deliberate, to reflect, to ponder, to console, to comfort, to cure and take care, to help, to provide for someone, to be worried, to advise. Of these meanings the ones have been recently taken into consideration concerning "take care of", "help" (Di Fabio 1999; Calvo 2009, 15). And this with good reason, as we will prove, as counseling is specifically characterized by empathetic and accepting listening, by a kind of relationship valorizing the way of feeling and being of a person. This kind of relationship is "transformative", as we will explain later on.

There are different types of counseling depending on the countries it developed, and on the contexts and historical periods. In the United States, initially, it was work counseling, in the strict sense of the word but consistent with the Taylorist work approach of the time – that is the identification of the jobs more appropriate to the characteristics of a certain worker. In Germany, the first counseling services can be traced back to the time of the Prussian state (Moodley et al. 2013, 293).

But Rollo May (1939) and Carl Rogers (1942), founders of humanistic psychology, that, in the '40s, started to use the word in a new way explicitly connected to the development and the realization of the person. They maintain that the individual is not only in need of guidance and direction, but he is capable of "self-orientation" and "self-heading", unless, in the course of his development, he was deterred, or certain situations repressed his inborn ability to evaluate the meaning of the experience of Himself in the world. In fact, in each individual there is an "organismic valuing process" of the experience and an "actualizing tendency" that leads him to gradually conquer ever more integrated and higher levels of "functioning".

This capacity the individual has to self-orientate and to develop can be recovered, as we said before, if the counselor establishes with him an accepting and empathetic relationship: the individual, accepted and understood, becomes capable of self-acceptance and self-understanding.

Therefore according to May and Rogers, counseling is not so much a technique that aims to provide solutions, but a way

> to assist the individual to *grow*, so that he can cope with the present problem and with later problems in a better-integrated fashion. If he can gain enough integration to handle one problem in more independent, more responsible, less confused, better-organized ways, then he will also handle new problems in that manner (Rogers 1942, 28-29. Italics of the author).

From that time counseling will concentrate on "helping a person to help himself", achieving higher levels of autonomy and "empowerment", now a widespread word.

> Whichever approach the counselor uses the fundamental purpose is the autonomy of the "client", his capacity : to make his own choices, take decisions and put them in place (British Association of Counselling, BAC 1990).

As counseling aims to support the subject in the development of his autonomy and his ability to take self-determining decisions, it works in a field of great interest to education. The closeness between counseling and education is also demonstrated by some evolution of Rogers's thought. In

fact, starting from the assumptions that underlie his idea of a person, Rogers developed a theory of education based on the ground "philosophy" that if individuals (children, students, workers etc.) feel they are understood in their authenticity, they will tend to mobilize powerful energies, by sharing rules and common projects and "co-constructing their future" in an ever new and creative way. It is a positive vision of man, often accused of looking only at the good sides of human nature. This perhaps is partially true, owing to the substantial lack in Rogers's thought of the destructive forces (Rogers and Buber 1960) – but undoubtedly, partially, wrong, as it highlights the constructive forces that inhabit the human being. Thomas Gordon managed to extend Rogers's thinking to many educational types of relationships: parent-child (1970), school (1974), work (company) (1977) by means of rigorously scientific books as well as by a powerful widespreading ability.

Not entirely clear is the relationship between counseling and psychotherapy. Literature shows difficulty in identifying exactly when it has to talk about one or the other. Rogers wrote:

> There has been a tendency to use the term counseling for more casual and superficial interviews, and to reserve the term psychotherapy for more intensive and long-continued contacts directed toward deeper reorganization of the personality. While there may be some reason for this distinction, it is also plain that the most intensive and successful counseling is indistinguishable from intensive and successful psychotherapy (Rogers 1942, 3-4).

With regard to this the differentiation is used between *counseling* in the strict sense and *counseling skills*. The latter is used in those professions – (doctors, teachers, educators, managers, social workers etc.) – that are based on helping, but their main purpose is not helping (Di Fabio 2003). In fact, when one uses counseling skills to support the development of the resources of a person, one assumes the role of teacher, nurse, social worker, but not that of counselor. However, "there are many situations where it can become difficult to draw a line between counseling and the use of counseling skills" (McLeod 2003, 9).

The proposal that will be put forward below is that the need to be accepted and recognized as a person is fundamental in all human relationships. This need is articulated differently in the various relationships that we experience in our lives (parent-child, friendship, teacher-pupil, husband and wife etc.), and this also happens in counseling and in psychotherapy. Both methods are characterized by the element of "care" of the other, but with the following difference: when the assumptions on the psychological functioning of the individual can remain in the background, are not thematized and rather the focus is on achieving educational goals (maturity, autonomy, self-guidance, clarity of purpose etc.), then you can

talk of educational counseling; when the assumptions on mental functioning are in the foreground and are specifically thematized, then counseling tends to be more like a psychotherapeutic intervention. The two methods require different experts (see Fulcheri and Savini 2011, 19).

We should notice that, in its historical development in Europe, counseling was mainly in the hands of volunteers. They proved to be very sensitive to intercept the growing social unrest and tried to provide an answer to it. This was due to the weakening of those institutions, organizations and ways of social life that guaranteed the educability of the individual. In Britain, counseling is still mainly in the hands of voluntary associations and also in Italy counseling appeared in connection with the establishment of family advisory centres, particularly those of Christian inspiration. These, alongside state centres, offer help and guidance to families who have problems.

In this regard, counseling can be considered an answer to the lack of social integration and of the capacity human beings have to listen and help one another so as to face and overcome the inevitable developmental crisis that are part of everyone's life. Halmos (1965) pointed out that the increase in the number of counselors is in inverse relation to the number of priests. Therefore counseling is a new practice that offers an answer to the "old" desire of the people to have someone to turn to when they are in difficulties. The following is a clear example: a teacher who was attending a course in counseling told me that an office colleague- was confiding her a problem she had. She listened to her and now and then she put in the word: "I understand". Then suddenly the colleague exclaimed: "Of course you understand, you are following a counseling course!"

In our society listening and understanding are often considered something exceptional and unexpected. In order to understand counseling we have to "empathize" with the new / old perspective of looking at the human being that it opens / resumes.

2. A new way to conceive human being and relationship

At the basis of counseling, and in particular as May and Rogers intended it, there are two aspects of the human condition. However "obvious", they were set aside by the traditional schools of psychotherapy, probably due to their need to be seen as "scientific practices" capable of creating models as much as possible "objective" of human behaviour:

2.1.the first of these aspects is that man is a "person", an integrated "whole" with an "agent" Self, always evolving, able to build subjective meanings and to take responsibility for them;

2.2.the second is that man is basically "relationship". Besides man "builds" himself in the relationship by making his own the assessments that the other people make on his way of being.

2.1. A new way to conceive the human being

Rogers considers a human being an integrated totality, functioning as a whole. He uses the word "organism" to refer to a human being in his total functioning. In this regard he quotes Bertalanffy (1960, 13).who states: "We find that all parts and processes are so arranged as to ensure the maintenance, construction, 'repair' and reproduction of organic systems". Rogers (1979) mentions a this proposal Szent-Gyoergyi (1974, 17). He says that he cannot explain the mysteries of biological development "without supposing an innate 'drive' in living matter to perfect itself".

The human being, conceived as a whole, naturally tends, in the interaction with reality, to evolve and to construct meanings ever more wide and integrated. Life, at whatever level, is an active not a passive process. (Rogers 1979). The human person is expanding. Rogers – likewise Maslow (1954), another well-known exponent of humanistic psychology – speaks in this sense of the existence of an "actualizing tendency". Even more, likewise Whitehead (1978), he maintains that there must be "a potent creative tendency" that operates at all levels (Rogers 1979), of which human consciousness would be an aspect. This would be a tendency that opposes entropy. Winnicott (1970) and Rogers maintain that being creative is consubstantial to the "fully functioning of the person" (Rogers 1961, 182 ss.). There is a natural tendency in human beings to expand the meaning of his own existence, to act in the direction of a self-actualization that every single experience offers (Rogers 1964).

A human being, understood as a whole, and this is very important, is capable of an organized "organismic valuing process". This evaluation process involves the whole person, it is "organismic", it is the expression of "the wisdom of the body" (Rogers 1964) hence it is first "viscerally" felt and then mentally "symbolized". Rogers, in this sense, speaks of an evolution from "animal harmony" to "human harmony" (Rogers 1963). Likewise Nietzsche and Lawrence, Rogers maintains that the wisdom of the body is higher than that of the intellect. This profound "feel" is what marks the experiences that "I feel to be 'mine'".

And so, according to Rogers, there is an authenticity of the person which comes from natural and integrated functioning of the organism that is able to make an organized assessment of the experience. Persons are capable of self-direction.

This assessment process is not rigid, but flexible, as the process of life is constantly changing. In fact, Rogers maintains that people are constantly

immersed in the experience of reality they make. Rogers calls this immersion of the self into the environment "phenomenal field".

> All individuals (organisms) exist in a continually changing world of experience (phenomenal field) of which they are the center (Rogers 1951, 481).

This immersion of the self in the environment can be figured as immersion in a "psychological amniotic fluid" (Rogers 1979) from which the individual will tend to develop into a functioning totality ("The organism reacts as an organized whole to this phenomenal field", Rogers 1951). If the environment in which the individual is immersed offers the right conditions, then the individual will naturally develop his own organization, as people, groups, students will when they are granted "freedom of learning" (Rogers 1969). This also occurs in counseling and in psychological therapy, being the change allowed by accepting the atmosphere created by the counselor.

As we said, Rogers maintains that the process of life involves a constant change in the interaction of the organism with reality. Yet, the structural identity of the organism does not fail, it keeps its own integrity and the ability to evaluate the experience. Life is a constant flow. The rigidity, conversely, is a sign of the inability of the subject to interact and to be modified, in the experience of reality, and it leads to the inability to change, to stasis. "The good life is a *process*, not a state of being" (Rogers 1961, 186, author's emphasis). According to Rogers the most "integrated" stage is when the Self is free to experiment reality in an ever new way, a condition which he calls using the word *experiencing*, by which he means the total process of subjective life, the spontaneous overflow of feelings. From construing experience in rigid ways, the person "moves toward developing changes, losing held constructions of meaning in experience, constructions which are modifiable by each new experience" (Rogers 1961, 157).

Rogers's position is very different from Freud's who maintains that a newborn, if he could, would keep away from stimulations. He instead, says that man is in expansion and realizes himself in constantly changing in relation to reality (Rogers 1979).

We must have realized that Rogers introduces innovative concepts such as: organismic functioning, expansion, actualizing tendency, true self. The meaning of Rogers's proposal can be better understood if it is considered part of that anti-reductionist way of thinking, which, even-though it can not be framed in a unified current of thought scholars like Whitehead (1978) and Bergson (1907), studied in depth followed by schools of thought such as Gestalt psychology, cybernetics, systemic and the theories of complexity in the 'eighties. During the twentieth century, these authors and schools of thought tried to show that there are, in reality, self-building and self-organizational processes that generate structures ever more articulated not in

virtue of some "vitalism", but owing to the natural dynamic of physical and living systems. As we mentioned above, Rogers – joining up with Bergson and Whitehead – suggests that there is a "powerful creative tendency" that operates at all levels in the universe (Rogers 1979). This is a completely different perspective from the one upheld by classical psychoanalysis, behaviorism as well as by a certain cognitive psychology. The Self, as a "living system" (Sander 2007), is a "whole that is more than the sum of his parts", has "agency", to use a term coming from the theories of complexity, it has not only "to serve three harsh masters" (Freud, 1974, 110) or a set of beliefs and behaviours or cognitive schemes.

Rogers's concepts can be looked at in the light of what the theories of complexity assert. We will try to do it by referring , in particular but not only, to the thought of Louis Sander a psychoanalyst who, in mid '50s started to integrate the psychoanalytic look with the perspective of nonlinear dynamic systems, bringing significant contributions to the understanding of the functioning of relation, both at infant and adult level. And so we can highlight:

a. Human beings are "living systems" (Sander 2007) with an agency and intentionality, arising from their own integrated functioning and their self-organization. This makes individuals unique. The "whole" functioning of a person is not a mere epiphenomenon but it is the result of a central "motivation" (Sander 2007, xiv). It is the result of a "creative organizational process" that supports the individual as he gets involved in an ever increasing complexity of the environment (Sander 2007, xiv). The self-organizing processes that make the self an integrated whole do not produce a "closure" of the living system – which remains, at the same time, "open" (Bertalannfy 1960). This allows the constant interaction of the system with the context, which is essential for its survival. Human beings are constantly changing even though they maintain a structural identity, the fruit of their "auto-poiesis" (Varela and Maturana 1980). Then, it is better to use the category of "process" rather than that of "structure" (Sander 2007, 168);

b. Since there is a constant interaction of the living system with the environment that allows its adaptation and survival; self-organization is always accompanied by an "eco-organization", that is the ability to interacts with the environment and change with it. Human beings are living systems "self-eco-organized" (see Morin 2000, 98). This creates a "paradox", because on the one hand we have the uniqueness of the individual, the result of self-organizing processes; on the other hand his depending on the environment and adapting to it. The question thus arises: what does allow the individual to communicate with the environment or with another living system and remain, at the same time, different? Sander, who borrows the concept from the biologist Paul

Weiss, considers to be important "the experience of specificity[1] in being know, a specificity of recognition in moments of meeting" (Sander 2007, 190). and the "ritmicity" (Sander 2002, 22), that permits to create a common base from which may germinate new differences between systems. Sander calls this knowing each other in a specific way "recognition process" (Sander 2007, 184). Rogers uses the equally correct, but more generic word "empathy": in empathy one feels what the other feels, while remaining separated. In systemic terms, we can say that empathy is a "resound" between two systems, that remain distinct.

c. Besides, also the concepts of "psychological atmosphere" and "accepting climate" Rogers mentioned can be defined by means of systemic-complex terms. In fact, also the social environment of which the individual is a part can be considered a system ,"which is more than" the sum of the individuals who make it up. The "relational field" is an "emergent property" (Anderson, 1972) compared with the individuals who belong to it. Lewin used the concept of "field", to explain that a group of people is a dynamic totality with its own qualities (Lewin, 1948). In fact there are self-organizing processes that also operate in the social or relational "field". Two or more individuals in relation generate something "more" than the sum of individuals separately considered. As within that "field" every person has an *agency* and his own universe of irreducible meaning, there is a constant dialectic: 1. among processes that lead the individual to be a part of the social group and 2. processes that drive him away from "being a part of it" being him endowed with his own agency. If we limit this perspective to two people: the helper and the helpee in a counseling relationship, this relationship can be intended as having the quality of "complex system" or "field" in which the two participants are "sub-systems" with their own autonomy. Then we notice that there are moments of "tuning" – enabled by "empathy" and the "unconditional positive regard" highlighted by Rogers. These lead individuals to function as parts of a global field; then there are moments of "disjunction" that lead individuals to favour their own specificity. In this sense, the counselor has his own emotional reactions. Rogers tells him to express them clearly and he refers to this ability by using the word "congruence".

d. Finally, as Rogers said human beings should be looked at as processes rather than states, not as unchangeable structures but as "living systems" (Sander 2007) that constantly change interacting with reality, always "at the border between order and chaos". Integrity is not a state but a continuously renegotiated process between the internal and the external and dynamically supported by internal self-organizing processes. We

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[1] "Specificity", that is "a sort of resonance between two systems attuned to each other by corresponding properties" (Weiss 1970, 162).

should think of them as systems and processes (Sander 2007, 168), not as static structures.

2.2. Centrality of relationship

Another aspect that counseling has had the merit of bringing to the fore is the centrality of the relationship. This was deeply discussed in the first paragraph of this paper. Such a switch to a "relational" dimension has also characterized the recent evolution of many different types of clinical psychology.

We have already pointed out how it is possible to understand the relational process in systemic-relational perspective and we will refer to these concepts later on in order to explain how counseling operates.

It is not easy to talk of the importance of the relational dimension which, as we have previously said, can be considered the natural joining of individuals a relational field, which is essential for psychological survival and personality development. A human being is "a relationship" and, at the same time, a separate agency capable of generating his own universe of meaning. The following comparison can be made: relationship is a network, individuals represent the knots – knots endowed with agency hence with their own consistency. And so if it is true that the relation is the background that makes possible the existence of the knots, it is also true that every movement of a single knot has an impact on the entire network, allowing it to come to life, be creative and not flatten. Besides the increase in "individuality" of a knot, increases the "value" of the network. Within this network, the people will claim their perspectives, interests and needs by acting in a disjunctive, centrifugal way, "individualizing" themselves. However, the network remains as relational background, allowing people to connect and identify themselves as "part of". Obviously, this perspective can also apply to a relationship "between two people" in counseling.

Therefore moving away from ordinary dimension in order to build one's own individuality does not mean breaking off deep relationships with others, but even more, it is the condition for a wider and more "specific" participation in the network. It is as if the subject conquered a new perspective of what is ordinary. When this happens, the subject discovers that "what is more personal, is more general" (Rogers 1970). Tronick (1998) refers to this more inclusive state by using the concept of "dyadically expanded states of consciousness".

Congruent / incongruent → certainty / uncertainty
Since the topic of the conference is the certainty/uncertainty of a piece of information communicated by a speaker, we will point out that the *uncertainty* can be understood in counseling as the index of the inability of the subject to "symbolize" (Rogers 1951) his deep emotional reactions with

respect to a certain situation. For this purpose, it is necessary to examine Rogers's idea of the "construction" of the Self.

Rogers (1951) calls "phenomenal field", the immersion of the Self in the environment. Compared to that field, the Self begins to differentiate on the basis of assessments that others provide about him ("I" or "me"). When there is a convergence between the assessments that give us our way of being (*ideal self*) and the emotions and sensations perceived at the "visceral" level (*real self*) "congruence" is experienced (Rogers 1951). Congruency is feeling "freely and deeply" themselves (Rogers 1957b), aware of one's own way of being. So, when the assessments of others are in continuity with the visceral emotions and feelings of the *real self*, there is their "symbolization", which allows the assimilation of the assessments in the structure of the self (Rogers 1951). Conversely, when the external evaluations ignore the visceral and deep structure of the self, the experience can not be integrated and symbolization is not possible. The Self must be built on the basis of self-images that are incoherent with the intimate feel. Experiences that can not be integrated represent something foreign, "not real", an "introjection", a threat which stiffens defensively the Self. Then one falls, in a state of "incongruence" in which the availability of one's own way of being and feeling, not being symbolized, can not be perceived. By integrating the thought of Rogers with the psychoanalytic one, we can say that the child does not yet have his own psychic organization and that can initially be conceived as dependent on the relational field. This does not mean that the child does not have his own agency, but only that he lacks organization. And so he can not "think" and structure his emotions if they are not caught by the empathy of the caregiver and returned to him in a structured way. A child, in order to know himself, draws from the relational field his emotions "interpreted" and "contained" by the empathy of the caregiver. But the term *empathy* is generic and should be better specified. Psychoanalysis tried to describe empathy as tuning, containment, *rêverie*. Sander speaks about the "recognition process", which allows two subjects to reach a specific connection and feel they know each other and yet remain distinct. If a child does not find in the relational field his own emotions mirrored on the other, or if he does not recognize himself in them, he can not take ownership of his own emotions that, as a consequence, remain unfamiliar. This is what Rogers calls *incongruence*. Rogers points out that when a person, in an effort to keep the love of people who have a meaning for him, accepts values from the outside in place of his own experience, he introduces in the concept of self something foreign and rigid. As we said before he calls this "introjection", thus borrowing the concept from psychoanalysis. This incongruence can be perceived even in new and unexpected situations, when the person feels having no resources to "symbolize" what is happening. These situations are typical of counseling,

where the focus is on the present, on the "adaptation" between the person and the situation.

In the state of incongruence a person is somehow disconnected with his deep feeling, unable to communicate his feelings, first of all, to himself then to the others, and this makes him fall into a state of uncertainty and impasse. Words fail to express emotions. This uncertainty of his way of being "turns the mind idle" (being the thought not connected with the deep perceptions of the person), hinders the ability to take his "own" decisions.

An example, that the author of this contribution takes from his experience in a familiar consultory, is that of a twenty-year-old girl who got married after being engaged for ten years. She applied to a counselor as during her first wedding night she began to feel a sudden and irrepressible discomfort regarding the choice she had made. The next morning she started leaving home for ever longer periods of time and went back to her parents. She perceived that living together with her husband had become unbearable, and so she started taking a divorce (or separation) into consideration. Despite all efforts on herself in order to understand the reason of this unexpected and dramatic event, she could not clearly understand her own feelings. This was the reason why she decided to turn to counseling. The girl could not believe what was happening to her. She could not explain what she was feeling and doing which was not at all an expression of her strong and resolute character. Her words revealed the great degree of uncertainty that she felt about her life. Very often she remained silent with a drawn face and any attempt to talk about her emotional state resulted in a desperate and often unsuccessful effort. After a few meetings, she felt that she had attributed the deep needs of individuation to the relationship with the fiancé thus assuming the role of counselor of her husband life (rather than of her own!), and projecting the desire to emancipate herself onto the "house" in which she should live with him. Suddenly she realized that the symbolization of her own deep feelings were entirely inadequate and did not express her real ones.

When there is *incongruence*, often talking about one's personal emotional states is characterized by a high degree of "uncertainty" which is sometimes expressed with the words "maybe", "do not know", etc., But more often silence, the inability to say something, accompanied by "anxiety and disorganization" (Rogers 1957b), reveals incongruence. In fact, the ability to fully communicate a sense of discomfort proves the capacity (as Bateman and Fonagy said, 2006) to "mentalize" emotional states. In cases where incongruence is more marked, the person tends not to speak of internal states, but rather to report "facts". Facts count, they are felt to be the source of the problem and not the feelings that make them significant and unique to the individual. Let us not make the mistake as it is not to the solution of "facts" that interests the person – even if this is that he wants – but at the discovery of his own deep "feel", which is the only one that can

tell him faces those facts. It's just the availability of the "organismic valuing" that enables the person give an authentic answer. All the counselor's attempts referring to the facts – providing "reasonable" and "sensible" advices – are bound to fail because the person does not want solutions from the outside, but she wants to regain his ability to provide solutions "from inside". If the counselor is tempted to offer solutions he will realize that the person will not accept his advice as he does not "feel" it. It is not the solution that is important, but the ability to find it. This does not mean that counseling should not provide solutions and advice in any way, but that they must play a secondary and subordinate role. Rogers reported that the advice, even if timely and appropriate, is for the subject neither negative nor positive but indifferent.

And so the uncertainty of a person to communicate to the counselor certain pieces of information is to be intended as a sign of his inability to feel or get in touch with his organismic and visceral feel. If this happens, the subject may find "his" place in the situation, painful or convenient may this be, and the difficulty to adapt himself that he experiences could change for the natural evolution of the real feelings. If the contact with the deep emotions is lacking , the Self remains "rigid" and the situation becomes "stagnant".

3. A systemic-relational reading of counseling

Rogers maintains that for a counseling relationship to be effective, three conditions are "necessary", and also "sufficient," to produce a change in the person. These are (Rogers 1957b; 1979):
1. Acceptance, taking care or an open and unconditional positive regard. The taking care is not possessive and it includes all the feelings that the counselor is experiencing (anger, fear, love...);
2. Empathic understanding. The counselor is able to understand what the subject feels and tells him. The counselor has "penetrated the inner world of the other". This type of sensory and active listening is extremely rare in our lives. We think we listen to someone but we very rarely do it with true empathy and understanding;
3. Genuineness, authenticity, congruence. The client can clearly see what the counselor "is" in the relationship.

Let's see how these conditions can be interpreted from the systemic-relational point of view.

As we have already explained, counseling can be intended as a relational field in which the counselor and the helpee are subsystems. This relational field is "something more" than the sum of the "inner worlds" of counselor and helpee. This field develops when a "connection" between helper and

helpee "takes place" According to Rogers this connection is favoured by the "unconditional acceptance" (the person feels he is welcomed – in the sense of "holding environment" mentioned by Winnicott) and by the "empathy". Sander specifies empathy as a "recognition process" (Sander 2007, xv): at some point, one is aware that he is known by the other. The "congruence" of the counselor is equally important as, on the one hand, it enables the helpee "to clearly understand what the therapist 'is' in the relationship" and, on the other hand, it indicates that the counselor is a separate individual with his own emotional reactions. This induces the helpee to be the same!

In this case the counselor's primary purpose is not so much that of acting from the "outside", providing advice, but of enabling the helpee to trust in the relational field, sharing doubts and difficulties. If this happens the "problem" of the subject does no more belong only to him but also to the "relational field" – as the helpee, by entrusting the problem to the relationship with the counselor, has also accepted that this no more belongs to him only but also to the relationship. This is an essential precondition for the success of counseling: it is very important for the counselor to be able to properly "empathize" with the helpee. If this happens, then the problem starts being thought, meditated upon and felt by the relational field.

So, the emotional and cognitive sharing that occurs in counseling generates a "state of mind to two", to be understood as a "system" compared to the "state of mind to one" of the person asking for help which is a "subsystem". By entrusting the relational field, the helpee will start, in an entirely natural way, self-organizing and "congruence" processes with himself and they will lead him to be "distinct from". In other words the helpee, on the one hand, "decentralizes" himself in the relational field, as he has his emotions accepted and empathized and on the other hand, he "re-focus" himself being he provided with agency and congruence. The subject acts, contemporarily, convergent and disjunctive processes. He will no more have the problem and look at it exactly as he did when he processed it alone following the same path because from that moment he gets into possession of the problem by "taking it away" from the relational field.

Hence, the helpee authentically entrusting his emotions to the relational field can find again his "feel" and take possession of it again in virtue of the auto-organizational and disjunctive normal processes that make each person unicum.

Since the helpee regains his emotions from his shared processing, he, inevitably, "internalizes" the way in which they have been processed and interpreted by the mind of the counselor, the words that he used, the vivid feeling of closeness of the counselor, his humor and so on.

At last it is interesting to notice the importance not only of the verbal aspects, but of the non-verbal too: not every change must be verbalized to be valid. Some cognitive psychologists coined the word "procedural" (Kihlstrom and Cantor 1984; Bucci 1997) to express the way a person

interacts (how he jokes, behaves and relates etc). The "how" refers to the preverbal state, not to the declarative semantic when language can be used (BCPSG 2010). In other words we must distinguish what is not said because of "uncertainty" from what can not be expressed in words. That is, not everything that is not expressed, or is expressed with difficulty, must necessarily be attributed to uncertainty because, indeed, there are some experiences that are only partially verbalizable.

4. The educational dimension of counseling

Since the purpose of counseling in the formulation of Rogers we mentioned is "to assist the individual to *grow*, so that he can cope with the present problem and with later problems in a better-integrated fashion" (Rogers 1942, 28), it is clear its educational value, in order to promote the growth of the subject and his capability to assume responsible choices. Counseling, generally speaking, caters for individuals who are going through a "developmental crisis" or who feel "out of step" when they are facing new or unexpected situations. In fact, according to the systemic-complex point of view that we have adopted, human beings are *living systems* who even though they co-evolve in constant interaction with reality, have their own history, are made up of a complex layering of choices and "bifurcations" that made them – even in processuality that characterizes them – "rigid", "structured", only partially inclined to modify the roots of their systemic organization. As changing implies a deep revision of our internal models, Bion (1976) maintains that all genuine evolutions are "catastrophic". Pirandello, if we are allowed this literary digression, thought likewise: the "flow" of life inside each of us necessarily sticks to the fixed roles and masks, which he attempted to "undress" throughout his work.

Owing to this inevitable "rigidity" of the system that each of us is, there may be situations the subject has difficulties to adapt himself to – in the sense of "structural coupling" of Maturana – and give them a meaning, or by which he feels overwhelmed. A counselor offers himself to assist the subject in order to find new ways of "being" in the situation, and give it a meaning. He intercepts the difficulty of the subject to adapt himself to the new dimensions of sense and he enables him to overcome his self-referential dynamics; he accepts him and understand him empathically, providing him with a "holding environment", making available, in the relational field, his emotions and his points of view so that the situation to which he was unable to adapt may slowly return to be "habitable". In "making habitable" the situation, the counselor enables the subject to draw on his resources, on his "creative primary self" (Winnicott), on his "actualizing tendency" (Rogers). The aim of the counselor is that of offering the subject tools in order to enable him to "re-tune" with the situation and not that of inquiring into his

personality. A counselor accepts and empathizes with the difficulties and feelings of the subject, he acts as something "inside" to his point of view, since he understand him and, at the same time as something "outside", as "another" from the subject. In this alternation of nearness and otherness, empathy and congruence, he has a real educational role, being he "close to" but "different from", he is one with the emotions of the subject and yet different from them. And so if someone from the outside can tune with the difficulty of the subject, then the world is not "closed"! There is an opening, and there is a chance for us to adapt ourselves! Then the transformative "mechanism" acting in counseling is one with the "normal" transformative power of the relationship, enabling the subject to activate the self-recognition processes as he was recognized by another. A genuine communication activates the processes of expansion of the self; the world ceases to be something "foreign" and becomes, in the reflection of the face of the other, something close.

It is interesting to notice that this method of tuning/congruence, proximity/diversity that the counselor puts into practice does not have to go through an explicit thematization of the psychological dynamics of the subject. Of course, in some cases, when there are conflicts or "intra-systemic" weaknesses – and who does not have them? – explicitly focusing on the psychological dynamics may be appropriate. In these cases counseling tends to be more properly psychotherapeutic and a thorough understanding of the psychological dynamics and of the related explanatory theories are needed. However, when the objective is re-finding the interaction of the self with reality, his "structurally coupling" with the world, to enable his evolution, then the psychological dynamics may remain in the background, the focus is on educational achievement; then counseling takes on the particular characteristics of an educational relationship. Gordon who, starting from Rogers principles, created a model for "effective" interpersonal communication, said that a thorough understanding of people and their personalities is not essential in order to know how to communicate well with each of them. The idea of having to "diagnose" people to effectively communicate with them still presumes a logic of control. People are so complex that it is difficult to have exhaustive opinions on them. Communication based on Rogers's three principles mentioned above is already "transformative"[2]. And, on the other hand does not, perhaps, the

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[2] It is interesting to notice that many different types of clinical psychology are experiencing a "relational turn", deriving models for the treatment of adults from the "normal" relational exchange that occurs between caregiver and child. Beebe and Lachmann (2002, 46), inspired by Sander, focus on the process of interactive regulation that occurs between therapist and patient rather than, as in classical psychoanalysis, on the dynamic content of the patient:

> We are not proposing a new technique, nor are arguing for decreased attention to dynamic issues in treatment. Instead, we revere the figure-ground customarily used in

relation transformative power characterize any genuine relationship – that of the mother with her child, of two friends, of the educator with the student, as well as that of a therapist with his/her patient and the counselor with the person that turns to him? All types of relationship we have here taken into consideration represent a precise psychological dimension within which we play certain roles, with different psychic functions.

The "relationship" must be conceived as "background" in respect of which every "single" relationship is a specific case, in which the subjects have determinate roles. A friend, even if he becomes a psychologist, will remain primarily a friend. A "friendly" psychologist will remain a psychologist and if he seriously thinks of becoming his patient's friend… it becomes a problem! Our life is full of roles corresponding to different mental functions: we are fathers, sons, colleagues, friends, patients, lovers, friends... Some roles can change (from colleague to friend), others can not (from father to lover, from father to friend). When the role changes the meaning of interpersonal commitment is deeply reorganized. Some issues can be dealt with educationally because the relation is educational, some in a friendly way as the relationship is friendship, etc. An educator establishes a kind of cooperation aiming at enabling the person to grow up and pursue his goals in life. In this way he establishes a deep relationship with the person so that the person may feel recognized and accepted but the final aim is that the individual may gradually acquire more capacity in the interaction with reality according to his characteristics and talents. An educator. An educator is interested in the person's capacity to grow up in the real world. He studies a person in an empathic relationship so as to enable him to start constructive processes interacting with the outside world.

Counseling aims "to assist the individual to grow up so that he may cope with present and later problems in a better-integrated way (Rogers 1942). This is also the aim of an educator, but with regard to educational counseling an educator must clearly establish what type of work he intend to do with the person in order to avoid misunderstanding and ambiguity. Counseling can be defined educational when it concerns the development of a person in different fields (school, work cultural, medical, nursing etc.). Also family life, adolescence, group life etc. can be the prerogative of educational counseling because they refer to the growing up of the subject during his life cycle and specific educational help may be needed provided that this is offered by people properly trained: a degree in education (see Fulcheri and Savini 2011).

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describing analytic treatment. We place the mutually regulated non-verbal exchanges in the foreground and the dynamic conceptualizations into the background (Lachmann 46-7).

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Degrees of (un)certainty in Bari Italian yes-no question intonation: perceptual evidence

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Abstract

This paper provides perceptual evidence that in Bari Italian yes-no questions a rising L+H* pitch accent conveys speaker's uncertainty as to the polarity of the answer, as opposed to falling (H*+L and H+L*) pitch accents which express speaker confidence that polarity is positive. It also demonstrates that the high-falling H*+L and the low-falling H+L* pitch accents cue different *degrees* of speaker certainty. Experimental results derive from a perceptual evaluation task, where Bari Italian listeners were asked to rate the perceived degree of (un)confidence in yes-no questions as to the correctness of the inference made in the question. These results provide further support to current research findings about the crucial role of intonation as an epistemic marker of (un)certainty across languages.

Keywords: Intonation, polar questions, epistemic modality, Italian language

1. Introduction

It has been largely demonstrated that languages can rely on a number of devices for conveying speaker epistemic disposition of (un)certainty towards a proposition, including lexical and morphosyntactic markers but also prosody – specifically intonation. Recent studies on this topic has been focussed on the specific role of intonation alone, or in combination with the use of non-prosodic markers like lexical, morphosyntactic or gestural (typically, facial expressions) ones. For example, Gravano et al. (2008) show that both the epistemic lexical marker 'would' and the downstepped F0 contour are equally crucial for conveying/perceiving certainty in American English spoken utterances. On the other hand, Borras-Comes et al. (2011) demonstrate for Catalan that even if the contribution of lexical markers is important for conveying (un)certainty, it can be easily overidden by prosodic and gestural markers.

In intonation studies dealing with the expression of epistemic disposition of (un)certainty across languages, it appears as a general trend that a rising/high pitch is related to the expression of uncertainty, whereas a

low/falling pitch is associated with perceived degrees of certainty. Such a picture is compatible with the concept of "intonation universals" expressing basic attitudinal meanings across languages and cultures. According to this hypothesis, high frequency/rising contours signal openness, deference, submission, lack of confidence, whereas low frequency/falling contours are associated with assertiveness, authority, aggression, confidence (Bolinger 1964, 1978). The use of a *frequency code* (Ohala 1984) is traced back to that observed in animals behaviour, where it is used for giving information about size: high frequencies have the primary meaning of "small vocalizer" (therefore submissive, non aggressive, etc.), whereas low frequencies have the primary meaning of "large vocalizer" (i.e. dominant, aggressive, etc.).

So in British English, for example, a falling contour conveys "dominance of the situation, or certainty with regard to our knowledge of the polarity of the message" (Verdugo Ramirez 2005, 2088), whereas a rising contour denotes "uncertainty, deference, vulnerability, or the fact that the polarity is unknown" (Verdugo Ramirez 2005, 2088). In American English, Ward and Hirschberg (1985) show that uncertainty is basically conveyed by a fall-rise F0 pattern, whereas a rising-falling contour is used for expressing the opposite.

On the other hand, in languages like Catalan the distinction between information-seeking yes-no questions (characterised by a neutral polarity reflecting speakers uncertainty about the answer) and confirmation-seeking yes-no questions (biased towards a positive reply, thus reflecting speaker certainty about knowledge of polarity) is intonationally marked by a different scaling of the leading H tone in the H+L* pitch accent (Vanrell et al. 2012), not by a different F0 movement (rising vs falling).

Unlike Catalan, in Bari Italian such a distinction (reflecting, as explained above, speaker (un)certainty as to polarity of the answer) is intonationally marked by the use of different pitch accents types: a rising L+H* for information-seeking polar questions, as opposed to either the rising L+H* or the falling H*+L or H+L* pitch accents for confirmatory yes-no questions. The use of any of the three pitch accents in confirmation-seeking questions depends on the *degree* of speaker confidence as to the correctness of the inferred material asked in the question (Savino 1997; 2000, Grice and Savino 2003a; 2003b; 2004).

These results about the role of intonation as epistemic marker of (un)certainty in Bari Italian polar questions are based on production studies only. Aim of the present paper is to provide perceptual evidence for corroborating these previous findings.

2. Intonation in Bari Italian yes-no questions

As introduced above, motivation of this study has its background in a number of past investigations on the intonational characteristics of Bari Italian yes-no questions based on analysis of Map Task dialogues (Savino 1997; 2000, Grice and Savino 2003a; 2003b; 2004, Savino and Grice 2007; 2011). In the Map Task (Anderson et al. 1991), pairs of participants – an Instruction Giver (IG) and an Instruction Follower (IF) – are each given a map, but only the IG's map has a route drawn on it. The task consists in transferring the route – as accurately as possible – from the IG's to the IF's map by exchanging verbal information. The two maps are not identical, since some of the landmarks are positioned differently, and some of them are only present on one of the two maps. These features are introduced in order to generate possible misunderstandings as in actual, everyday interactions. In the modified version of the Map Task method used for eliciting Bari Italian dialogues, participants were not told in advance that the two maps were different (even though this is what they assumed when they started the session), thus allowing the experimenters to make assumptions on what constituted shared information until a discrepancy was found by the participants. Moreover, eye contact was always inhibited during interaction in order to maximise the use of the verbal channel.

A specific dialogue structure coding scheme (Carletta et al. 1997) has been developed for the Map Task distinguishing three hierarchical levels of dialogue analysis, namely (from the highest to the lowest):

- *Transactions*, "which are subdialogues that accomplish one major step in the participants' plan for achieving the task" (Carletta et al. 1997, 14);

- *Conversational games*, which "embody the observation that, by and large, questions are followed by answers, statements by acceptance or denial, and so on" (Carletta et al. 1997, 14). Conversational games are also differentiated between *initiations* "which set up a discourse expectation about what will follow" and *responses* "which fulfill those expectations" (Carletta et al. 1997, 14);

- *Conversational moves*, which are "simply different kinds of initiations and responses according to their purpose" (Carletta et al. 1997, 14). Conversational moves are therefore the building blocks of the whole dialogue structure: initiating moves are typically questions, instructions or explanations (*Query_yn*, *Check*, *Instruct* and *Explain* moves in the Map Task coding scheme), whereas response moves are replies to questions, clarifications, or acknowledgements (*Reply*, *Clarify* and *Acknowledge* moves in the same coding scheme).

The above mentioned studies focussed on the intonational distinction, in Bari Italian, between two types of questioning moves: Query_yn, i.e. yes-no questions asking for new information (that is, information which is unknown by the speaker at the time of asking the question), and Check, i.e. yes-no questions asking for confirmation about (assumed) given information (Carletta et al. 1997).

Recall that Queries are normally unbiased questions (i.e. they are not biased towards a particular answer type), whereas Checks are biased towards a positive answer.

Intonationally, such a distinction is marked by the use of different nuclear pitch accents (the boundary tones being the same in both question types, namely a falling L-L%): a rising L+H* in Queries, and a falling H+L* or H*+L pitch accent in Checks. An example of a prototypical Query is offered in Figure 1, and one of a prototypical Check with a low falling H+L* nuclear pitch accent is shown in Figure 2. For both examples, the relating Map Task dialogue context is also provided.
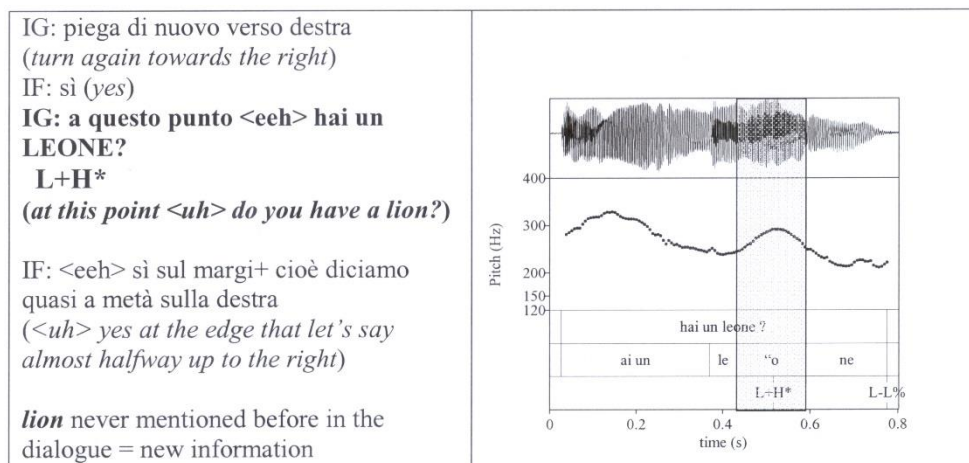
Figure 1: Speech waveform and F0 contour (right panel) of a spontaneous Query ("hai un leOne?) produced during a Map Task sessions, along with the relating excerpt from the dialogue transcript (left panel). Reproduced and adapted from Grice and Savino (2003a). Shaded box in the right panel highlights the nuclear accented syllable.

| IG: cioè la linea deve stare a sinistra chiaramente sali su dal Giardino delle Visite *(that is the line has to be clearly on the left go up from the Visitors' Garden)* |
| IF: sì *(yes)* |
| IG: e fermati subito dopo che poi **devi girare a destra** *(and stop straight after that as then **you have to go round to the right**)* |
| IF: subito dopo quindi al di sopra del Giardino delle Visite *(straight after so above the Visitors' Garden)* |
| IG: sì *(yes)* |
| **IF: e curvo a DESTRA**   H+L* *(**and I have to curve to the right?**)* |
| IG: sì *(yes)* |
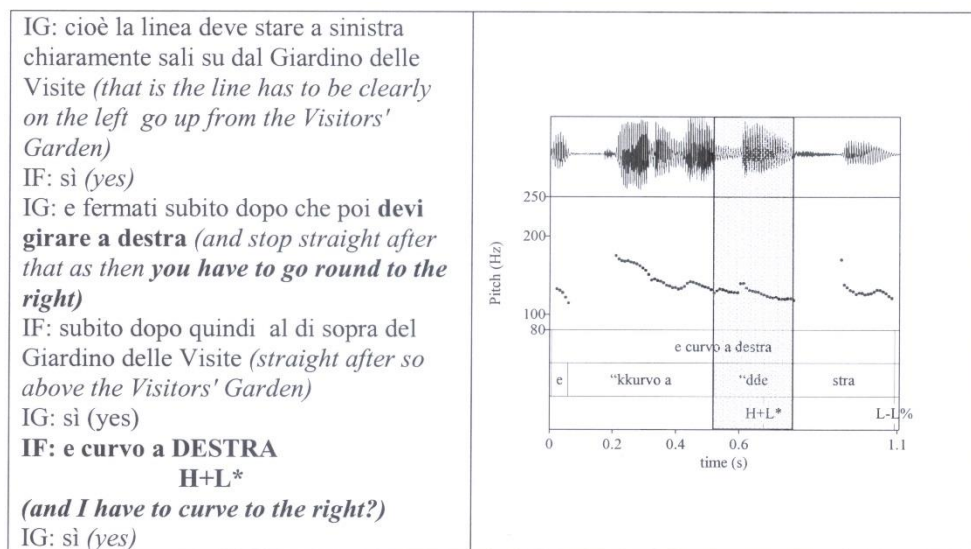
Figure 2: Speech waveform and F0 contour (right panel) of a spontaneous Very Confident Check ("e curvo a DEstra") produced during a Map Task sessions, along with the relating excerpt from the dialogue transcript (left panel). Reproduced and adapted from Grice and Savino (2003a). Shaded box in the right panel highlights the nuclear accented syllable.

However, it was also observed that Checks can be characterised by any of the three accents types, depending on (a) whether or not accessible information (about which confirmation is requested) is active in the speaker's consciousness (Chafe 1974), and (b) how confident is the speaker as to the correctness of the inference made in the question. On this basis, the following sub-classification for Check move in Bari Italian has been proposed:

- *Tentative Check*, intonationally marked by a rising L+H* nuclear pitch accent, i.e. confirmation-seeking yes-no questions when speaker confidence as to the correctness of inferred material is very low (an example is shown in Figure 3, along with the Map Task dialogue context it was extracted from). Note that this is the same intonation contour described for Queries.

- *Confident Check*, intonationally marked by a high-falling H*+L nuclear pitch accent, when speakers are confident that information is mutually given or accessible (Chafe 1974). An example is shown in Figure 4, along with the Map Task dialogue context it was extracted from.

- *Very Confident Check*, intonationally marked by a low-falling H+L* pitch accent, when the degree of speaker confidence as to givenness of

information is very high, i.e. higher than in Confident Checks (example in Figure 2). Note that when context is not provided, Very Confident Checks are indistinguishable from declarative utterances.
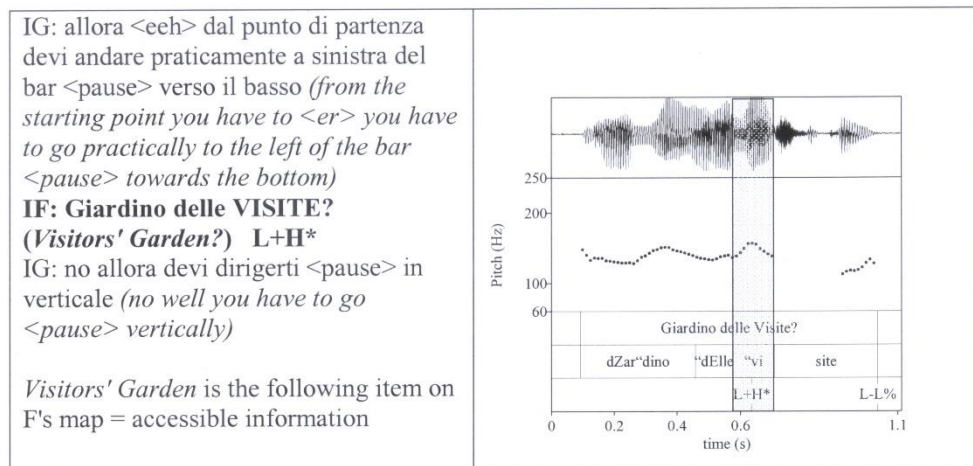
Figure 3: Speech waveform and F0 contour (right panel) of a spontaneous Tentative Check ("giardino delle VIsite?") produced during a Map Task sessions, along with the relating excerpt from the dialogue transcript (left panel). Reproduced and adapted from Grice and Savino (2003a). Shaded box in the right panel highlights the nuclear accented syllable.

Figure 4: Speech waveform and F0 contour (right panel) of a spontaneous Confident Check ("in tratto orizzonTAle") produced during a Map Task sessions, along with the relating excerpt from the dialogue transcript (left panel). Reproduced and adapted from Grice and Savino (2003a). Shaded box in the right panel highlights the nuclear accented syllable.
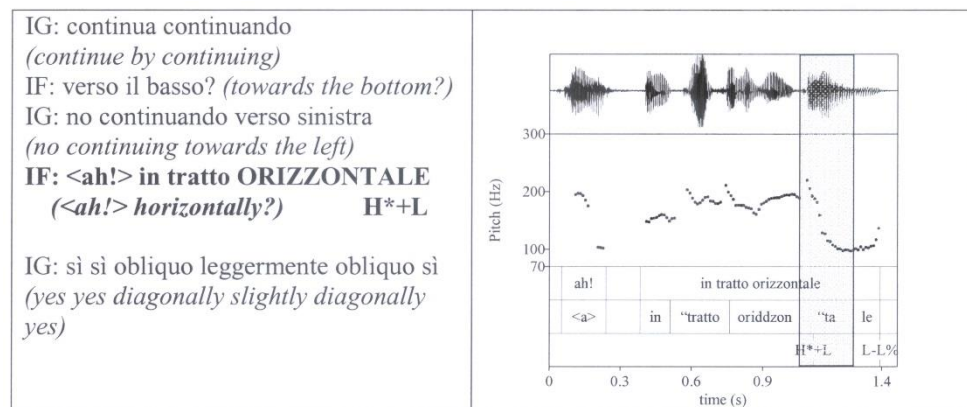
Such a description is schematised in Table 1. Intonational categories are described within the Autosegmental-Metrical framework (Ladd, 1996).

Pragmatic function	Intonational marking
QUERY tentative CHECK (unconfident)	L+H* L-L%
confident CHECK	H*+L L-L%
very confident CHECK	H+L* L-L%

Table 1: Intonational marking of Query vs Check yes-no questions in Bari Italian, according to different degrees of speaker confidence that information is shared, as resulting from previous investigations on this variety.

3. Research question

The pragmatic interpretation of pitch accents as associated to different degrees of speaker's confidence in Bari Italian polar questions as pictured above, is derived from production studies and it is based on dialogue context analysis and native speaker's intuitions.

Scope of the present paper is to provide perceptual evidence supporting this interpretation. A perceptual evaluation experiment has been carried out, where listeners were asked to rate the degree of certainty/uncertainty (confidence/unconfidence) in Bari Italian yes-no questions realised with the three types of nuclear pitch accents as described above. In particular, we aim to verify:

- whether yes-no questions carrying a L+H* pitch accent would be perceived as unconfident, as opposed to those with both H*+L and H+L* pitch accents being evaluated as confident;

– whether yes-no questions carrying a low-falling H+L* nuclear pitch accent would be judged as sounding more confident than those with a high-falling H*+L nuclear pitch accent.

4. Method and materials

In the perceptual evaluation task, listeners were asked to rate the perceived degree of speaker (un)confidence in yes-no questions as to the correctness of the inference made in the question. Subjects were requested to make their judgements along a 7-point scale (Equal Appearing Interval Scale paradigm, Rietvald and Chen 2006), where 1='very confident' and 7='very unconfident' (see the complete scale in Figure 8). Note that here confident/unconfident are used instead of the typical certain/uncertain, for consistency with terminology adopted in previous studies in classifying sub-types of Checks.

According to our hypothesis, we expect that perceptual ratings of stimuli intonationally marked with the low-falling H+L* nuclear pitch accent (very confident Checks) would be concentrated on the leftmost end of the scale (1='very confident'), whereas those of stimuli with a rising L+H* nuclear pitch accent (tentative Checks) would converge on the rightmost end (6='unconfident'/7='very unconfident'). As to the stimuli characterised by a high-falling H*+L nuclear pitch accent (Confident Checks), expected judgments would converge on positions 2/3 of the scale (i.e. 'confident'/'somewhat confident').

Stimuli

As a first step, 10 yes-no questions (both Queries and Checks) were extracted from a number of Bari Italian Map Task dialogues. These questions were used for recording a trained Bari Italian female speaker (the author) who reproduced each of them with L+H*, H*+L, and H+L* nuclear pitch accents, respectively, for a total amount of 30 target utterances. For example, the question "giro intorno al lago Anomalo?" (*shall I go around lake Anomalo?)* was intonationally realised as a Query/tentative Check (1.a), as a confident Check (1.b), and as a very confident Check (1.c), as schematised in the following (capital letters indicate the nuclear syllable):

1.a   giro intorno al lago aNOmalo   (tentative Check, see Figure 5)
                              L+H* L-L%

1.b   giro intorno al lago aNOmalo   (confident Check, see Figure 6)
                              H*+L L-L%

1.c   giro intorno al lago aNOmalo   (very conf. Check, see Figure 7)
                      H+L* L-L%

Figure 5: Speech waveform and F0 contour of the stimulus "Giro intorno al lago Anomalo" realised as a Query/tentative Check (L+H* nuclear pitch accent). Shaded box highlights the nuclear accented syllable.

Figure 6: Speech waveform and F0 contour of the stimulus "Giro intorno al lago Anomalo" realised as a confident Check (H*+L nuclear pitch accent). Shaded box highlights the nuclear accented syllable.

Figure 7: Speech waveform and F0 contour of the stimulus "Giro intorno al lago Anomalo" realised as a very confident Check (H+L* nuclear pitch accent). Shaded box highlights the nuclear accented syllable.

Additional 30 questions were produced and used as fillers in the perceptual evaluation test. These fillers consist of alternative questions (like "vado avanti sempre dritto o no?" *shall I go always straight or not?),* tag questions (like "vado sempre dritto, vero?" *I go always straight, right?,* or "il negozio ce l'hai sotto, no?" *you have the shop below, haven't you?),* or echo questions ("hai detto che hai? due arrivi?" *you said you have? two arrivals?).* Fillers were created by extracting and adapting original utterances from Map Tasks dialogues, which were reproduced by the same Bari Italian speaker in the same recording session.

The total amount of stimuli used for the experiment is 60. In creating the stimuli, care was taken that they were homogeneous with respect to F0 level and speech signal amplitude. Preparation of the stimuli was carried out using Praat software tool for speech analysis (Boersma and Weenink 2001).

Procedure

Subjects sat in front of a computer and wore headphones. They were instructed to listen to each stimulus and to judge how confident the speaker sounded by clicking their response on one of the boxes corresponding to one of the 7 points of a scale. The scale as it appeared to listeners on the computer screen is reproduced in Figure 8.

Before starting the evaluation, listeners were given written instructions explaining the situational and communicative context – the Map Task dialogues –in which the questions had been originally uttered, and subsequently extracted and reproduced by the same female speaker. A small reproduction of a pair of maps used in a Map Task session was also provided. Subjects were asked to evaluate, for each question they were going to listen to, how confident the speaker sounded that she would receive a positive answer to her question. For example, if the speaker asked whether she had to perform a certain action, how confident she sounded that she indeed had to perform that action, and that therefore she would be answered 'yes' to her question. This example was included in the written instructions.

Stimuli were presented in random order, and perceptual evaluation procedure was completely self-paced. Listeners were allowed to play each stimulus as many times as they wanted before answering, and to have a break at any time during the session. In any case, a break was inserted after every block of 20 stimuli, and subjects were free to decide when to resume from breaking, and proceed with the next stimulus by clicking on the screen.

Listeners received a feedback that their evaluation response had been accepted by the system through the changing colour of the selected box (from yellow to red), and only after that feedback they were allowed to proceed listening to the next stimulus. Skipping responses was not permitted. The evaluation task was preceded by a training session, whose responses were not included in the analysis.

All sessions were carried out in a quite laboratory, and the experimenter was always present but did not interfere during the task.

The perceptual experiment was implemented and run by using the scripting facilities included in the Praat software tool.

very confident	confident	somewhat confident	neither confident nor unconfident (neutral)	somewhat unconfident	unconfident	very unconfident

Figure 8: Reproduction of the 7-point scale boxes as it appeared to the listeners in the perceptual evaluation session (English translation of the original Italian text)

Informants

Twenty Italian listeners (14 females and 6 males, 21-48 aged, mean=27.4) participated in the experiment on a voluntary basis. They were all born and living in Bari, with no self-reported hearing deficits. They were all undergraduate, graduate and PhD students of Psychology, Educational Science, and Engineering at the two local universities. None of them had a background in linguistics, phonetics or prosody.

5. Results and Discussion

Results are presented in Figure 9, showing the mean values (along with standard error bars) of all listeners responses for the three nuclear pitch accent types.

Figures show that the perceptual rates assigned to the falling H*+L and H+L* pitch accents are located between 2-3, i.e. on the "confident" side of the scale, whereas that attributed to the rising L+H* pitch accent is located on the "unconfident" side. These results confirm the interpretation proposed in previous studies on Bari Italian yes-no questions as to the pragmatic meaning conveyed by the three pitch accents, in terms of speaker confidence/unconfidence that information is given. Results also provide perceptual support to the previous observations about different degrees of speaker confidence in questions which are encoded by distinct pitch accent types.

This outcome is confirmed by a paired *t*-test (one-tail) showing that mean values of evaluation rates are significantly different in the three pitch accents (corresponding to as many pragmatic categories): for H+L* vs H*+L $t(19)=7.92$, $p<0.001$; for H*+L vs L+H* $t(19)=8.71$, $p<0.001$.

All Listeners Responses (mean values)
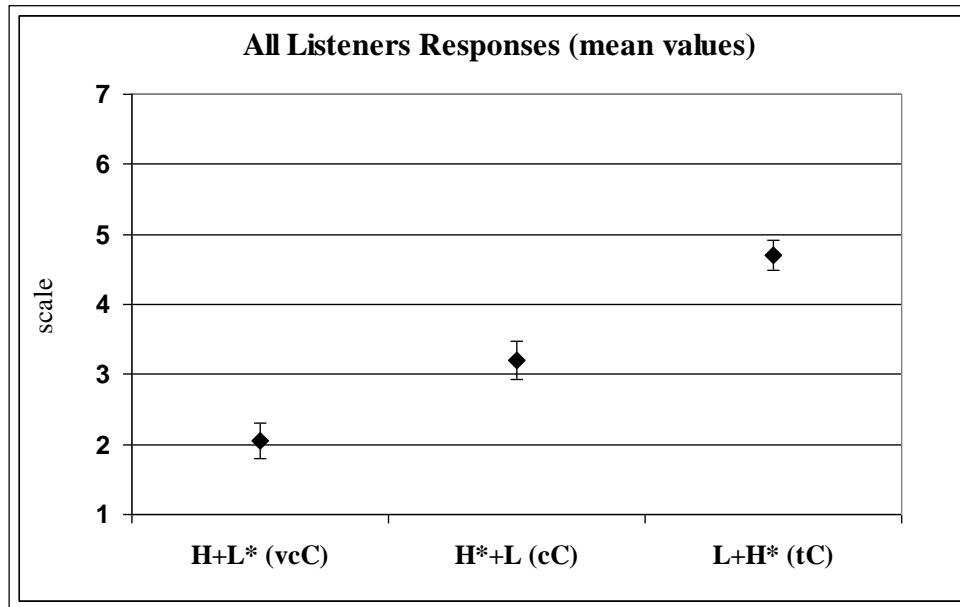
Figure 9: Mean values of all listeners evaluation rate for the three pitch accent types as realised in vcC= very confident Check, cC=confident Check, tC=tentative Check, respectively (scale: 1='very confident', 7= 'very unconfident').

As a side observation, it can be noted that listeners did not use the extremes of the scale for their perceptual evaluation. This is more evident for judgments rates of the L+H* tentative Checks than for the H+L* very confident Check. This asymmetry can be probably explained by the corresponding asymmetry in the pragmatic categorisation of pitch accent types, i.e. only one pitch accent encoding speaker unconfidence vs two pitch accents for conveying different degrees of speaker confidence (i.e. confident and very confident Checks).

6. Concluding remarks

In this paper, perceptual evidence has been provided that in Bari Italian yes-no questions:
- a rising L+H* pitch accent conveys speaker uncertainty, as opposed to falling pitch accents (H*+L and H+L*) which express speaker confidence that information is shared;
- two different types of falling pitch accents, the high-falling H*+L and the low-falling H+L*, convey *distinctive* degrees of speaker confidence as to the giveness of information.

These results also give further support to current research findings about the crucial role of intonation as an epistemic marker of (un)certainty across languages (see discussion in Vanrell et al. 2012). They are also in line with predictions made by the frequency code and the intonation universals theories, thus providing further evidence in typological perspective.

Acknowledgements

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Chapter 2
Literature

Uncertainty markers in novels

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Abstract

I refer to those speech acts that connect in a dubitative manner the action of narrating with the subject of the narration. A number of epistemic uncertainty markers such as "maybe", "probably", "likely", "I think that", can be used in everyday conversation and in scientific speech and also in *novels,* and this is the context that I will hereby discuss. The use of a dubitative marker connecting the action of narrating with the product, the novel, indicates the narrator's presence and it is a peculiar means of collusion that the narrator establishes with the reader, creating something like a paradoxical effect, I will examine a number of narrative types, from the limited standpoint of the first person to that of neutral omniscience, to cast a light on the different effects produced by the use of uncertainty markers.

Keywords: Uncertainty markers, novels, novelist-reader relation, doubt

1. Introduction and definition of the problem

The cognitive attitude towards the reliability of a message relates to, among other things, the degree of certainty or uncertainty on the part of who is talking or writing, and which who is listening is obliged to receive. Often this uncertainty is expressed through linguistic (as well as perceptive) indicators (Bongelli and Zuczkowski 2008).

The degree of uncertainty relating to the *source of information* can be indicated through modalisation markers such as adverbs: *maybe*, *probably*, or verbs, *think*, *seem*, *believe*, *presume*; the conditional: *would be*, *could be*, or terms of approximation, *towards evening*, *around four*, or the question mark following an assertion, or even the over-used inverted commas with which one distances oneself from what one is saying. I will refer to these linguistic strategies which connect, in an openly doubtful way, the act of communication with what is being communicated.

In terms of linguistic pragmatics, uncertainty markers are comments relative to how we express a message, as if we're saying: 'I make this

statement characterising it with uncertainty'. The speaker partially disassociates himself from what they are saying: 'I say this but I don't believe it deep down', 'I am not certain of what I am saying'. Alternatively, these uncertainty markers can indicate heterogeneity of expression, the presence of an alternative voice in the message, from which the speaker can also distance himself ('it could rain tomorrow', to use an example from weather forecasting).

These markers exist in everyday conversation, giving a voice to the possible, which is discussed no less than the real, so much so that, in verbal exchanges, the conditional is used as much as the indicative. Beyond speech, these markers also occur in print, from news stories ('the robbery must have happened at dawn') to the titles of those same articles. Uncertainty markers are also present in scientific discourse, which one would deem more compliant with certainty, with proven events, but which also articulates itself through hypotheses, through 'ifs'.

These signals of doubt exist as well as in everyday conversation and science, also in novels. But how do you express the relation between certainty and uncertainty in narrative texts, in which the reported events by definition belong to the realm of fiction and therefore to some extent to the arbitrary, to the hypothetical? The signals of doubt peer through the pages of a novel creating an effect of instability, one could say, in the relation between author and reader, but favouring also an understanding, a complicity between the two.

I will centre my analysis on uncertainty markers in novels, but before I do so I would like to make a more general consideration on how fiction conforms itself to an undefined rule between the certain and the uncertain, between the real and the possible.

Stories are open to multiple readings and interpretations. Bruner (1986) talks about 'subjunctivation', a linguistic mechanism through which a story is set 'in the subjunctive', a use of the verb which weakens the narrator's resoluteness. Even if the possibilities of interpretation are not endless, the relative uncertainty of the text nevertheless allows the reader a search for meaning within a few options, even independently from the author's intentions, an array of undefined interpretations, some more relevant than others.

In fiction we are always confronted not with certainties, but with possibilities. Stories is novels are not real (even if they can be based on reality), they are 'possible realities', which present us not with truth, but with verisimilitude. They are "as if true stories" (Mizzau 1998), the validation of which – the proof of psychological truthfulness – can only be the one construed from the reader's understanding of the plot, the characters, their intertwining, and their thoughts, as plausible, or in other words, subjectively and communally, as real.

Storytelling therefore takes place in an uncertain, undetermined tone. Nevertheless the presence of uncertainty markers – *maybe*, *probably*, *plausibly*, *I think that*, *I don't know whether*, *it would appear*, *around seven o'clock*, *I wonder why*, *in inverted commas* – within a literary text instigates at the very least curiosity, if not perplexity. They can determine a paradoxical effect that can be expressed thus: if the story is the novelist's invention there is no reason why he should doubt what he himself has produced. This could be the reaction of the reader, who, presented with the doubts on that very reality that the narrator seems to be questioning, might be invited to "offer up his own suppositions, just like the author offers up his, collaborating on the development of the story" (Eco 1979)

To whom are the signs of uncertainty attributable? The introduction of *maybe* – an adverb that I will sometimes use an prototype of the uncertainty marker – can be ambiguous, depending on whether it is referred to a character or if it is an 'author's marker'. An out-of-context example:

(1)   *Jim didn't answer her. Maybe he hadn't heard.*

The *maybe* following *Jim didn't answer her* and that precedes *hadn't heard* can be an inference of the female character, who is indicated by the pronoun *her* (She thought that maybe Jim hadn't heard), but also potentially the external voice of the author. It is the author who suggests an explanation for Jim's lack of response. It is this 'authorial doubt' that I will discuss in my chosen examples.

As a linguistic tool connecting the act of narrating with the end product, the novel, *maybe* represents the author's presence and a singular instrument of interaction that the author – or the narrator, to leave the semiotic debate on how to define him – establishes with the reader.

We could engage the idea, as Greimas (1986) does, of *débrayage énonciatif*, in other words a shift from the figure of the narrator asserting something, but who then distances himself from the assertion.

Much as we possess the ability allowing us to distinguish a story or a film from a description of reality, the *maybe* can suggest the truth insinuating itself into the *false*, a breaking of the frame, to use Goffman's (1975) categories, separating the truth from the make-believe.

2. Analysis of a few samples

I will now illustrate some examples of uncertainty markers taken from novels, from the complex to the less so, from those in which the *maybe* is more inherent to the context of the story, in other words is relatable to the thoughts of the character/s, to those in which the introduction of doubt by the author is appears more anomalous compared to the outline of the

characters or that of the narrated events, in other words those in which the author himself seems to question the events and backstories.

In the following example, the narrating 'I', expressing himself in the first person, observes the reactions of a character, the lift attendant, asking himself what reasons might lead him to not respond to his words, listing many as if to cover the entire array of possibilities.

(2) *Mais il ne me répondit pas, soit étonnement de mes paroles, attention a son travail, souci de l'etiquette, durete de son ouie, respect du lieu, craint du danger, paresser d'intelligence ou consigne di directeur.*
But he did not answer me, perhaps because of surprise over my words, attention to his work, obedience to etiquette, hardness of hearing, respect for the setting, fear of danger, laziness of mind or a reprimand from the manager.
(Marcel Proust, *A l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleur*, 1919).

The first-person narration, in which the narrator identifies himself with the character, makes the expression of doubt plausible: the person narrating 'pretends' to question the reality he has 'encountered' (or he questions a reality which he 'pretends' to have 'encountered') whose meaning is not clear to him. I will explain the terms in inverted commas, referring to sources.

For Searle (1975), the writer pretends to make assertions, shows to be making a series of normal statements, he pretends to be someone who makes assertions.

This pretence is inherent to the very act of literary creation. Nevertheless the interaction between author and reader gives the effect of reality, co-existing with suspension of disbelief; I will come back later to this argument.

'Encountered' refers to the psychological distinction Metzger (1954) makes of the different meaning of reality. One of these possible meanings relates to the juxtaposition *encountered* vs *represented*: art by definition falls in the realm of the represented, it 'not encountered'. Even so – and this is where the problem that concerns us lies – art, literature, and particularly the classic novel contain references to the *encountered*; we could say that the narrator suggestively produces the effect of the encountered in the moment in which, introducing the *maybe*, he seems to express a resistance to the reality he is confronted with, and to its existence beyond being represented, narrated, to which he cannot give a thorough explanation.

Doubts in general appear to be more problematic than 'maybes' in novels in which the narrator could be called 'omniscient', or in which the writer does not take a character's point of view; the reader has therefore access to all the information, thoughts, feelings, perceptions of the characters, as well as to those of the writer himself. In some cases though the narrator

introduces doubt in the reader, he challenges his certainty of reading a made-up story, by insinuating the suspicion, obviously as a pretence, that the story is a real one he is reporting first-hand or from a source. He achieves this by using explicit uncertainty markers around the events he recounts or the thoughts of the characters. These expedients were frequently used in the 19th-century novel:

(3) *It just so happened at that moment that the owner of the caravan brought her lips to the cup (which, so that everything around her was solid and comfortable, turned out to be a coffee cup). And, as she kept her eyes turned up to the sky to savour fully the taste of the tea, perhaps mixed with a light splash or dash from the suspicious bottle.* ***But this is only a deduction, not a precise historical fact…*** (Charles Dickens, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, 1842).

Occasionally the admitting of uncertainty is based on a literary expedient popular in the 19th century, the pretence of a hidden author, generally anonymous, whose doubts the actual narrator takes up himself.
    See for instance:

(4) *Il nostro autore non descrive quel viaggio notturno, tace il nome del paese dove fra Cristoforo aveva indirizzato le due donne; anzi, protesta espressamente* ***di non lo voler dire.*** *Dal progresso della storia si rivela poi la ragione di questa reticenza*
Our author doesn't describe that journey through the night, he does not speak the name of the town to which Friar Cristoforo sent the two women; in fact, he explicitly says **he does not want to say**. The reason for this reticence is revealed later as the story unfolds.
(Alessandro Manzoni, *I promessi sposi* [*The Betrothed*], 1840-42).

(5) (Renzo and Lucia renew their mutual vows, and Lucia accepts to allow the nuptials)
Qui l'autore confessa di non sapere un'altra cosa: se Lucia fosse, in tutto e per tutto, malcontenta di essere stata spinta ad acconsentire. ***Noi lasciamo, come lui, la cosa in*** *dubbio.*
Here the author confesses not to know something else: whether Lucia was, in her heart, unhappy of having been pushed to consent. **We leave, as does he, this detail in doubt**.
(Alessandro Manzoni, *I promessi sposi* [*The Betrothed*], 1840-42)

In these two extracts the uncertainty of the author indicates a willing mischievousness, a nod to the reader who is called into play, as if the doubt was directed to him.

While in the moving description of Cecilia's death during the plague epidemic the *maybe* is a 'doubt of the author' which he does not relate to a character's thoughts. The narrator doesn't decide exactly how old the girl is, it is as if in seeing her he assumed her age approximately from her appearance.

(6) *Portava essa in collo una bambina, di **forse** nov'anni, morta, ma tutta bene accomodata, co' capelli divisi sulla fronte, con un vestito bianchissimo, come se quelle mani l' avessero adornata per una festa promessa da tanto tempo e data per premio*
She carried in her arms a small girl, **maybe** nine years old, dead, but neatly groomed, with her hair combed across her forehead, wearing a pure white dress, as if those hands had adorned her for a party long promised and conceded as a prize.
(Alessandro Manzoni, I promessi sposi (*The Betrothed*), 1840-42)

I'd like to compare this extract to another from a more recent author, in which the author concedes himself an approximation, this time a temporal one.

(7) ***With all likelihood** Lambert got up around six o'clock, like every other day* (Georges Simenon, *Les Complices,* 1956).

The note *with all likelihood* isn't the character's thought, but the external narrator's, who, instead of deciding the time, reports it with a note of uncertainty based on the protagonist's habits. But, we ask ourselves provocatively, was it necessary? It is he, the author, who decides what time Lambert gets up (as in the extract by Manzoni regarding the girl's age). He could have done so without reserve. The narrator's uncertainty lazily becomes part of the story itself.

Lodge (1992) observes how these author intrusions fell out of fashion towards the end of the 19th century, as they damaged the illusion of realism, or they remained only with an ironic undertone.

(8) *It seemed to Lucy that that brief lecture was quite spot on; the reader may have seen it as an unfortunate blunder. But if Miss Bartlett had noticed, **it is not known**, as it is impossible to know the mind of elderly people. It is likely the girl would have continued talking, but they were interrupted by the entrance of the lady of the house* (Edward Morgan Forster, *A Room with a View*, 1908).

Here the readers presence is explicit, hi is addressed directly to make up for the intellectual limits of the character Miss Bartlett, *maybe* due to her less perspicacious age than that of the reader himself.

With these mischievous nods the novelist puts him omniscient being into crisis, but only as a 'pretence'; he pretends to make an assertion on a reality he doesn't know thoroughly, even though he has penned it himself. As I mentioned at the beginning, the paradoxical effect lays in the fact that, if the story is a creation of the novelist, there is no reason for him to doubt what he has produced himself.

This ironic reading, which recalls the awareness of the intention on the narrator's part, doesn't always relate to the context of the story; it is hard for instance to apply the notion to a novelist like Tolstoj, whose writing presents but few playful aspects:

(9)   *Boris Drubetskoj was cleaning with his hand his knees (that were all muddy, **probably** as he too kissed the icon) and with a smile took a step towards Pierre)* (Lev Tolstoj, *War and Peace*, 1869).

(10) *"Ecoutez, chére Annette", the prince said, taking at once his companion by the hand to, **who knows why**, pull it down. "Arrange this affair for me, and I will be your most faithful servant forever more"* (Lev Tolstoj, *War and Peace*, 1869).

The markers *probably*, *who knows why*, cannot be referred to a narrator within the story, to a character who sees and describes the behaviours of the others. Tolstoj is the all-together omniscient author, and, differently from aforementioned examples, it is not easy to attribute him meta-textual nods bearing a playful undertone. We could say that the distance between the empirical writer, in other words the real person who is writing, and the narrator is extremely short, as is also observed by Pugliatti (1985) and it is such to make the paradoxical effect of the 'not knowing why' of the introduction of the uncertainty in his story more the result of identifying himself with the reality he is describing – that he invents as if he were witnessing it – an identification he imposes on himself right to the finest details, as a purely intellectual exercise, in other words as a sort of imagination bordering on perception, much like children often do. Perhaps Tolstoj really had this ability. His observation is not only visual, it does not relate only to gestures, but it also appears to be auditory, if we think of the extraordinary realism of his dialogues; as if he cannot help but listen. In the conversations his characters hold with one another the fullness of meaning, implied and not, the introspective finesse mixes with phrases, gestures, individual twitches and mannerisms, reported his such precision to make us think of a kind of listening one cannot withdraw from, just like he cannot withdraw from remembering visual events.

Tolstoj was an extraordinary observer and analyst of communication, its two opposite functions of harmony and conflict, careful to the moves of the construction of a social consensus as to words as a subtle weapon. In all his

novels he puts into play the various typologies of conversation, of dialogue and monologue, relating them to the personalities of the characters, recounting their characteristics, investigating the causes of verbal and non-verbal instances of communication, but also depicting the randomness and gratuitousness that are borne from finding oneself immersed in the self-regulated river of conversation and gestures. A randomness in front of which the author feels obliged to ask himself: '*who knows why*'.

Jumping to yet another time to take into account an extract from Italo Calvino, in which the 'adventure of a reader' is narrated, fluctuating between the attraction of the sea, a women's temptation, but mostly the pleasure of reading from which he wouldn't want to be distracted.

(11) *Lì Amedeo si fermò. Su di una sporgenza piana stese i suoi capi di vestiario, piegati per bene, e sopra posò, a suola in su, i sandali, perché un colpo di vento non avesse a portare via tutto (in realtà tirava appena una bava d'aria, dal mare, ma quello doveva essere un suo gesto di precauzione abituale)*
Amedeo stopped there. He laid his items of clothing on a flat ledge, neatly folded, and on top of them he rested, soles up, his sandals, so that a gust of wind wouldn't blow everything away (in truth there was but a vague hint of a breeze, from the sea, but that must have been a typical precautionary measure of his).
(Italo Calvino, *Gli amori difficili*, 1970)

Here the author questions the logic he has given the character (fear of the gust of wind), introducing a doubt of *his*; he disassociates from it by attributing the bather's behaviour more than to the risk of wind to a meticulous ritual.

3. Conclusion and discussion proposal

I have previously mentioned the collaboration between narrator and reader, the complicit and challenging relationship that is set between them in the interpretation of the text. The reader fills the gaps that the author leaves deliberately open-ended, he draws meaning from what is implicit, from what is not said to mislead, to achieve an interpretation that may coincide, but which doesn't necessarily, with that of the author.

This interaction between producer and consumer is my cue for another consideration, of a psychological nature, relating to the connection between the 'author's doubt' with a reader's life and how he poses himself towards a piece of literature.

In front of a piece of fiction there is a suspension of disbelief. In other words we don't ask ourselves if what we are reading or seeing is true, we

rely in what is being relayed to us, accepting its improbability as its ambiguity. Nevertheless, we don't confuse the make-believe with the true. We possess an ability that allows us to distinguish between a story, a film, any other form of fiction, from a description of reality.

Nevertheless it is difficult to claim that the world of reality and that of the make-believe are entirely separate. As Iser (1979) argues, fiction and reality cannot be opposed to each other, but communicate with each other; fiction is a medium to recount something about reality.

They are not separated but only for the obvious reason that one draws from the other, but a novel or a film can tell the story of true events or at least draw inspiration from them, also because – and this is what concerns us in this analysis – the evidence of this drawing from one another are present in the reader's mind, as obviously they are in the author's, in such a way that is inherent to the development of the work itself. In other words, if from an aesthetic point of view it makes no difference that what is narrated is true or false (for instance, asking oneself about the 'true story' of the Nun of Monza in Manzoni's *The Betrothed*), it does make a difference to ask oneself the question of 'being truthful'.

To this end we should remember Bateson's analyses of the paradoxical and of the levels of abstraction of language and behaviour, and in particular of play, of the message 'this is play'. For Bateson (1956) play, which he observed among children as well as animals, is important not so much to acquire an understanding of roles, but because we learn that roles, frames, exist in the first place, that they can be crossed, that these positions can change and replace each other, moving from the true to the make-believe, from the serious to the playful. 'This is play' labels one behaviour, but at the same time hints to its opposite, the serious, it informs that I am playing, but telling it I am not playing. It is a similar paradox to that of the liar: is he who says: 'I am lying' lying or telling the truth? If he tells the truth, he is actually lying, if he lies, he is in fact telling the truth. Bateson's intuition in relation to play though is even more subtle. It concerns not so much the assertion 'This is play' but the question 'Is this play?'.

To paraphrase Bateson, we could put forward the hypothesis that art, in particular literature, is based not so much on the premise that 'this is fiction', but rather on the question 'is this fiction?' – a question which tends to remain unanswered, helping to make the world of storytelling magical.

Regardless of every one of our acquired convictions as disenchanted readers who know that 'reality' is only such within the text, we are to some extent lead to believe its existence beyond the text, in one or several of the directions the text points us towards.

What I am attempting to argue is that narrators' 'maybe', this fluctuating between the certain and the possible, to some extent replicates our own self-awareness as readers. Narrative doubt is the tie between the true and the make-believe, evidence of the breakdown of a distinction between the two

realms, the lapsus that reveals our weakness. It is as if the narrator placed himself in the role of the reader favouring his weak points, his tendency to overlap the factual and the hypothetical, the weak points which, at the end of a novel, make us wonder: 'how will it end?'

Confronted with the make-believe, whether literary or in film – the child is scared, or he is moved by what happens to the character. To a less intense degree, we all do the same. Does an ambiguous ending, for example, not invite us to ask ourselves questions beyond the text? 'What will they do after?' 'Will they separate?' 'Will they meet again?' These questions we ask ourselves are on top of those we continuously ask while reading the text. Because a novel, a story, will always have dark sides to it, or at the very least ambiguous ones. The suspension of disbelief, the 'maybe' relates to the ambiguity that a plot or a character goes through during the course of a narration.

Yes, I know, but anyway. We could apply to literary fiction the analysis that a psychoanalyst, Mannoni (1969), makes in relation to those paradoxical movements of the unconscious in which a belief outlives its disproof. 'It is not true, but I believe it'. 'I know it is false, but still'.

The beauty of reading, with the imagination that always goes with it, would not be possible if even the disenchanted reader was not subject to the confusion, if he did not have a space in his psyche in which the make-believe and the real are mixed up, in an uncontrollable distraction from the 'I'.

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Persuasive communication and construction of certainty in colonial Brazil

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Abstract

Aim of this research is the persuasive communication in preaching performed in Brazil of the Modern Age. The sermons of Father Antonio Vieira, the famous Luso-Brazilian preacher, are analyzed. The method is historical cultural analysis. Result is that preaching is the product of a complex process of construction of certainty that, through the ordained use of the word according to the precepts of Rhetoric, obtains the effect of mobilizing the psychic dynamism of the recipients and thereby leads to intellectual certainty concerning the transmitted doctrinal content and to moral certainty concerning the pertinence of the reform of customs proposed by the preacher.

Keywords: Persuasive communication, Antônio Vieira, psychology and rhetoric.

1. Introduction

Persuasive communication is object of this research in the field of cultural history. It was made by preachers, especially those who belonged to the Society of Jesus, operating in Brazil of the Modern Age, with emphasis on psychological and rhetorical dimensions of the construction process of certainty achieved through this cultural practice. The sources chosen for our analysis are preaching performed in Brazil which, due to their importance recognized at the time, were also printed, after being given orally, and also instruction manuals of rhetoric kind and of ecclesiastical rhetoric widespread in the West Catholic and in Brazil of the Modern Age and used for the writing of sermons. For example, the sermons of Father Antonio Vieira, the famous Luso-Brazilian preacher, are analyzed (Massimi, 2005).

The ambit of analysis is the history of psychological knowledge as part of the cultural history. According to Massimi (2014), the History of Psychological Knowledge in Brazilian culture aims at inquiring aspects of the view of the world of a culture, related to psychological practices and

concepts, whereas the definition of "psychological" is conventional and transitory, to be replaced during the survey by the terminology and demarcation of relevant fields to the specific socio-cultural universes that were investigated. Such knowledge can be obtained by investigative pathways that try to show through historical views by means of the sources, main objects, methods, and actors in the construction of psychological knowledge and practices in Brazil over time. In this universe, one must consider the presence of distinct cultural protagonists of construction of such knowledge in different historical periods: Native, Lusitano, and Luso-Brazilian people; travelers and merchants of French, Dutch, Spanish, North-American nationality; Africans deported by slavery; immigrants from Europe and other countries. These subjects reflect the composition of Brazilian society, marked by complex cultural stratification, by different temporalities and, therefore, by various modalities of elaboration of psychological experience. In this universe, one must consider the presence of distinct cultural protagonists of development of such knowledge in different historical periods: these subjects reflect the composition of Brazilian society, marked by complex cultural stratification, by various temporalities and, therefore, by various modalities of elaboration of psychological experience.

In this environment, the great unifying role was performed by the missionaries of the Society of Jesus present since 1549 by invitation of the Lusitanian crown with the purpose of evangelizing the natives and the slaves and of religious assistance to the settlers. Initially residents in the Province of Bahia, the missionaries dilated their presence in Brazil in the regions of the northeast, north, central, south-central, up to the south. The Jesuits remained in the country until mid-eighteenth century (1760) when their expulsion occurred by decree of the Portuguese Secretary of State Carvalho e Melo who exiled the Portugal Order of the oversea dominions with general expropriation of their homes and their property. Over the two centuries of its permanence and its presence in almost the entire length of the Brazilian territory, the Society of Jesus took charge of translating anthropological conceptions of the Western tradition, in a method of formation of man, through education. At the same time, it favored the mixture of social and cultural traditions of the Amerindian, African, and Lusitanian people through the process of Christianization, striving to promote a social policy aimed at the encouragement of intermarriage and the creation of the first school system in the country oriented to all parts of the colony. The Society of Jesus also promoted the development of cultural and religious practices to integrate Indigenous, African, and European cultures: we highlight, for example, the production of plays and poetry and grammar textbooks in which the languages and traditions of oral culture of the indigenous nations were transmitted in written form. With all this, the Jesuits aimed at promoting the establishment of a Christian social body in

the colony, where all social and racial components were inserted and united by a Christian worldview. They sought to achieve this ideal in their villages and especially in Missions (or Reductions) of the Thirty People in a territory that now belongs in part to Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina (Massimi 2008).

It is known that the Jesuits widely used practices from the Society to perform that unifying joining function, such as spiritual direction, or the examination of consciousness, systematically employed in schools, and practices inherent in Western religious culture, masterfully performed by the members of the Order, such as persuasion, concerning criteria of judgment and changes in customs, obtained by using rhetorically ordered word in preaching (Massimi, 2005), or as the promotion of ritual celebrations with the use of images, music, choreography, and gestures with the involvement of expressive components from various folk traditions (Massimi and Conde, 2008).

2. Background: persuasive communication as practice of cultural transmission of knowledge in Brazil of colonial period and brief characterization of this universe

The Brazilian context of colonial period was profoundly marked by orality. The majority of the population was illiterate, or their access to the writings was limited, taking into account also the absence of the press and academic institutions in the country. In this realm, the process of cultural transmission in colonial Brazil is largely a result of the spread of oratory understood as a form of persuasive communication and means of knowledge. Since oratory was common practice of different traditions present in Brazil (European, especially Lusitanian, Indian, and African), it constituted a common ground which provided the consolidation of a peculiar culture formed by the mixture of very different cultural traditions.

From the historical point of view, attention to this feature demands considering the insertion of oral culture in regimes of historicity different from those of written culture.

According to Hartog (2003), the regime of historicity is created insofar as the time is not simple flow, but is the human experience of time. In it, the human being experiences a detachment of himself to himself (a distance between who he was in the past and who he is in the present) and through the narrative gives himself a historical identity, in chronological order.

In this sense, in different societies, the cultures elaborated by the subjects who compose them have several regimes of historicity experienced and transmitted by these subjects: they possess their own experiences of temporality and historical identities and narratives peculiar to these regimes. In case the temporalities may not be homologated, the historian must deal

with them attentive to the differences involving various modalities of narratives, transmission, expression, historical identity, duration, etc. The plurality of cultural and social subjects that integrate the Brazilian social contexture is carrier of different modalities of elaboration of psychological experience submitted to different regimes of historicity, that is, different experiences of temporality. Therefore, the methodological necessity is of taking care of the apprehension of the meanings of temporality, insofar as we undertake a historical study.

In general, oral cultures have a temporality whose duration is longer than that of written cultures, and, in this sense, they are provided with a permanence which may extend in time, even if they are subjected to changes.

In which sense is it possible to state that oratory was a diffuse activity and quite appreciated by the population in the colonial society context?

News and descriptions concerning these practices in the Brazilian social sphere are given in reports and letters of travelers and missionaries since the earliest times of colonization (Abbeville, 1614/1975). One of the oldest pieces of information appears in a narrative from 1593 by the visitor Father of the Society of Jesus, the Portuguese Fernão Cardim (1548-1625): interestingly, however, it refers not to the preaching of the missionaries, but to the oratorical activities of the Indians themselves as an occurrence of the pastoral visit of missionary priests. The report deserves to be examined once it evidences the peculiarities of Indian rhetoric and emphasizes the great propensity of the natives to practice the word, and also it describes the modality in which a common ground for communication between natives and missionaries based on orality was constituted. As a result, the familiarity of native populations using speech to persuade and teach was perhaps one of the reasons for the importance given to preaching by missionaries as a means of christianization of Brazilian populations.

The letters of the Jesuit missionaries also emphasize that the preaching of the indigenous chiefs was necessary to create the trust of their tribes in the word preached by the priests.[1] Cardim reports that, in the village of Espírito Santo, after the reception by the "*principais*"[2] (principals), he was taken in procession to the Church by the Indians with dances and music of flutes along with two other visitors, Father Cristóvão de Gouveia and brother Barnabé Telho. We quote the report maintaining its original style and writing:

> After the prayer, the priest requires them to make a speech in the language, the one they were very comforted and pleased; that night, the

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[1] Several documents attest to the fact: for example, in the letter sent by José de Anchieta from São Vicente to Lainez, on January 8, 1565, (Anchieta, 1988).

[2] This is an expression used in missionary reports of that time to indicate the political authorities of the native populations.

principal Indians, great languages, preached about the priest's life in their own way, which is as follows: they begin preaching in the dawn while lying on a hammock during a span of half an hour, then they get up and move through the whole village, tiptoed very leisurely, and their preaching is also paused, phlegmatic, and slow; the principal Indians often repeat the words with seriousness; they tell in such preaching all the works, storms, death hazards which the priest would suffer, while coming so far to visit and comfort them, and also to initiate them in praising God for the received grace; and they bring their gifts to the priest, in thankfulness. This was to see them coming with their things, etc., ducks, chickens, pigs, flour, *beijus* with some roots and vegetables of the earth (Cardim 1593/1980, 146).

The chiefs of the tribe, appropriating the missionary preacher's discourse, translated it into their own language in order to communicate it to the community, thus legitimizing the presence of the priest while posing themselves as irreplaceable mediators between him and the people. In fact, Cardim states that:

When the visitor priest arrived, these principals preached in their way in respect with the work by which the priest suffered on the pathway, passing the sea waves, and coming from so far, exposed to so many hazards to comfort them, inciting everyone to rejoice with so much welfare, and that they could bring him his things (Cardim 1593/1980, 152-153).

In the same document, Cardim provides information concerning the value of oratory to the Indians when describing the indigenous huts and their social organization.

As a result, a principal, whose authority was mainly exerted by the use of the word, lived in each "hut". This one used to exhort listeners to work, excite them to war, and was highly respected by all. These exhortations were initially made within the hut, "through preaching": the chief began his speech at dawn, lying in a hammock, during a span of half an hour; then, in early morning, he got up and moved through the village continuing his preaching, "which he makes loudly, very leisurely, often repeating the words" (Cardim, 1593/1980, 152-153).

Cardim continues the report stating that among the principal Indians and preachers, "there are some elderly ancient people with great name and authority among them, who have a reputation throughout the interior, three hundred and four hundred leagues, and more." He affirms that the natives estimate very much "a good speaker who they call as the speech lord. In his hand there are the life and death, and he will carry them wherever one wants without contradiction." When they want to test whether an individual has

this capability, "several of them gather together in order to see if they can make him tired, talking a lot all night with him, and sometimes, during two or three days, without being indisposed." (Cardim, 1593/1980, 152 -153).

The description of Cardim reveals the surprise of the religious Portuguese concerning the importance attributed to the use of the word by Brazilian Indians: unexpected point of convergence between the unfamiliar culture of these populations and the immense effort for communication of the European culture of that period, which is evident in the creation of new instruments such as the press, in the search of contacts and knowledge of new peoples, new cultures, and new languages, and the great development of rhetoric art and its infinite possibilities as pedagogical and doctrinaire means.

3. Persuasive communication and rhetorical art in the Brazilian context

In the ambit of such complex and rich universe of cultural exchange and communication, we address here a specific facet of this universe: the practice of sacred oratory or preaching carried out by the priests of the Society of Jesus, a practice which intended to convey knowledge characterized by certainty regarding the doctrine and conduct, and to persuade the listener concerning the value of truth of these certainties and of the convenience to model his behavior and actions based on them.

The sources chosen for our analysis are preaching performed in Brazil which, due to their importance recognized at the time, were also printed, after being given orally, and also instruction manuals of rhetoric kind and of ecclesiastical rhetoric widespread in the West Catholic and in Brazil of the Modern Age and used for the writing of sermonsFor example, the sermons of Father Antonio Vieira (1608-1697), the famous Luso-Brazilian preacher, are analyzed.

The sermons are taken here as cultural transmission devices of certainty and persuasion to change habits and conceptions in listeners, devices which seek to carry out this function insofar as certain conditions defined by two fundamental premises should follow: a conception of the process of knowledge acquisition and transmission in environments characterized by orality; a conception related to the communicative and persuasive effects arising from the well-organized use of the word (Ardissino 1997; Ardissino 1998; Rusconi 1981; Rusconi 1996; Battistini 1981; Battistini 2000; Bolzoni 2002; Fumaroli 1995; Fumaroli 1999; Majorana 1996).

These aims suggest criteria for a specific selection of the sources which are object of research, and from the methodological point of view, they indicate some pathways to take and some conditions to be observed. Firstly, the requirement to consider that such communicative practices of certainty

fall into a different regime of historicity from the contemporary experience of temporality, and also to consider that the communicative efficacy of this practice should be evaluated on the horizon properly to the regime where it sets up and operates itself. In the considered regime, the role of memory and narrative is especially important. For example: the preaching of a sermon can take several hours and it is in this time span that the desired effect occurs. By contrast, it would be totally unfeasible nowadays once the success depends on the speed of information transmission. This attention concerning the diversity of regimes of historicity avoids anachronisms.

Secondly, the reading of the sources selected for analysis leads to evidence some *topoi*, that is, the common places to be evidenced, according to the method suggested by Pécora (1994) in the analysis of the Antonio Vieira's sermon work. The methodological proposal asserted by Pécora suggests a modality of analysis of the texts based on the pursuit of the 'base logic' which pervades and inserts them into their universe of production, searching to detect the systematic recurrence of certain essential topics (the common places) articulated among them. Following such perspective, the categories, or topics, could not be defined in a preconceived manner when reading the text (which would necessarily lead to anachronisms and presentism), but seized (almost like in a phenomenological analysis) through the careful reading of the text evidencing the recurrences of *topoi*.

4. Results

The historical analysis of the sources reveals that preaching is the result of a complex process of construction that, through the ordained use of the word according to the precepts of Rhetoric, obtains the effect of mobilizing the psychic dynamism of the recipients and thereby leads to intellectual certainty concerning the transmitted doctrinal content and to moral certainty concerning the pertinence of the reform of customs proposed by the speaker. The objectives of the rhetorical art (to delight, to move, to instruct) imply the person of the recipients in all dimensions thematized by psychological and anthropological knowledge of the time: corporeal, psychological, and spiritual. External and internal senses (memory, imagination, common sense, and cogitative power), appetitive (sensory and intellectual), and cognitive potencies should be involved in an integrated motion that proves essential to persuade listeners and construct certainty in an effective and lasting way. The long tradition of word art and philosophical knowledge about the dynamics of the person effectively converge to this scope, from the contributions of classical and medieval authors, such as Aristotle, Seneca, Cicero, and Augustine, and their modern interpreters, for example, Luis de Granada (1504-1588) and Cipriano Soares SI (1562). This operation of construction of certainty through the art of the word is articulated with a

realistic theory of knowledge which states that the process of rational knowledge is based on the evidence. (Soares, 1580)

The analysis will take place in four topics.

5. Epistemological support of the composition of sermons

The epistemological concept that supports the composition of sermons is derived from the Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy. According to this philosophy, one can know or get knowledge only from the data obtained through the sensitive sensory pathway, that is, through the five external senses.

Nothing happens in the intellect that had not first passed through sensitivity: it is possible to know only from the data obtained by sensory via. The objects perceived by the senses give rise to representations which are internally processed in the form of internal representation (ghost). The internal senses, which according to Thomas Aquinas are the fantasy (or imagination), cogitative power, memory, common sense, in their pre-rational apprehension of things, establish the relationship between sensitivity and cognition (Rahner 1989). This concept presupposes three groundworks: the similarity between the image and reality; the objective value of knowledge based on the intentionality of the ghost (namely, its reference to the world outside the mind); and the assertion that the concept can be communicated only by sensitive means.

However, early in the sixteenth century, the transparency of the sensitive means starts to be challenged by the development of modern science and philosophical reflection that follow it. Arendt (1999) claims that the arrival in the world of scientific instruments produced by human technology, such as the telescope, contributed to a radical change in the conception of knowledge: the technical capacity of the *homo faber* able to build knowledge replaced the acuity of observation and contemplation of the scientist.

The truth and reality are no longer conceived as dates and revealed to the senses: the mediation of appearance is always an interference which in some cases can be deceiving.

The process culminates in the philosophical position of Descartes featured by methodical doubt. The path to certainty (method) will be identified in mathematics and experimental science, where the human cognitive skills depend on the technology yielded by man. In this new conceptual horizon, the sensory evidence can be illusory: "it can be a sign or it can mask the nothingness" (Jori 1998, 292). The sign veils and unveils (Pécora 2001).

This new configuration of the cultural universe of the nascent modernity requires an effort from the word and especially from its interpreter, the

preacher, in order to build confidence in the listener and to persuade him/her on the value of the sign of reality. In the socio-cultural context of pos-Tridentine Catholicism, as the Brazilian colonial period was, this picture linked to the ministry of the sacred word is of great authority, insofar as he is considered the legitimate interpreter of the grammar in the world, the true connoisseur of the "science of signs" (Pécora 2001) .

6.   The rhetoric and the compositions of sermons

The rhetoric holds the composition of sermons and assumes the role of organizing the mediation of the "signs" of its grammar in the world, through the creation of eloquent means of communication, according to the three main functions that support this type: to delight the senses, to move affections, and to teach. The eloquence amplifies the sign function of words, gestures, voice, and images, and it expands their efficiency so that they become sensitive vehicles of the concept, evocation of what is absent, through analogue and imaginative processes. In this sense, the rhetoric is a fundamental tool of knowledge, since the act of thinking itself requires the use of images and simulacra stored in memory. The representation of the thing thus produced mobilizes the will linked not only to knowledge but also to sensitivity and imagination, and that can act on the sensitivity and on feelings, through the mediation of the interior senses, to guide them, sort them, and discipline them, according to the ideal Aristotelian-Thomistic, the political government of the soul (as the philosophers of the Society of Jesus of Coimbra say). In short, the objectives of the art of rhetoric involving the person of the recipients in all sizes thematized psychological and anthropological knowledge: body, mental, and spiritual. The long tradition of the art of speech and philosophical knowledge on the dynamism of the person effectively collaborate in this endeavor, since the contribution of classical and medieval authors (Aristotle, Seneca, Cicero, and Augustine) and their modern interpreters (Granada and Soares SI).

7.   Evidentia. The ideal of evidence in the common rhetoric and epistemology of the first modern age.

Reflection about the importance of "*evidentia*" characterizes the new eloquence widespread since the Council of Trent. At the same time, the knowledge to 'evidence' is ideally stated in the science of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, insofar as mathematical evidence is understood as internal experience and evidence shows sensitive observation for the natural scientist. The authors of treatises on preaching incorporate the concept of "ἐναργέια" proposed by Quintilian (35-100) and translate the Latin word

"*evidentia*" or representation. It is, in short, the ability of language to evoke presence, establishing the link between visibility and emotion, the ability to represent things so strongly, to make them look visible.

Aresi claims that the ability of word is rhetorically elaborated in representing things in such a way that "one does not just seem to hear them, but also to see them" (1611 cited by Jori, 1998, 145).

On this type of evidence certainty is based. More than the result of the argumentative structure of the discourse, the communication of certainty is through the opening in the space where it can become the "palpable experience", the "sensible proof." The evidence of the image, in this sense, is much more persuasive than that produced by logical reasoning.

The metaphor becomes effective instrument of expression which gives the form of the wise word: according to Tesauro (1625/1965), the metaphor assigns an image with an idea, thus making the idea almost visible. The frequent use of metaphor confirms the observations made by Huizinga (1919/1995) that, in the late Middle Ages and the beginning of Modernity, the trend of Western thought for the solidification of images was affirmed.

A small book by Gaspar Loarte well known in the Modern Age (Loarte 1570) diffuses in suitable terms to the popular use the method of *compositio loci*, or composition of the place, as proposed by Loyola in his Spiritual Exercises: "With respect to the steps of Passion, when you meditate them, you should feel that they must be meditated as if they happened in front of your eyes (...) you should imagine being present in the same places where these things happened" (Loarte 1570, 29). The *compositio loci* is a complex psychological operation which Ignatius proposed in the Second Week of the Spiritual Exercises, whose goal is to form in the mind, through the representation of internal senses, a 'place' where the subject in first person can engage himself in the represented scene, and that becomes a space for contemplation, knowledge, devotion.

Sensitive knowledge is an integral part of the construction process of certainty: the word is conceived in such a way that the preacher, through the art of rhetoric, can make the subject capable of "phantasm processing" and thereby causes the dynamism of knowledge. However, this evidence cannot be limited just to the sensitive: it must also be evidence of affection and intellect. According to the theologian and rhetorical Spaniard Luis de Granada, in fact, evidence is able to move inside the other one who is himself moved (Granada 1578/1945). The evidence must involve the whole person and only becomes full evidence to the extent that manifests as personal event. The power of the word derives ultimately from the experience of those who said it; experience in which thought and practice are the size of the unit and dynamic phenomenon that is the person (Massimi 2005).

8. An exemplification through the sermons of Antonio Vieira

Antonio Vieira's [3] sermons are a rich example of cultural dynamics described above. From their reading and analysis we can better understand the fact that construction of the certainty and persuasive communication composes a single process. We analyze two sermons: one of his most famous sermons (in Lisbon at the Court, 1655) and a sermon preached in 1651 (Monastery Odivelas, Portugal).

In the first sermon preached in 1655, Vieira discusses the meaning and function of preaching and offers his vision of the possibility of communicating certainty and the conditions necessary for this to happen. These conditions are: the person of the preacher, his knowledge, the subject matter, the voice which he speaks, and the style. The first and most important of such conditions on the person of the preacher is his own experience of life that must be exemplary manifestation of what he says. The strength of the word depends on the example of the life of the preacher. Such example depends on the strength of the word which is only this way insofar as the word is action. Effective communication is the revelation of a fact and, in this manner, it works only if its contents can be verified by the senses, namely, they can be heard, but can also be seen: "listeners might see what they hear from us!" (Vieira 1655/2000, 37). And in order to prove what he says, Vieira cites an example derived from his experience of preaching: "Here is a preacher who tells his listeners about the Christ Passion." Vieira narrates that Christ was submitted to the court of Caiaphas, the way He was deceived; then Vieira reports how they dressed Christ with a mantle of purpleness. And the audience listens with attention. And the preacher continues narrating that they put a crown of thorns on His head. The audience listens with equal attention. Next, the orator says that they tied the Christ's hands and put a scepter of cane in them. "The same serious silence goes on, and the audience keeps attentive." But suddenly, a curtain on stage opens, and the statue of *Ecce Homo* Christ appears. And then, everybody immediately lie down on the ground, hit their chest, crying, screaming, etc... "What happened? What is new in the church?" (Vieira 1655/2000, 37): Vieira asks. The preacher had spoken of the mantle of purpleness, crown of thorns, cane. "But why did the simple fact of talking about it not produce any movement, as it is the case now? Because before

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[3] Father Antônio Vieira (1608, Lisbon, Portugal-July 18, 1697, Bahia, Brazil) was a Portuguese Jesuit preacher and writer, the "prince" of Catholic orators of his time. Brought when a child to Bahia, he studied under the Jesuits, and entered the Society of Jesus in 1623, pronouncing his first vows in 1625. Vieira is one of greatest figures in the seventeenth century. As an orator he is one of the world's masters, equally great in the cathedrals and courts of Europe and the poor churches and chapels of Maranhão. He is profoundly original and frequently sublime. After his ordination in 1653, he took up the charge of defending Indian's against the Portuguese settlers and he often preached to the colonialist about theirs abuses.

Ecce Homo was heard and now *Ecce Homo* is seen" (Vieira 1655/2000, 38). The narrative of the preacher came through the ears. The representation of the figure enters their eyes. And he concludes that the reason why the preachers produce little conversion effects on listeners with their practices is because they preach only to the ears and not to the eyes. However, insofar as the word of the preacher acquires visibility, it becomes "the stars of heaven", visible to all, because they are very clear, very distinct, and very high (Vieira 1655/2000, 40).

Effective communication is the revelation of a fact. And as such, it works as if its contents may be verified by the senses: to be heard but also to be seen. Here Vieira raises an issue that will continue in another sermon: the visibility of the word also depends on its receptor. And the view itself can mislead; so that to see the signs present in the world in their full evidence, it is necessary to go through the path of "*desengan*o" (path of restoration that leads to true knowledge). And this way, the preacher is an authoritative teacher.

In the sermon preached in 1651 (Monastery Odivelas, Portugal), which is about the need to correct the excessive use of mirrors in female convents of the period, Vieira relates to the possible mistake of vision caused by disordered affections, such as self-esteem, anger, fear, etc. This disorder results from the fact that the will not see what is actually portrayed, but what it wants to see.

Vieira refers to the possible mistake of vision: "in our imagination, or imaginative potency, located in the brain, the images of things that enter through the senses and that philosophers call species are kept as secret treasure." But the presence of the "devil" ("self-deception") among the infinite species "can order and compose them in a more convenient way for him in order to internally paint and represent in our imagination what can bend, mold, and attract the appetite" (Vieira 1651/ 2001, 344). This is even more serious in the case of self-knowledge, as in the case of people who use the mirror to see themselves reflected in it. The misleading precisely consists of cleaning the way we see ourselves and the things, from the delusion of appearance, created by disordered affections, such as self-esteem, anger, fear, etc... The disorder is a result of the arbitrariness of the will properly to the subject, which leads him to not see what is really portrayed, but "what he wants and how he wants it to be" (Vieira, 1651/2001, 345).

The word of the preacher is the effective tool in the process of "*desengano*." This is not an uncritical reception of 'certainties': it is required by the receiver that uses a specific criterion of discernment. The possibility of certain knowledge obtained through the preached word, in fact, must be verified and proven by the recipients on the basis of the conditions laid down for its truthfulness and discussed by Vieira's sermon in 1655.

9. Conclusion

It is concluded that the possibility of certainty is not so much as a statement of doctrine, but as an event to be known, from the clues or signs that occur. The certainty does not just have theoretical character and it is not just a rhetorical construction, but it takes on experiential dimension and it envolves both thought and practice. In fact, it concerns thought and practice from both the one who speaks and the recipient. And his assertion on the part of the communication and its recognition by the recipient require the full involvement of the people involved in their somato-psychical-spiritual dynamism.

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Paul Guimard entre humour et ironie

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Abstract

In Paul Guimard, irony is not a bare linguistic fact, but a structure endowed with philosophical substance that plays the role of a founding figure of speech of his writing. The law that governs his universe is chance, the unexpected, that henceforth makes everything swing between certainty and uncertainty. In the novel *Les premiers venus [First Commers]*, the rewriting of the Genesis myth exploits the duplicity of irony, its capacity to transform the uncertainties of human condition in generally valid certainties. This function of irony is emphasized by the writer in numerous forms of peritexts which make the object of the present analysis.

Keywords: Mythe, écriture, ironie, explicite, implicite, ironie du sort

1. Introduction

Dans le roman *Les premiers venus,* parmi les derniers publiés, Paul Guimard réécrit le mythe de la Genèse. La fiction, qui s'inspire des cinq premiers livres de la *Bible* jusqu'au Déluge, gravite autour de la question du pêché originel. L'écrivain parvient à créer une fiction avec ironie et humour, sans perdre la lucidité de l'être pensant, mais surtout, sans perdre la sensibilité de l'être sentant.

À partir de l'hypothèse que l'ironie est un principe fondateur de son écriture, mes recherches s'intéressent en priorité à la manière dont Guimard contourne, dans ce roman, les lieux communs du roman de la condition humaine. Fondée sur l'ironie, la communication littéraire de l'écrivain se trouve dans une permanente oscillation entre le certain et l'incertain, entre l'explicite et l'implicite[1].

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1 Pour la précision de l'analyse, je rappelle la définition la plus commune de l'ironie : figure de rhétorique par laquelle on dit le contraire de ce qu'on veut faire comprendre.

Deux axes seront proposés pour déployer l'analyse de cette oscillation dans ce roman de Paul Guimard : l'examen des paratextes, notamment des péritextes[2], et l'étude de l'incipit et de la fin du roman.

2. Les péritextes

La dédicace

Le premier péritexte, qui mérite notre attention, est la dédicace : « À mon Eve ». Le prénom de la « première venue », Eve, remplace tout autre mot que l'écrivain aurait pu employer pour nommer son épouse à laquelle il dédie le livre. Toutefois, la dédicace ouvre la voie vers des significations proposées par le mythe biblique : soumission de la femme à l'Homme dont elle est issue, charme, pureté, beauté, mais aussi tentation. L'ironie délicate, utilisée par l'écrivain pour s'adresser à son épouse, entraîne cette richesse de significations que le prénom de celle-ci, ou tout nom commun désignant sa qualité – épouse, femme, compagne, conjointe –, auraient annulée. Elle révèle déjà la manière dont l'écrivain conçoit le rôle de cette figure dans son discours. L'emploi du mot « Eve » précédé de l'adjectif possessif confère à la dédicace l'émotion [3] transmise par les sentiments éveillés par sa compagne.

En même temps, l'emploi du prénom de la femme primordiale dévoile l'intention de l'écrivain de se référer au mythe de la Genèse dans son écriture. On peut donc remarquer qu'à partir de la dédicace du livre, l'ironie impose sa présence et affirme son double rôle de médiateur dans la transmission de l'émotion et dans la validation de la qualité du discours littéraire.

Trois autres péritextes, dans lesquels l'ironie est présente, accompagnent le texte du roman : deux épigraphes, situées en tête du livre, et un post-scriptum. L'ironie est construite sur la dualité et la duplicité[4].

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2 Dans *Seuils*, Paris, éditions du Seuil, coll. "Poétique", 1987, Gérard Genette définit le terme *paratexte* (ce qui entoure et prolonge le texte) et en distingue deux sortes : *le péritexte*, le paratexte situé à l'intérieur du livre (le titre, les sous-titres, les intertitres, les nom de l'auteur et de l'éditeur, la date d'édition, la préface, les notes, les illustrations, la table des matières, la postface, la quatrième de couverture...) et *l'épitexte*, celui situé à l'extérieur du livre (entretiens et interviews donnés par l'auteur avant, après ou pendant la publication de l'œuvre, sa correspondance, ses journaux intimes...).
3 Dans son étude, *Poétique de l'ironie*, Paris, coll. "Points/Essais-Inédits", 2001, Pierre Schoentjes souligne la dualité du Moi et l'émotion, importantes pour étudier les effets de l'ironie, généralement absentes des études sur cette figure.
4 Voir à ce propos Tamine, Marcandier et Vivès 2007.

Les épigraphes

Le premier extrait est tiré d'*Autobiographie* de John Cowper Powys :

> Ce qu'en réalité j'éprouve, c'est une pitié qui me serre et me soulève le cœur pour tous les êtres vulnérables, meurtrissables victimes que nous sommes tous de la grande puissance sadique qui a créé le monde [5] (Guimard 1997, 9).

L'extrait dévoile les réflexions de Guimard sur la condition humaine, qui visent à annuler tout éloge fait au Créateur du monde. Dans son roman, ces réflexions seront soulignées, d'une part, par la présentation des erreurs que le Créateur suprême commet à l'égard de ses propres créations, et d'autre part, par le processus d'humanisation d'Adam et d'Eve. L'écrivain ne critique pas la Divinité dans la lignée du scepticisme romantique d'un Alfred de Vigny, qui propose la leçon de la dignité orgueilleuse, mais dans l'esprit d'une âme sensible communiquant avec les autres humains dans la souffrance causée par le sort commun. La présence de cet extrait en tête du livre semble avoir le double rôle de mettre sous le signe du doute les certitudes annoncées par la *Bible*, et d'orienter le discours guimardien vers l'ironie romantique. La dualité de l'ironie rhétorique est ainsi évidente comme plaisir et amertume à la fois. En même temps, avec cet extrait, Guimard dévoile indirectement ses idées philosophiques, sa position de non croyant, et simultanément sa démarche scripturale dans la réécriture du mythe de la Genèse. Guimard s'avère être moins intéressé par le contenu de ce mythe que par les réflexions scripturales qu'il soulève, et c'est la raison pour laquelle il fera la transcription de cet épisode de la *Bible* dans le roman.

La deuxième épigraphe du roman de Paul Guimard est tirée de *La Semaine Sainte* de Louis Aragon :

> Ceci n'est pas un roman historique. Toute ressemblance avec des personnages ayant vécu, toute similitude de noms, de lieux, de détails, ne peut être l'effet que d'une pure coïncidence, et l'auteur en décline la responsabilité au nom des droits imprescriptibles de l'imagination (Guimard 1997,10).

Cet extrait renforce la suggestion de l'extrait précédent de voir dans la *Bible* un prétexte à l'écriture. L'effet de l'ironie réside dans le contraste entre le réel et l'irréel. Guimard reprend le texte d'Aragon dans la même intention de se défendre contre l'accusation supposée de ses lecteurs d'avoir

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5 Sans doute Guimard a-t-il lu le livre de l'écrivain anglais paru en 1934 grâce à la traduction française de 1965, réalisée par Marie Canavaggia. Les idées de l'écrivain rencontrent celles de l'écrivain anglais.

transposé des noms, des lieux ou des personnages du réel, alors qu'il n'a obéi qu'à l'imagination. Or le réel, dans son roman, n'existe pas à proprement parler. Il n'existe que dans et par le texte de la *Bible*, donc dans l'imagination scripturale. L'écrivain utilise ainsi une forme ironique pour dévoiler la qualité de son imaginaire de contester et de créer par l'écriture.

L'emploi des épigraphes est d'ailleurs très fréquent dans l'écriture guimardienne. L'écrivain les place aussi bien au début des récits, qu'au début des parties ou des chapitres. Il leur fait dépasser la fonction habituelle d'annoncer et de résumer le contenu. Leurs significations sont visibles, dans leur ensemble, dans un livre, ayant le but de laisser surgir la philosophie guimardienne bâtie sur l'ironie. Il s'agit de l'ironie du sort[6], concept fondateur de la philosophie de Guimard, devenu aussi le titre de l'un de ses premiers romans.[7]

Dans le cas du roman *Les premiers venus*, les épigraphes mettent en évidence les idées de l'écrivain sur l'acte scriptural.

Le post-scriptum

À la signification des épigraphes correspond symétriquement celle du post-scriptum.

Le roman garde d'un bout à l'autre comme héros principaux Adam et Eve. De temps en temps, dans les moments-clés de l'histoire de ces héros apparaît Satan. Dans le post-scriptum, c'est à ce personnage que l'écrivain se réfère, notamment à son immortalité, présentée par le même jeu de l'ironie :

> *Figé dans leur éternité, les Immortels n'ayant pas de passé ne disposent pas de souvenirs. Par contre, ils n'ignorent pas l'avenir. Rien de surprenant, donc, à ce que Satan cherche parfois des références, des points de comparaison ou des définitions dans sa mémoire du future. On n'accusera pas l'auteur de se parer de plumes illustres lorsqu'il profite de ce privilège sans recourir aux guillemets pour souligner des citations si transparentes quelles ne peuvent abuser personne[8]* (Guimard 1997, 151).

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6 Selon Pierre Schoentjes 2001, les Français considèrent l'ironie comme une raillerie et parlent d'une "ironie du sort" dans une perspective de malheur. Dans l'acception de Paul Guimard, le message de ce concept est optimiste: on peut dépasser l'effet de malheur si l'on sait profiter du concours de circonstances et que l'on accepte de vivre son moment présent, en évitant les incursions dans le passé.
7 Paul Guimard, *Ironie du sort*, Paris, Denoël, 1961.
8 Dans la citation, nous avons gardé les italiques utilisées par l'écrivain pour présenter le post-scriptum.

En tant qu'immortel, Satan n'a pas de passé. L'immortalité invalide sa faculté de se souvenir et rend active ce que Guimard appelle « sa mémoire du futur ». Le post-scriptum annule toute incertitude qui enveloppe ce personnage, et rend explicite l'implicite. Guimard dévoile la signification d'alter ego qu'il donne à Satan par l'antiphrase : « On n'accusera pas l'auteur de se parer de plumes illustres lorsqu'il profite de ce privilège sans recourir aux guillemets pour souligner des citations si transparentes quelles ne peuvent abuser personne ». Cette forme d'ironie laisse comprendre le privilège de l'écrivain visionnaire qui exprime ses idées sur les faits de la culture et de la civilisation contemporaines, comme il le fait d'ailleurs dans tous ses romans, sans peur ni contrainte, à la manière de Satan. Si, dans *Les premiers venus,* Dieu, qui refuse le pardon à Adam et à Eve, est le créateur qui, par orgueil, décline sa responsabilité devant ses créatures, Satan, toujours prêt à leur donner des conseils, représente le vrai principe créateur. Il représente le Savoir suprême qui se met au service de l'humanité[9].

Les péritextes du roman, dans leur ensemble, mettent en évidence la tâche principale du discours romanesque guimardien, qui est la création du monde littéraire par l'écrivain, son créateur suprême.

3. Le début et la fin du roman

L'incipit

Le roman débute et finit avec deux textes à valeur spéculaire, qui se répondent l'un l'autre comme les épigraphes et le post-scriptum. Le premier texte annonce le prétexte du roman, le deuxième est une *Postface*, dont le rôle est de résumer les intentions du livre.

Le premier texte, intitulé « Résumé des épisodes précédents », présente brièvement toutes les étapes de la Genèse avant l'épisode du « fruit défendu », prétexte de la fiction guimardienne. Le texte a la forme d'une liste de phrases nominales, comme, par exemple : « Modelage d'un Homme en terre glaise et son animation par la méthode du bouche-à-bouche. ». La dernière phrase nominale – « Episode dit du « fruit défendu » » – est ensuite développée dans la fiction qui se déroule dans les deux parties du livre. Le principe constitutif de cette liste est toujours l'emploi de l'ironie. Un simple mot, adroitement utilisé, reflète la dualité et de la duplicité de cette figure, validant les intentions cachées de l'écrivain. Par exemple, dans la première phrase citée, résumant la création de l'Homme par Dieu à la méthode « du bouche-à-bouche », l'écrivain exprime la distance qu'il prend par rapport aux faits de la *Bible* et implicitement par rapport à la foi. De même, dans la

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9 De cette manière, on peut comprendre l'humanisme guimardien, qui, selon la leçon d'André Gide, met son écriture au service de l'Homme.

dernière phrase du texte « Episode dit du « fruit défendu » », le déterminant « dit », attribué au péché originel, fait disparaître l'idée de culpabilité foncière du geste d'Eve. Guimard laisse ainsi transparaître l'idée que la théorie du « fruit défendu » est une invention du dogmatisme chrétien, car connaître est le droit légitime de l'homme. Dans tous ses livres, l'écrivain démontre que la soif de connaître, loin d'être un péché, est ce qui fait avancer l'humanité. C'est dans ce sens que l'on peut aussi comprendre la « mémoire du futur » de Satan dans le post-scriptum.

La liste des phrases nominales du premier texte spéculaire est introduite par une ample phrase verbale qui annonce et caractérise ce qui va suivre, tout en rappelant les titres des chapitres des romans ou des contes philosophiques du XVIIIe siècle[10] : « Où l'on voit que la création du monde à partir du Chaos n'est pas une mince affaire ». Le verbe placé au début annonce ce dont on doit prendre conscience. Il s'agit de l'acte créateur initiatique envisagé par un clin d'œil ironique, mais pas méchant. En utilisant l'antiphrase « la création du monde [...] n'est pas une mince affaire », l'écrivain dévalorise l'acte divin. L'expression « mince affaire » installe l'acte créateur suprême dans « les choses de la vie ».[11] Guimard présente ainsi l'acte de la création du monde comme un projet faisable, ce qui nous permet l'extrapolation de ce projet faisable à l'écriture, vu la signification du post-scriptum. Cette interprétation est soutenue aussi par le texte même du roman qui est une création du monde par l'écriture. On sait que l'ironie est l'art de persuader et qu'elle est utilisée dans le but de dévaloriser quelque chose par des termes valorisants. Guimard fait le contraire : il utilise des termes dévalorisants pour valoriser. Il dévalorise le mythe biblique, pour valoriser la création du monde par l'écriture.

La Postface

La *Postface,* ayant un sous-titre intitulé « Extraits du Livre de la Genèse », va également dans le sens de cette interprétation. Elle se présente comme un commentaire de texte, construit selon les exigences de la recherche scientifique. Son objectif est de révéler les erreurs du Créateur Suprême dans la création du monde. Le texte commence par la citation de deux versets du Déluge (Genèse, chap. IX, verset 7). Le commentaire est focalisé sur la dernière phrase du passage : « Soyez féconds et prolifiques ; pullulez sur la terre et multipliez-vous sur elle », que Dieu prononce en s'adressant à Noé et à ses fils. L'écrivain remarque que Dieu avait employé la même formule « *soyez féconds et prolifiques, remplissez la terre* » (Genèse, chap.

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10 Voir, par exemple, le titre d'un chapitre de *Candide* de Voltaire : « Comment Candide rencontra son ancien maître de philosophie, le docteur Panglosse, et ce qui en advin t».

11 Par « les choses de la vie », syntagme utilisé comme titre de l'un de ses romans (*Les choses de la vie*, Paris, Denoël, 1967), Paul Guimard comprend les faits de la vie quotidienne qui passent inaperçus, mais qui constituent notre vrai bonheur.

I), « un millénaire plus tôt, au matin de la Création » (Guimard 1997, 148). Selon son commentaire, la reprise de la phrase traduit l'erreur de Dieu de persister dans ses intentions malgré l'échec de sa première version. En analysant l'échec de Dieu, Guimard essaie en réalité de trouver la solution pour surmonter les échecs dans la création littéraire. Dans les termes de la création littéraire, la reprise de la même histoire signifie la tentation de la réécriture. En analyste du travail du Créateur Suprême, Guimard attribue l'échec de la première version de la création à l'incapacité de Dieu d'apercevoir la mauvaise construction de la configuration terrestre. Il n'a prêté attention qu'à « la dégénérescence de l'humanité » :

> Cette redite volontaire montre assez que le Créateur s'en tenait à son idée initiale, malgré l'échec de la première version et qu'il n'avait pas constaté de malfaçon du globe terrestre – il pouvait le pulvériser d'un claquement de doigts !- mais la dégénérescence de l'humanité qui le peuplait (Guimard 1997, 148).

L'erreur de Dieu réside dans le fait qu'il ne cherche pas à connaître ses créatures, le produit de sa création, parce qu'il est trop occupé par l'idée de créer. Il ne connaît pas l'homme, il néglige le rapport indissoluble entre la vie de celui-ci et le monde, et ne prête attention qu'à la fonction humaine de peupler la terre. Guimard met en évidence cette idée par une ironie verbale qui raille le texte même de la *Bible* concernant le devoir de Noé et de ses fils de peupler la terre :

> Sem, Cham et Japhet, les trois fils qui sortirent de l'arche, avaient expérimenté depuis belle lurette les agréments des exercices conduisant à la pullulation. Ils s'employèrent joyeusement à obéir aux consignes célestes. Noé lui-même, pourtant âgé de six cents ans à l'époque des faits, disposait encore de trois cent cinquante ans pour collaborer en personne au repeuplement avec sa femme et les femmes de ses fils, et cela, malgré un penchant pour la boisson qui le plongeait parfois dans de longs sommeils dont il s'éveillait fringant lorsqu'il avait cuvé son vin, comme dit la Genèse (chap. IX, verset 24) (Guimard 1997, 148).

Guimard désire accentuer l'idée que l'orgueil produit par son pouvoir absolu empêche Dieu de saisir l'imperfection de sa création, notamment l'imperfection de l'homme et du monde dans lequel il est jeté. Ce qui manque, par conséquent, au Créateur suprême est la conscience de son acte. Guimard y voit l'erreur principale de l'acte créateur. Cette erreur est encore plus grave si quelqu'un d'autre doit l'assumer et en subir les conséquences. L'écrivain interprète dans cette perspective l'histoire de la Rédemption. Il considère que « l'hypothèse ingénieuse du Rédempteur » qui « prend sur lui la punition de l'espèce grâce à une mort lente et cruelle » est la forme sous

laquelle Dieu décline sa responsabilité envers ses créatures par un acte de vengeance contre l'insoumission à ses consignes. Implicitement Guimard laisse comprendre que le fils inventé dans ce but assume en réalité les erreurs du Père. Par l'interprétation de son commentaire on peut comprendre que, dans sa conception, la tâche principale de tout créateur est la haute conscience de son acte. La haute conscience du métier rend l'écrivain responsable de son acte scriptural et éveille en lui « la mémoire du futur », c'est-à-dire la lucidité nécessaire pour railler les vices de notre société contemporaine et offrir à l'avenir des solutions pour s'en sortir. Le problème central que Guimard pose d'ailleurs dans ses livres est l'état de la civilisation et de la culture, suite à la perte de la sensibilité et de la faculté d'aimer. Dans ce contexte, l'acte littéraire est l'engagement d'un écrivain responsable de sa création, dont la mission est de guider l'être humain à dépasser les imperfections de sa vie et de sa condition. Guimard nourrit cette mission de sa philosophie fondée sur le concept d'ironie du sort.

4. L'ironie du sort

L'ironie du sort est généralement définie comme le contraste entre ce qu'on espérait et la réalité. Dans cet esprit, Guimard voit dans la réalité quotidienne, qui est la matière de ses livres, un contraste entre le fonctionnement des « choses de la vie » et ce qui est ressenti par l'individu. La loi qui agit dans son univers est le hasard, l'imprévu. Dans son monde, tout bascule entre certitude et incertitude. « Tout est prévu de ce qui est prévisible. » (Guimard 1995, 16) dit Guimard dans *L'ironie du* sort. Pourtant, tout s'avère imprévisible car tout est relatif [12] en fonction du concours de circonstances. Le concours de circonstances est l'effet de l'ironie qui s'insinue dans le sort des humains, mais qui donne aussi la possibilité d'une décision : en profiter ou ne pas en profiter. En profiter est, selon Guimard, la forme que prend la dignité humaine face à l'ironie du sort. L'écrivain laisse surgir cette idée dans tous ses écrits, mais elle est explicitement présentée dans l'incipit du roman *Les premiers venus.*

Adam et Eve se voient chassés de l'Eden sans trouver d'explication à la colère du Tout Puissant, suite à leur geste de s'attaquer au « fruit défendu ».

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12 Cette idée est sans doute inspirée à l'écrivain par la théorie de la relativité d'Albert Einstein. D'ailleurs la quatrième partie de *L'Ironie du sort* a comme épigraphe cette citation du célèbre physicien : « Je ne veux pas croire que Dieu joue aux billes avec l'Univers » (Guimard 1961, 113).

L'Homme et la Femme que nous appellerons Adam et Eve, leurs noms originels, ne comprirent rien à l'ouragan que suscita leur fredaine. Ils s'attendaient à un froncement de sourcils de l'ombrageux Créateur ou, pire, à des remontrances dans le style pompeux régissant leurs rapports avec le Très-Haut, mais ils restèrent stupides devant le furieux ramdam qui suivit leur enfantillage (Guimard 1997, 15).

Pour Adam et Eve la relation avec Dieu ressemblait à la liaison existante entre le père et ses enfants. L'« enfantillage » qu'ils ont commis n'était pour eux que la satisfaction des caprices devant une interdiction parentale immotivée, de leur point de vue. « Adam et Eve ne quittèrent donc pas l'Eden, ils furent quittés par lui. » (Guimard 1997, 18), dit Guimard. Il s'agit donc un concours de circonstances qui décide de leur vie. En aucun cas, ils ne se révoltent pas contre leur Père. Seuls sur la terre, il ne leur reste que deux issues : se laisser accabler par leur sort ou bien essayer de s'en sortir. Ils choisissent d'agir tout en s'entre-aidant. Il est à remarquer que la solution proposée par Guimard devant le destin n'est pas la révolte, mais la dignité de l'acte. Agir, c'est sa leçon d'écrivain de la condition humaine, assumée dans l'unique but de la communication entre les hommes par la voie de la sensibilité et du cœur. Guimard met en évidence cette idée par une ironie fine qui transforme le contraire de la perfection en réalité harmonieuse.

La terre sur laquelle sont plongés Adam et Eve devrait être le contraire de la perfection de l'Eden. L'art scriptural guimardien prouve le contraire. En attribuant à ses héros la perspective descriptive, Guimard met en parallèle la perfection immuable de L'Eden avec la beauté mouvante et vivante de la terre :

D'abord, ils ne virent pas la différence. Le fleuve puissant continuait à travers la grande vallée fertile cernée de monts qui en limitait l'horizon. Le soleil éclairait toujours la terre bien que sa lumière fût moins uniforme, plus nuancée ainsi que la qualité de l'air parcouru de légers courants. Ils virent apparaître dans le ciel des écharpes blanches, paresseuses et changeantes. Adam et Eve n'avaient connu de la voûte céleste que la lumière invariable d'un soleil immobile dispensant sur l'Eden une température uniforme (Guimard 1997, 18).

La beauté de l'Eden ne connaît aucune variation de l'espace et du temps, elle est uniforme, statique et inchangeable, privée de la dialectique des contraires. Monotone, elle ne produit aucun effet sur l'âme. Dans l'Eden, Adam et Eve n'ont jamais remarqué le ciel, comme il leur arrive depuis qu'ils se trouvent sur la terre. Guimard recourt à un jeu d'adjectifs pour réaliser la description du ciel de l'Eden : « Il n'y avait rien à voir, dit-il, qu'une étendue calme et bleue, calme et bête » (Guimard 1997, 19). Les adjectifs « bleue » et « bête », ayant des sens tout différents, plutôt opposés,

deviennent synonymes grâce au même terme auquel ils sont associés, l'adjectif « calme ». L'adjectif « bleue » reçoit ainsi les connotations de l'adjectif « bête » : banal, sans originalité, conventionnel, ce qui est déjà suggéré par la forme négative du verbe voir : « il n'y avait rien à voir ». La phrase qui suit explique la raison de cet aspect conventionnel de l'Eden, du dogmatisme religieux, tout en laissant transparaître la philosophie antireligieuse guimardienne :

> Un ordre immuable régissait le mouvement des astres, le comportement des créatures, de toutes les créatures, l'Homme et la Femme en tête mais aussi les oiseaux de l'air, les poissons de l'eau, toute bête de la terre et la terre elle-même et l'herbe des champs (Guimard 1997, 19).

Paul Guimard trouve une manière moderne et poétique pour réécrire l'éternel problème du destin implacable et de notre impuissance devant ses lois. Recourant à un nouveau jeu de contrastes, propre à l'ironie, il oppose le malheur du couple chassé de l'espace édénique au bonheur qu'il ressent devant le spectacle vivant de la terre. L'effet produit par l'image de la terre sur Adam et Eve est contraire à un désespoir causé par la perte de l'espace d'origine. Avec la sensibilité propre aux femmes, Eve remarque : « Il fait bon », et à Adam de répondre : « C'est sans doute le début du changement ». Dans la description de l'incipit du roman, qui se termine par ce bref échange de répliques, on peut reconnaître l'aspect de base de l'esthétique guimardienne : l'invitation adressée à l'être humain à dépasser sa condition, en accédant à la beauté et à la communication, par la voie de la sensibilité. L'art, offrant cette opportunité à l'être humain, est, pour Guimard, comme pour Malraux, un antidestin.

L'incipit du roman *Les premiers venus* laisse également voir la philosophie de l'écrivain bâtie sur le concept d'ironie du sort. Le concours de circonstances est un produit de l'ironie du sort et ne connaît aucune explication. En vain la cherche-t-on, il ne s'agit que de simples suppositions (Adam ne fait que supposer les raisons de la colère de Dieu). La philosophie de Guimard est celle d'un écrivain, être sensible. Elle n'est pas à la recherche du sens, qui est de toute façon inexistant, mais tente de trouver la voie d'agir en dignité pour s'affirmer en tant qu'être humain, dans un concours de circonstances. Il faut savoir dire, comme Adam devant la décision implacable du Tout Puissant : « je refuse que nous Lui faisons l'hommage du remords ».

La fin du roman offre une image poétique de cette philosophie, par le rituel de la célébration du mariage dans la mort, suggérant la solution offerte par Paul Guimard face aux limites de la condition humaine : la communication sur la base affective.

Atteinte d'une maladie incurable et réconciliée avec son sort, Eve lègue à Adam son dernier désir. Elle lui demande de couvrir son corps inanimé de

fleurs et de le confier au fleuve, pour qu'il conserve d'elle une belle image. Après la mort de son épouse, Adam accomplit ce devoir en se donnant lui-même la mort, tout en affirmant la liberté de décider de son sort :

> Adam fit ce qu'il avait promis, il porta le corps sans vie jusqu'au fleuve et le couvrit d'iris et de jacinthes d'eau. Il avança jusqu'à ce que le courant atteignît sa poitrine. Alors il accomplit l'acte de révolte qu'il avait décidé, le choix qui rejetait la soumission au Déluge en refusant au Créateur le pouvoir de lui imposer l'heure de sa destruction. Homme libre, il se coucha dans le fleuve en étreignant sa femme. Il aspira profondément l'onde qui noya ses pensées (Guimard 1997, 145).

Le suicide d'Adam révèle la position de Paul Guimard contre le fatalisme. Il démontre que, par un geste de dignité humaine, il y a des solutions contre un sort qui est décidé à l'avance. Adam se donne la mort pour faire passer sa dignité d'homme et ses sentiments dans l'éternité. Il fait ainsi triompher sa liberté et fait l'éloge du seul sentiment humain valable, selon Guimard, qui rend possible la communication : l'amour. Le couple, couvert de fleurs, glissant vers la mort dans une étreinte, exprime la confiance de l'écrivain dans la vie de l'âme, seule chance d'avenir pour la civilisation.

5. Conclusion

Dans *Les premiers venus,* la réécriture du mythe de la Genèse, avec l'humour que lui confère la distanciation ironique, est une ébauche de l'art de Paul Guimard. Comme on a pu le remarquer, l'ironie n'est pas chez lui un simple fait de langage, mais une structure à substance philosophique, ayant la fonction de figure fondatrice de son écriture.

Il ne s'agit pourtant pas, chez lui, d'une ignorance simulée, destinée à faire découvrir à ses interlocuteurs leur propre ignorance, à travers des interrogations naïves. Guimard partage le sort de tous les humains et compatit avec eux, tout en essayant de leur révéler, par un détachement qui crée la bonne disposition et l'humour, l'unique solution d'affirmer leur dignité. Il ne parle pas en philosophe, mais en écrivain sensible, dont le but est de rendre possible et évident ce qui est improbable et incertain. Il ne fait cette démonstration ni sous l'influence du fatalisme ni sous celle du déterminisme, mais en artiste de l'écriture romanesque.

Se trouver par hasard dans un concours de circonstances, comme se trouvent les héros guimardiens, pourrait faire penser à la fatalité. Mais Guimard propose justement d'intervenir dans « les choses de la vie » pour dérégler le mécanisme de la fatalité. La solution qu'il suggère, d'une manière poétique, c'est profiter de tout concours de circonstance. Sa philosophie pourrait se résumer ainsi : la condition humaine est constituée

d'une série de circonstances qui, dans l'espace d'une hésitation, peuvent marquer le destin ; si l'on accepte de tout subir, on devient le spectateur passif de la déconstruction de sa personnalité, de la perte de son identité, souvent jusqu'à la mort ; au contraire, si l'on profite, sans hésiter, des circonstances, on devient capable de construire son identité et de décider de son sort. Guimard place une bonne partie de ses héros dans la première catégorie justement pour souligner par contraste l'importance de la deuxième attitude proposée, pour laquelle il plaide dans ses romans. Adam et Eve s'inscrivent dans cette dernière catégorie.

L'ironie est l'outil de base pour révéler cette philosophie, ayant, par sa duplicité, la capacité de transformer les incertitudes de la condition humaine en certitudes généralement valables.

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L'(in)certitude dans l'univers de croyance de Robinson

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Abstract

The discursive forms of the verb *devoir* contribute to the representation of the set of beliefs shared by the actors involved in the plot of the novel *Vendredi ou les Limbes du Pacifique*. Robinson's reflexive movement goes first from absolute certainty to quasi-certainty and uncertainty, and then the other way round. Our article illustrates how the narrator's and character's "subjacent" interventions are made visible in the fictional text and how, through them, the author manages to transmit to the reader a pre-established point of view, letting him at the same time into the reflexive meanders of the protagonists' thinking. These are several issues that we shall try to address by means of a thorough analysis of the 102 occurrences of the verb *devoir* whose values, bearing the sign of *apodictic neccessity* (Kronning 1994), are revealed only when we take into account the situational co(n)text.

Keywords: Epistemic, evidential, universe of beliefs, (un)certainty, point of view.

1. Introduction

Le récit comme mode de représentation verbale de l'histoire est le résultat d'un acte de communication par lequel le narrateur, le protagoniste et indirectement l'auteur expriment leurs intentions. L'architecture interne d'un texte dévoile comment le mécanisme de prise en charge énonciative contribue à l'établissement de la cohérence pragmatique du texte explicitant : (a) les diverses évaluations (jugements, opinions, sentiments) susceptibles d'être formulées à l'égard de l'un ou de l'autre aspect du contenu thématique et (b) les sources même de ces évaluations; quelles sont les instances qui les assument.

    Notre démarche ayant comme assise théorique les recherches de Dendale (1994), Kronning (1994, 2001) et Rabatel (1998) s'attachera à illustrer comment se fait sentir dans ce texte fictionnel l'intervention « sous-jacente » du narrateur, quels sont les moyens linguistiques dont dispose

celui-ci, et par delà son créateur, pour y impliquer le lecteur et lui faire accepter un point de vue préétabli, comment sont livrés « en direct » au lecteur par l'intermédiaire des différents types de discours (discours indirect, discours indirect libre, etc.) les sentiments, les évaluations, les transformations du protagoniste.

Autant de questions auxquelles nous essayerons de répondre par une analyse approfondie de quelques-unes des 102 occurrences du verbe *devoir* puisées dans le roman de Michel Tournier *Vendredi ou les Limbes du Pacifique* (désormais VLP) dont les valeurs pragmatico-interprétatives ne se dévoilent qu'à la prise en considération du co(n)texte linguistique et situationnel.

2. Aperçu théorique

Le verbe *devoir* est polysémique[1]. Ses valeurs modales et évidentielles ainsi que les différentes interprétations sémantico-discursives de ses formes linguistiques reposent tant sur des contraintes syntaxiques que sur le sémantisme des éléments co-présents sur la chaîne syntagmatique. Les interprétations modales définissent les valeurs de *devoir* en termes de jugements sur la fiabilité de l'information ou l'attitude du locuteur à l'égard de ce qu'il dit.

Entre le déontique et l'épistémique / ou l'évidentialité, en passant par l'aléthique, les réalisations syntaxiques et discursives de cet auxi-verbe modal peuvent exprimer l'obligation, la plausibilité, la probabilité, la vraisemblance, la quasi-certitude, la certitude. Les trois valeurs fondamentales de *devoir* participent d'une seule et même *nécessité*, nécessité «apodictique». Kronning (1994, 28) définit la nécessité apodictique en termes d'inférence et de quantification mondaine. «L'apodicticité est: (a) le produit d'une composition inférentielle; (b) qui dénote l'universalité mondaine (dans tous les mondes possibles) dans un certain univers modal U_M».

Les propriétés syntaxiques susceptibles d'orienter l'interprétation aléthique de *devoir* sont la compatibilité de ce verbe avec l'interrogation partielle et sa compatibilité avec les subordonnées introduites par *puisque*. Par son caractère véridicible *devoir* aléthique peut apparaître dans ces constructions tandis que *devoir* épistémique y est impossible (Kronning 2001,73-74).

Devoir épistémique est décrit en termes de jugement sur la fiabilité de l'information ou l'attitude du locuteur vis-à-vis de ce qu'il dit/pense. Les valeurs modales évidentielles sont en corrélation étroite l'une avec l'autre.

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[1] Voir en ce sens la revue *Langue française*, no. 102, 1994.

Nous suivons l'hypothèse soutenue par Dendale (1994, 24-38) selon laquelle la valeur évidentielle de *devoir* est de signaler que le locuteur a eu recours à une opération complexe de création d'information dans laquelle l'inférence joue un rôle important sans cependant être la seule opération à avoir été effectuée. Quelles sont les étapes mentales de l'opération de création d'information qui déterminent l'utilisation de *devoir* épistémique? À reprendre les réflexions de Dendale, ces étapes en nombre de trois consistent: (a) à gérer ou à activer une série de prémisses (majeures, mineures) en fonction de la situation extralinguistique donnée ; (b) à inférer de ces prémisses une ou plusieurs conclusions virtuelles; (c) à évaluer ces conclusions. Le raisonnement qui mène de la profération de la prémisse jusqu'à la conclusion peut être de type déductif, quand il va des conséquences à la cause, ou abductif, quand il va des causes à la conséquence.

Présentation de la démarche : (a) premier niveau d'analyse : présentation des données statistiques sur les formes fléchies du verbe *devoir* et le taux d'occurrences reparti par chapitres; (b) représentations syntaxiques et mise en évidence des contraintes discursives susceptibles d'orienter l'analyse des valeurs et effets de sens de cet auxi-verbe modal. Mise en relation des occurrences du verbe devoir avec les autres marques de la double focalisation narrative.

3. Présentation des données statistiques en relation avec l'organisation formelle de la structure narrative du roman

Tournier (1977, 128) souligne dans ses écrits autobiographiques la structure narrativo-musicale de ses romans, composés d'habitude selon une structuration binaire où les deux parties sont séparées par une crise. L'écrivain fait souvent référence à l'admirable structuration de l'Art de la fugue qu'il considère: «l'œuvre musicale…la plus riche, la plus rigoureuse, la plus touchante qui fût jamais conçue de tête humaine». Sur l'ensemble des douze chapitres qui composent le roman faisant l'objet de nos analyses, cette crise est située au chapitre VIII. Au plan figuratif cette étape est marquée par la destruction des installations construites par Robinson sur l'île et correspond à l'instant crucial qui annonce la métamorphose du protagoniste. La destruction agit comme un miroir qui réfléchit et inverse les séquences, balisant le parcours de Robinson. La structure binaire sera schématisée dans notre étude de la manière suivante: a →b→c /**destruction/** c'→b'→a'. En fonction de la répartition des occurrences flexionnelles du verbe *devoir* ainsi que les moments situés à l'incipit et dans les chapitres I, IV, VIII, X.

4. Devoir – effets de sens et focalisations narratives

4.1 Points d'ancrage de l'(in)certitude

Espace re-présentatif[2] d'un roman, l'incipit rend à échelle réduite la manière dont seront livrées au lecteur les réflexions du héros et du narrateur ainsi que la relation qui s'instaure entre les instances en jeu. Cette partie, formée par deux paragraphes, comprend un inventaire assez riches de locutions et marques verbales modales.

(1) Robinson fit un effort pour s'asseoir et éprouva aussitôt une douleur fulgurante à l'épaule gauche. La grève était jonchée de poissons éventrés, de crustacés fracturés et de touffes de varech brunâtre, tel qu'il n'en existe qu'à une certaine profondeur. Au nord et à l'est, l'horizon s'ouvrait librement vers le large, mais à l'ouest il était barré par une falaise rocheuse qui s'avançait dans la mer et semblait s'y prolonger par une chaîne de récifs (…).

Lorsque la tempête s'était levée, la galiote du capitaine Van Deyssel *devait se trouver* – non pas au nord comme il l'avait cru - mais au nord-est de l'archipel Juan Fernández. Dès lors, le navire fuyant sous le vent, *avait dû être chassé* sur les atterrages de l'île Mas a Tierra, au lieu de dériver librement dans le vide marin (…). Telle était du moins l'hypothèse la moins défavorable à Robinson (*VLP*,12).

   Dès la première page du roman *Vendredi ou les Limbes du Pacifique* le narrateur focalise avec son héros; son discours emprunte dans ce cas la vision et les caractéristiques rhétoriques de son protagoniste. Du point de vue des structures énonciatives et lexicales, on remarque le même genre de vocabulaire, une syntaxe où abondent les concessives (*mais, quoi qu'il en soit*), les temporelles (*dès lors*), des phrases où les adverbes et les verbes modalisateurs (*peut-être*, *devoir*, *convenir,* etc.) notent l'attitude axiologique de Robinson et marquent les articulations du raisonnement de ce protagoniste. L'on constate l'utilisation des formes fléchies du verbe *devoir* avec leurs valeurs épistémiques.

   Dans l'exemple de sous (1), le changement de registre énonciatif est marqué par des moyens lexico-sémantiques et grammaticaux: l'alternance des temps verbaux passé simple/imparfait, un verbe de perception *éprouva* ouvrent la voie à la description qui suit où le *point de vue représenté*

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[2] Cf. Basilio (2009, 73) : « l'incipit n'est pas seulement initial mais également initiatique, faisant office d'introduction au livre qu'il inaugure, et ce à trois titres au moins: il a pour charge de faire les honneurs du lieu, en *introduisant* l'hôte dans la demeure, demeure que, de surcroît, tout en la *représentant* à ses yeux, il se doit de lui *présenter* », in « Incipit romanesque et coup de foudre amoureux ».

(Rabatel 2001, 153) construit la perspective du locuteur focalisateur, dans notre cas, du héros Robinson. Le fragment est divisé en trois parties dont la matérialité de référenciation linguistique présente, en discours indirect libre, les évaluations épistémiques de la source focalisatrice. Ces évaluations portent : (a) sur la situation où le héros se trouve; (b) sur la situation qui aurait déterminé le naufrage; (c) sur ce qu'il devra/devrait faire. Quel est le degré d'assurance avec lequel le locuteur-protagoniste communique l'information? Dans la première partie du fragment, les constatations de nature géographiques avec des mentions référentielles à valeur absolue *au nord et à l'est, à l'ouest*, ou relative à sa position d'énonciation, *cette île*, ainsi que les déductions empruntées à ses connaissances de marin « … de poissons éventrés (…), tel qu'il n'en existe qu'à une certaine profondeur », amènent le héros à envisager sa situation avec un sentiment de détresse.

La deuxième partie du fragment reste sous le signe d'un raisonnement abductif, de type estimatif, par lequel le protagoniste prend en considération et évalue plusieurs aspects des circonstances qui ont mené vers le naufrage. D'abord la mise en doute des calculs du capitaine, ensuite l'assertion de son propre point de vue supposé fiable avec l'expression d'une conclusion partielle. C'est une estimation du type « si la galiote *devait se trouver non pas au nord…/ mais au nord-est….*alors *il* [le navire] *avait dû être chassé....* ». Le mouvement interprétatif est activé et rendu saillant au niveau linguistique par les formes verbales *devait se trouver…avait dû être chassé*. La forme de l'imparfait du verbe modal *devait* suivie par l'infinitif *se trouver* exprime le mouvement cognitif de la prise en compte d'une source énonciatrice différente, en l'occurrence l'énonciateur$_1$, séquence polyphonique, par laquelle sont reprises et niées les paroles du capitaine Van Deyssel. La probabilité affirmée par le capitaine, «la Virginie se trouve…» est ainsi niée. En vertu de l'opinion fondée sur son expérience de marin, par abduction, le héros infère la plausibilité d'une hypothèse basée sur le constat antérieur, c'est-à-dire la supposition de la méprise du capitaine. Mais l'hypothèse sur laquelle est construite l'inférence peut s'avérer fausse et alors la conclusion énoncée à la suite du raisonnement abductif peut être contestée[3]. La voie à l'expression d'un doute est ainsi ouverte:

(2) Mais il était également possible que le capitaine n'eût commis aucune erreur d'estime… (*VLP*, 12).

Le calcul interprétatif n'est pas fini.

La troisième partie du fragment analysé débute par une subordonnée concessive régie par l'imparfait du verbe *convenir* :

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[3] L'abduction infère la plausibilité d'une hypothèse à partir d'un constat supposé vrai.

(3) Quoi qu'il en soit, il convenait de se mettre à la recherche des éventuels rescapés du naufrage et des habitants de cette terre, si du moins elle était habitée (*VLP*, 12).

Par manque de preuves suffisantes, Robinson décide de vivre dans l'immédiateté. Quelle est, dans l'exemple de sous (3), l'identité du sujet énonciateur: s'agit-il du narrateur, du héros ou voire des deux? Par son sémantisme (*être forcé de convenir*, *convenir des faits*), le verbe implique une sorte de connivence entre le narrateur et le personnage. Le contenu de l'énoncé laisse sous-entendre que la source énonciative serait le héros: la présence du déictique spatial, le narrateur qui sait autant que son personnage « si du moins elle [l'île] était habitée ». Mais il y a là, à la fois, le narrateur annonçant comme une voix en écho (pour le lecteur ?) le programme narratif du héros qui, dans le paragraphe suivant, se mettra à l'exploration de l'île. Nous considérons que ce fragment clôt l'incipit du roman.

Entre la probabilité niée et la plausibilité assumée puis mise en doute, la vraisemblance fait place à l'incertitude. Robinson aura besoin de preuves supplémentaires pour estimer sa situation de naufragé. Ainsi procède-t-il à l'exploration de l'île.

Par deux fois, en discours direct d'abord et en discours indirect libre ensuite, le héros arrive à la triste constatation:

(4) Puisque ce n'est pas Mas a Tierra, dit-il simplement, c'est l'île de la Désolation. (…) Puisque cette terre n'était pas l'île Mas a Tierra, il *devait s'agir* d'un îlot que les cartes ne mentionnaient pas, situé quelque part entre la grande île et la côte chilienne. A l'ouest l'archipel Juan Fernandez, à l'est le continent sud-américain se trouvaient à des distances impossibles à déterminer, mais excédant à coup sûr les possibilités d'un homme seul (...). En outre, l'îlot *devait se trouver* hors de la route régulière des navires, puisqu'il était totalement inconnu (*VLP*,14).

Le contenu d'une subordonnée en *puisque* est présenté comme vrai préalablement à l'énonciation[4]. Vu l'enchaînement à la séquence *puisque…* la lecture de *devoir* ne peut être qu'aléthique. Dans le fragment de sous (4), les deux occurrences du verbe modal à l'imparfait acquièrent une valeur de *futur aléthique du passé* dit « objectif », instaurent un point de vue rétrospectif, « instance de validation, située au moment de l'énonciation, qui vérifie la réalisation, antérieurement à ce moment, du procès modalisé et

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[4] Cf. Kronning (2001,76) : « Faisant toujours l'objet d'un acte de véridiction, le produit inférentiel que dénote DEVOIR aléthique doit préexister à cet acte qui s'accomplit à travers l'énonciation et, à plus forte raison, les prémisses dont procède ce produit inférentiel ne peuvent être convoquées *in praesentia*, au moment de l'énonciation, mais doivent être convoquées avant l'acte d'énonciation ».

l'inscrit dans tous les mondes possibles de l'univers modal convoqué par *devoir* » (Kronning 2001,78). Les estimations de Robinson d'ordre inductif-déductif, se présentant sous la forme de structures syntaxiques complexes conséquence-cause/cause-conséquence, confirment sa triste situation de seul rescapé du naufrage, arrivé sur un îlot totalement inconnu. Comme elle est tributaire de l'irréversibilité ontologique du temps et « fonctionne dans un univers axiomatique » (Kronning 2001, 72), la nécessité exprimée par *devoir* est associée à une « fatalité ».

Cependant si le discours mimétique du narrateur va très loin, il ne se confond pourtant pas avec celui de son héros. La mise à distance entre les deux discours est réalisée par plusieurs procédés : *devoir*, rattaché dans la catégorie de l'aléthique sous la forme d'un imparfait compris comme futur du passé objectif, inévitable pour Robinson, est repris par le narrateur et acquiert dans son commentaire une valeur de prédestination, de «fatalité-programmatico-narrative ». Au niveau textuel cette forme de *devoir* se présente comme un commentaire évaluatif explicite:

(5) Cependant que Robinson faisait ce triste raisonnement, (…), il avait subi un premier changement. Il était plus grave (…) d'avoir pleinement reconnu et mesuré cette solitude qui allait être son destin pour longtemps peut-être (*VLP*, p.14).

(6) Pour la première fois, la peur de perdre l'esprit l'avait effleuré de son aile. Elle ne *devait* plus le quitter (*VLP*, 18).

(7) *Il ne devait* comprendre que plus tard la portée de cette expérience de la nudité qu'il faisait pour la première fois… (*VLP*, 24).

Pour sa part, le narrateur, jouissant de sa fonction testimoniale, vient confirmer mais aussi commenter et reprendre, comme dans un discours dialogal, cette triste fatalité constatée mais non entièrement assumée encore par notre héros « cette solitude… allait être son destin pour longtemps peut-être ». Utilisé dans ce cadre narratif, dans les exemples de sous (6) et (7), *devoir* exprime la modalité jointe à la temporalité. Le *futur aléthique du passé* dit «subjectif» exprime le point de vue narratif, prospectif, à partir du passé. Le contenu présuppositionnel transmis par le numéral d'ordination ainsi que par les formants négatifs *ne…plus* et restrictifs *ne... que* dévoilent au lecteur le parcours futur du protagoniste, anticipent sur le cheminement du héros, orientent la lecture.

Entre la nécessité factuelle de sauver les biens existant sur la Virginie (le navire), qui s'impose presque comme une obligation et l'éventualité hypothétique de son séjour à long terme sur l'île, Robinson hésite encore et choisit l'attente:

(8) Robinson *pensait* aux armes et aux provisions (…) *qu'il devrait bien* sauver avant qu'une nouvelle tempête ne balayât définitivement l'épave. Si son séjour sur l'île *devait se prolonger*, sa survie dépendrait (*VLP*, 16).

Pour lutter contre la fatale certitude de la solitude, il reste au protagoniste un seul espoir, à savoir l'attente du salut. Le salut, qui ne se laisserait pas trop longtemps attendre dans l'imaginaire de Robinson, devrait venir de quelque navire arrivé sur la côte. Au tréfonds de son âme, Robinson gardait encore la faible certitude d'être sauvé. Ainsi ajournait-il le moment de procéder à l'installation sur son île. Cette situation se transforme au plan thématico-narratif en une attente maladive. Ayant perdu les repères temporels, le héros frise la folie, ses attaches à l'écoulement du temps s'affaiblissent et ont pour conséquence la perte de l'appréhension de l'espace. Sous le coup de l'imagination, la réalité environnante se transforme. Au niveau descriptif, cette transformation est signalée par la graduation attentive des mouvements perceptifs:

(9) (a) il oublia d'abord qu'il n'avait à ses pieds qu'une masse liquide…;
(b) Il vit en elle une surface dure et élastique… ;
(c) puis, allant plus loin, il se figura qu'il s'agissait du dos de quelque animal fabuleux dont la tête *devait se trouver* de l'autre côté de l'horizon ;
(d) Enfin, *il lui parut* tout à coup que *l'île n'était que* la paupière et le sourcil d'un œil immense… (*VLP*, 18).

Devoir évidentiel apparaît ici à la suite d'un processus de raisonnement basé sur les données de l'imagination. De la quasi-certitude à la probabilité jusqu'à l'évidentialité il n'y a qu'un pas presque franchi: « il lui parut tout à coup que… ». L'évidence trompeuse mène à une évaluation de la conclusion erronée elle-aussi. En proie à des hallucinations, le héros met le feu d'avertissement au grand cèdre qui se trouvait sur la colline de l'île, le faisant ainsi brûler vainement :

(10) Ainsi ce signal qui devait balayer l'océan n'avait réussi à attirer que lui-même, lui-seul, suprême dérision! (*VLP*, 34)

Dans un dernier effort de s'arracher à ses rêveries «brumeuses», Robinson décide de reprendre en mains son destin. Entre l'incertitude du sauvetage et la certitude de perdre ses esprits, Robinson fait appel aux «armes» avec lesquelles l'avait muni la société: dompter l'espace et les animaux, maîtriser le temps et l'île, construire, mesurer, accumuler. Au plan narratif, cette période désignée par le syntagme «l'île administrée» (Tournier 1989) s'étend entre les chapitres trois et huit. Les points d'ancrage de «la

certitude» sont la construction d'une maison, la maîtrise du temps, le désir de devenir le maître absolu administratif et spirituel de cet espace et de ses «habitants». Le parcours du protagoniste est annoncé, préfiguré ou sanctionné par le narrateur.

4.2 Sous l'empreinte du devoir comme marque d'obligation

(11) Mais Robinson *ne devait recouvrer* pleinement son humanité qu'en se donnant un abri qui soit autre chose que le fond d'une grotte… (*VLP*, 54).

Dans l'exemple de sous (11), le sémantisme du verbe modalisé *recouvrer* (récupérer ce qui était perdu) et l'adverbe *pleinement* influent sur l'interprétation de la valeur modale. *Devoir* exprime dans cet emploi une «capacité logiquement ou naturellement prévisible que l'on prête au sujet». L'emploi aléthique du verbe est analysable en termes de «nécessité analytique argumentative». Il s'agit d'une nécessité *discursivo-textuelle* (Tuțescu 2005, 98), construite par l'énonciateur-narrateur à des fins argumentativo-discursives. L'occurrence de *devoir* affectant le sujet protagoniste est glossable dans ce cas par: «être en état de». Le discours dialogique entre les instances en jeu continue et, pour reprendre à M. Tournier une métaphore souvent utilisée[5], on pourrait dire que le narrateur prépare l'ourdissage et le protagoniste tisse la trame, ou plutôt réalise le programme. Pour accomplir le but annoncé, « recouvrer son humanité », le protagoniste se soumet à une obligation d'ordre moral et une contrainte d'ordre utilitaire:

(12) Ayant désormais pour compagnon le plus *domestique*[6] des animaux, *il se devait de* se construire une maison (VLP, 54).

Cette fois-ci, la forme réflexive pronominale du verbe modal exprime «ce que l'on se croit tenu d'accomplir en vertu de la morale» (TLF$_i$). La valeur déontique fait écho à la *nécessité analytique argumentative*. Dire □P[7], c'est dire que P est vrai dans tous les mondes possibles. Alors Robinson se soumet à cette loi et commence à construire une maison. Mais bientôt cet abri, cette villa «massive par ses murs», qui aurait dû attester son humanité, devient une «sorte de musée de l'humain», d'une «inutilité pratique» qui ne faisait qu'attester «les contradictions de sa propre situation». La pointe d'ironie qui surcharge le discours narratorial attire l'attention du lecteur, lui fait pressentir la métamorphose qui commence à affecter le protagoniste. Parfois, par un tour de parole ironique, le narrateur sanctionne le « bien

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[5] La construction du roman *Les Météores* est, en grande partie basée sur cette métaphore.
[6] Souligné par l'auteur.
[7] Le symbole □P se lit: «il est nécessaire que P», où P signifie «phrase».

fondé » du raisonnement de son héros et, par son commentaire, il attire l'attention du lecteur sur la présomption d'un esprit trop confiant dans ses pouvoirs absolus de Législateur (chapitre IV). Les quelques occurrences du verbe *devoir* qui apparaissent au présent de l'indicatif dans le IVe chapitre du roman et qui s'inscrivent sous la dépendance de la modalité déontique sont à expliquer en relation avec le contenu thématique de cette partie du roman.

4.3 L'éternel retour aux sources ancestrales

En dépit de l'échafaudage «artificiel et extérieur» qu'il construit, Robinson ressent des doutes. Cet échafaudage chancelant est marqué tantôt par le protagoniste en discours direct (notes du log-book), tantôt par le narrateur en vertu de sa tâche de régie :

(13) Mais aurai-je la force de mener à bien cette tâche formidable… ? […] tout mon édifice cérébral chancelle (*VLP*, 57).

La confirmation de la faible certitude qui se fraie chemin dans l'univers du protagoniste ne se laisse pas attendre. Le narrateur vient confirmer:

(14) Ainsi, pour Robinson, l'organisation frénétique de l'île allait de pair avec le libre et d'abord timide épanouissement de tendances à demi inconscientes. […] Mais cela, Robinson ne le reconnaissait pas encore pleinement (VLP, 69).

L'arrivée de Vendredi sur l'île et l'explosion qui détruit les constructions dressées par le héros marquent le renversement des valeurs en jeu. Les rapports avec Vendredi changent; à bien observer son compagnon, Robinson est amené à mettre en débat le bien fondé du rôle qu'il avait attribué à Vendredi :

(15) Et si en cet instant précis il découvre par hasard la beauté anatomique stupéfiante de l'œil de Vendredi, ne doit-il pas honnêtement se demander si l'Araucan n'est pas tout entier une addition de choses également admirables qu'il n'ignore que par aveuglement? (*VLP*, 155).

La question négative modalisée par *devoir* au présent de l'indicatif exprime l'obligation naturellement prévisible dont l'évidence ne se laissera pas attendre. Et notre héros ne tardera pas à reconnaître qu' «il devait bien s'avouer que Vendredi avait une personnalité» qui le conduira vers la transformation en «Robinson solaire», fils de l'astre tutélaire, être nouveau

vivant en étroite communion avec l'île qu'il avait adoptée et baptisée Speranza.

Si l'on prend en considération la structuration narrativo-musicale du roman (voir *supra.*), on peut interpréter le chapitre X selon le concept de *stretto* qui, dans l'art de la Fugue, précède la conclusion et resserre les motifs du sujet[8]. Cette fois-ci, par ses réflexions inscrites dans le log-book, Robinson entre en dialogue avec l'instance agissant dans le paratexte auctorial. Il déchiffre, évalue et se pose des questions sur la réalisation du programme narratif inscrit symboliquement dans ce préambule au roman sous la forme de prédictions « lues » par le capitaine Van Deyssel dans les cartes du Tarot. Dans la «forêt d'allégories» exposées par le capitaine, Robinson «tâtonne à la recherche» de soi-même. Il se découvre «chevalier solaire», se rend compte de l'écoulement inversé du temps qui l'a fait rajeunir, atteste ses relations métamorphosées avec l'espace:

(16) Cette autre Speranza, j'y suis transporté désormais, […] car *il me semble*-non, *j'ai la certitude*-que je les découvre [Vendredi et l'île] à chaque instant pour la première fois (*VLP*, 189).

Ce chapitre rédigé à la première personne du singulier abonde en questions délibératives, en questions appel de confirmation :

(17) Et cet être sorti des eaux *ne devait-il pas se transformer* en archer tirant des flèches vers le soleil ?» (*VLP*, 195).

Et son cheminement passe de la quasi-certitude vers la certitude d'avoir parcouru les grandes étapes de sa transformation sauf une dont le déchiffrement incombe au lecteur qui devra avoir la patience de finir la lecture :

(18) Ces paroles [du capitaine] *auraient dû s'imprimer* en lettres de feu dans ma mémoire. Hélas, il ne m'en revient que des bribes confuses (*VLP*, 195).

Clin d'œil explicite actorial et implicite auctorial par lequel la coopération du lecteur est requise.

Robinson, le protagoniste principal du roman de Tournier, est un héros emblématique pour son parcours transformationnel. Le cheminement réflexif de Robinson concernant la condition humaine évaluée en étroite liaison avec l'appréhension de son univers de croyance passe de la certitude

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[8] Pour de détails sur l'art de la fugue dans l'écriture tourniérienne nous renvoyons à l'ouvrage de Bouloumié (1988).

absolue vers la quasi-certitude et l'incertitude pour faire ensuite marche arrière.

Entre l'épistémique et le déontique, en passant par l'aléthique, les valeurs discursives du verbe *devoir* réfléchissent la représentation de l'univers de croyance des acteurs en jeu dans le roman *Vendredi ou les Limbes du Pacifique*.

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Les "certitudes" de Pangloss

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Abstract

Candide ou L'Optimisme is a story with a thesis, by means of which Voltaire aims at ridiculing Leibniz's philosophy, the theories of the pre-established harmony and of the sufficient reason, which lead to the conclusion that *we live in the best of all possible worlds*. For this purpose he uses the literary formula of the anti-fairy tale, subjecting his heroes to a series of misfortunes, on their long way from unjustified optimism to disillusionment, respectively from the epistemological certainty to doubt. Pangloss's "philosophical" discourse is the very model of the character's manner of "reasoning", which is followed faithfully by his disciple Candide and constantly applied by the narrator, this false *alter ego* of the author. The contrast between the "scholarly" form of the discourse, accompanied by the attitude of the locutor, who manifests his certainty regarding the truth of the information that he communicates, and its hilarious content, highlights in a caricatural manner the ridiculousness of the character, serving perfectly the sarcastic purpose of the author, who turns Leibniz's philosophy into a huge mockery

Keywords: Anti-fairy tale, certainty, doubt, discourse, mockery

1. Introduction
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Assurance pleine et entière d'une chose ou adhésion totale de l'esprit à une chose reconnue comme vraie, la certitude fait depuis l'Antiquité l'objet de recherche des philosophes, des mathématiciens, des logiciens, des physiciens, des linguistes, etc., produisant des controverses et des redéfinitions avec chaque nouveau paradigme scientifique.

Pour les penseurs des Lumières, le concept recoupe les notions de vrai et de faux. En digne représentant de l'époque de la critique universelle, Voltaire va remettre en question les « certitudes » métaphysiques, démontrant, à travers ses contes philosophiques, leur vanité face au pragmatisme des rationalistes.

2. Un conte à thèse

Candide ou l'Optimisme est un conte à thèse, par lequel Voltaire vise à ridiculiser la philosophie de Leibniz, ses théories de l'harmonie préétablie et de la raison suffisante, qui mènent à la conclusion que *nous vivons dans le meilleur des mondes possible*. Pour ce faire, il se sert de la formule littéraire de l'anti conte de fées, faisant subir à ses héros toute une série d'épreuves, voire de mésaventures, dans leur long itinéraire de l'optimisme béat vers le désenchantement, respectivement de la certitude épistémologique non fondée vers le doute.

Pour les rationalistes du XVIIIe siècle, le malheur se confond avec le faux jugement. Aussi Voltaire construit-il son texte comme parfaite illustration de cette conception, mettant les maux de ses personnages au compte de leur manque de raison. Le premier chapitre du conte se constitue en un véritable *épisode pilote*, présentant, de manière implicite, les prémisses des malheurs à venir.

Dans ce contexte, le discours de Pangloss est le modèle même de la manière de « raisonner » du personnage, modèle fidèlement suivi par son disciple Candide et constamment appliqué par le narrateur, faux *alter ego* de l'auteur.

3. Le chorus de la bêtise

Notre analyse, placée sous le signe de la pragmatique littéraire et de la rhétorique argumentative, se concentre sur un fragment représentatif de ce chapitre, qui réunit, de manière polyphonique, les voix du narrateur, de Pangloss et de Candide dans ce que nous avons appelé ailleurs « le chorus de la bêtise » (Mustățea 2001, 60) :

> *Pangloss enseignait la métaphysico-théologo-cosmolonigologie. Il prouvait admirablement qu'il n'y a point d'effet sans cause, et que, dans ce meilleur des mondes possibles, le château de monseigneur le baron était le plus beau des châteaux et madame la meilleure des baronnes possibles.*
>
> *« Il est démontré, disait-il, que les choses ne peuvent être autrement : car, tout étant fait pour une fin, tout est nécessairement pour la meilleure fin. Remarquez bien que les nez ont été faits pour porter des lunettes, aussi avons-nous des lunettes. Les jambes sont visiblement instituées pour être chaussées, et nous avons des chausses. Les pierres ont été formées pour être taillées, et pour en faire des châteaux, aussi monseigneur a un très beau château ; le plus grand baron de la province doit être le mieux logé ; et, les cochons étant faits pour être mangés, nous*

mangeons du porc toute l'année : par conséquent, ceux qui ont avancé que tout est bien ont dit une sottise ; il fallait dire que tout est au mieux. »

Candide écoutait attentivement, et croyait innocemment ; car il trouvait Mlle Cunégonde extrêmement belle, quoiqu'il ne prît jamais la hardiesse de le lui dire. Il concluait qu'après le bonheur d'être né baron de Thunder-ten-tronckh, le second degré de bonheur était d'être Mlle Cunégonde ; le troisième, de la voir tous les jours ; et le quatrième, d'entendre maître Pangloss, le plus grand philosophe de la province, et par conséquent de toute la terre (Voltaire 1966, 180).

Le premier paragraphe du fragment est pris en charge par le narrateur. Il s'agit d'un narrateur hétérodiégétique à la première personne, manifesté par une seule occurrence – « c'est, *je crois*, pour cette raison qu'on le nommait Candide » dit-il au début du texte - pour qu'il s'efface ensuite, laissant l'impression que l'histoire se raconte d'elle-même.

Ici il fait l'introduction du précepteur Pangloss, l'*oracle de la maison* de monsieur le baron de Thunder-ten-tronckh, après avoir présenté tous les habitants du château, pour lui donner ensuite la parole par le discours direct rapporté.

Nous assistons, en fait, le long du premier chapitre du conte, à un dédoublement énonciatif ironique, donc polyphonique (cf. Ducrot 1984, 204-206)*,* le narrateur laissant entendre deux énonciateurs, E_1 et E_2, qui soutiennent des points de vue contraires: le premier, ce faux *alter ego* de l'auteur que nous venons de mentionner, et qui débite des inepties sous l'apparence d'un discours sérieux, mi descriptif, mi argumentatif ; le second, le véritable porte-paroles de Voltaire, qui fait entendre le contraire des affirmations du premier, parsemant le discours de marqueurs d'ironie très bien dissimulés derrière les dires naïfs de celui-ci.

Symétriquement, il y a dédoublement du destinataire. On a, d'une part, le narrataire, tout aussi naïf que le narrateur, supposé incapable de saisir les sous-entendus du texte, prenant à la lettre les dires de celui-ci, et d'autre part, le lecteur modèle, appartenant à cette « aristocratie de l'esprit » avec laquelle Voltaire communique par des clins d'œil ironiques et qui est le vrai destinataire du discours.

Tout le long du fragment l'ironie se double d'humour, les deux modalités d'expression se mettant réciproquement en valeur. Si l'ironie est une « sur-énonciation », dans le sens que l'énonciateur prend ses distances par rapport à ce qu'il énonce, manifestant sa supériorité cognitive et/ou axiologique face à sa cible, l'humour est une « sous-énonciation », l'énonciateur s'y impliquant, tout en impliquant son énonciataire (cf. Rabatel, 2013). L'humour « est tourné, à la fois, vers le monde, dans le désir de le remettre en cause, et vers l'autre, dans le désir de le rendre complice » (Charaudeau 2011, 6).

Les deux modalités rappellent en même temps que « l'interprétation est un processus complexe, pour partie interne au texte et pour partie extérieur à lui » (Rabatel 2013, 36), le narrataire et le lecteur se rencontrant et se séparant dans le jeu polyphonique de l'énonciation.

Dès le premier énoncé - *Pangloss enseignait la métaphysico-théologo-cosmolonigologie* - le clivage entre les deux énonciateurs est bine évident : le premier manifeste son admiration envers le personnage en question, le second le ridiculise. Le savoir de Pangloss, ses compétences multiples - métaphysique, théologie, cosmologie - semblent être pour E_1 une raison suffisante de le présenter comme une autorité scientifique et didactique digne de respect. Ce que E_2 glisse subrepticement dans le discours du premier est la *nigologie*, terme inventé, formé par la dénaturation du mot *nigaud,* qui met l'ensemble sous une perspective différente, affirmant, au contraire, la stupidité du personnage, son charabia à prétention savante.

La suite rapporte indirectement les dires de Pangloss par un discours qui laisse entendre une multitude de voix : celle du narrateur disjoint en E_1 et E_2, celle de Pangloss lui-même et celle du philosophe paraphrasé et ridiculisé, Leibniz. Nous assistons ainsi à une sorte de mise en abyme du dialogisme même. La subtilité énonciative est telle qu'elle peut égarer l'éventuel lecteur naïf, cible implicite de l'ironie du mystificateur que s'avère être Voltaire. Car celui-ci se plaît à brouiller les pistes, mettant à profit le cliché de lecture qui assigne au narrateur le rôle de porte-parole de l'auteur, pour faire accréditer l'idée qu'il est lui-même adepte de la philosophie leibnizienne.

E_1 illustre, en toute naïveté, la « méthode philosophique » de Pangloss, celle de la raison suffisante, basée sur le syllogisme et ses dérivés, posant comme vrais des sophismes. Il présente les faits comme étant indubitables, certains – voir l'emploi du verbe *prouver* (dont le contenu sémantique est *apporter des preuves irréfutables*), renforcé par le modalisateur appréciatif *admirablement* : « Il prouvait admirablement qu'il n'y a point d'effet sans cause, et que, dans ce meilleur des mondes possibles, le château de monseigneur le baron était le plus beau des châteaux et madame la meilleure des baronnes possibles. »

E_2 se distancie de E_1, donnant à entendre le contraire de ce que celui-ci relate, de sorte que *il prouvait admirablement* doit être compris comme antiphrastique, ironique. C'est l'énormité des affirmations qui en témoigne, affirmations qui ne peuvent pas être mis au compte de l'auteur qu'en tant qu'intention moqueuse.

Les assertions proprement dites, plus exactement leurs contenus propositionnels – *il n'y a point d'effet sans cause* ; *dans ce meilleur des mondes possibles, le château de monseigneur le baron était le plus beau des châteaux et madame la meilleure des baronnes possibles* – sont attribués à Pangloss, qui, à son tour, interprète et applique à sa manière la philosophie leibnizienne. L'intention évidente de Voltaire est de discréditer cette

philosophie, en se permettant de la déformer, d'en faire une caricature. Aussi, selon la théorie de la raison suffisante dans l'interprétation panglossienne *via* le narrateur, suffit-il qu'on vive dans le meilleur des mondes possible pour que le château de monsieur le baron soit le plus beau des châteaux et la baronne la meilleure des baronnes possibles, vu que dans ce monde *tout est au mieux*, comme dira le personnage lui-même dans son discours direct, quelques lignes plus bas.

On peut constater que Voltaire prête à son narrateur les défauts de pensée de ses autres héros. Il est le double de Pangloss, tout comme le sera Candide, son disciple. La fausse logique semble se répandre par contamination, produisant une chaîne d'absurdités dont l'évidence est souvent masquée par le mélange du vrai et du faux. Car s'il est logiquement vrai que tout effet a une cause quelconque, il n'y a point de relation causale entre la « perfection » du monde et la « perfection » du château ou de la baronne. Il faut voir dans ce mélange encore une technique de la stratégie de mystification à laquelle Voltaire soumet son lecteur.

C'est toujours sur la fausse causalité que se construit la suite du texte. Le narrateur rapporte tout d'abord les paroles de Pangloss. Sous l'apparence d'un discours scientifique, démonstratif, se cache une collection de faux raisonnements à effet comique. Le contraste entre la forme « savante » du discours, accompagnée par l'attitude du locuteur, manifestant sa certitude quant à la vérité de l'information qu'il communique, et le contenu hilare de celui-ci, souligne de manière caricaturale le ridicule du personnage, servant parfaitement le but sarcastique de l'auteur, qui transforme la philosophie leibnizienne en une énorme risée.

D'un air doctoral, usant à tort et à travers de connecteurs argumentatifs (*car, aussi, par conséquent*), de modalisateurs épistémiques (*nécessairement, visiblement*) et d'un vocabulaire qui mélange tournures scientifiques (*il est démontré, remarquez bien*) et termes du quotidien le plus banal (*nez, lunettes, jambes, chausses, cochons*, etc.), Pangloss émet des inepties: les nez ont été faits pour porter des lunettes, les jambes pour être chaussées, les pierres pour être taillées et pour en faire des châteaux. Les prémisses étant fausses, les conclusions sont absurdes: nous portons des lunettes parce que nous avons des nez et des chaussures parce que nous avons des jambes, le baron a un très beau château parce qu'il existe des pierres, etc. Toutes ses "preuves" sont censées soutenir la thèse de la "meilleure fin", or elles ne prouvent que le manque de logique du personnage. Si Pangloss croit produire des syllogismes irréfutables, Voltaire, lui, il propose à son lecteur des sophismes d'un comique irrésistible.

Le ridicule du personnage est accru par la confiance totale qu'il a dans la théorie qu'il soutient et dans sa démonstration. Il ne manifeste aucun doute quant à la validité de ses dires. Il prononce un discours catégorique, *ex cathedra*, qui n'admet pas de commentaire ou de contradiction. Le *magister*

a toujours raison, même s'il manque de raison. Et de plus, c'est un discours tout fait, clos, fermé sur lui-même, tautologique, bon à être utilisé dans toute occasion, comme le démontrera la suite de l'histoire. Il lui faudra traverser une logue suite de mésaventures pour qu'il sorte de son fixisme, abandonne ses certitudes et accepte l'idée qu'il ne vit pas dans le meilleur des mondes possibles. Mais même lorsqu'il perdra toute illusion, ne croyant plus à ses thèses optimistes, il continuera à affirmer que tout est au mieux, rien que pour être conséquent avec lui-même.

Sous la forme du discours indirect du narrateur, le dernier paragraphe pénètre dans l'univers mental de Candide, pour illustrer, implicitement, sa manière de raisonner, en totale harmonie avec les enseignements de son maître.

Le héros produit, mimétiquement, des réflexions sur le monde environnant, qu'il trouve, à l'exemple de Pangloss, parfait. La raison suffisante de cette perfection est la beauté de Cunégonde: il vit dans le meilleur des mondes possibles *car* il trouve « *M elle Cunégonde extrêmement belle* ».

Le caractère dialogique du paragraphe est bien évident : c'est encore la voix du narrateur, qui se charge, à travers le discours indirect, de présenter, cette fois-ci, les « certitudes » de Candide ; puis c'est la voix de Candide lui-même qui se fait entendre en tant que responsable des contenus énoncés ; c'est enfin la voix de Pangloss, qui transparaît derrière les paroles du narrateur et les idées de Candide, en sa qualité de maître de penser de son disciple, auquel il prête sa « méthode » :

> *Candide écoutait attentivement, et croyait innocemment ; car il trouvait Mlle Cunégonde extrêmement belle, quoiqu'il ne prît jamais la hardiesse de le lui dire. Il concluait qu'après le bonheur d'être né baron de Thunder-ten-tronckh, le second degré de bonheur était d'être Mlle Cunégonde ; le troisième, de la voir tous les jours ; et le quatrième, d'entendre maître Pangloss, le plus grand philosophe de la province, et par conséquent de toute la terre* (Voltaire 1966, 180).

Le manque de logique du personnage se manifeste à travers l'incohérence du discours indirect qui transpose ses conceptions. Le thème du discours est le bonheur, état universel qui connaît des degrés d'intensité sur un axe scalaire ouvert, indéterminable, entre un bonheur suprême et un malheur absolu, axe subjectif et donc individuel, variable selon les sujets qui en jugent. Candide se pose naïvement en sujet - observateur universel, prenant ses choix personnels pour généralement valables. Il énumère quatre degrés de bonheur, découpant de manière arbitraire un continuum inclassable et attribuant à la « catégorie » des raisons subjectives qu'il croit être objectives, donc scientifiques, alors qu'en réalité il s'agit dès le début de propositions   absurdes, renforcées par un mélange de critères et un

changement des points de vue absolument hilaires. Le tout est totalement dépourvu de sens, les contenus n'étant ni vrais, ni faux, mais simplement hors de propos.

Candide réduit l'univers entier à l'univers du château et pose ses préjugés comme lois universelles. Si la logique du bon sens dit que le généralement valable l'est aussi pour un univers particulier, l'antilogique de Candide pose que ce qui est valable dans un univers particulier est généralement valable, de manière nécessaire. Suivant cette logique à l'envers, si Pangloss est le plus grand philosophe de la province, il est, par voie de conséquence, le plus grand philosophe de la terre.

4. La solution voltairienne

Voltaire condamne, à travers les propos absurdes de ses héros, l'acceptation sans réflexion personnelle d'un savoir tout mâché par autrui, en opposition avec le *sapere aude !* kantien, véritable mot d'ordre des Lumières. Les objets de la risée voltairienne sont à la fois le faux jugement, les spéculations métaphysiques et, par parodie, le système philosophique de Leibniz. Il mettra ses personnages dans la posture d'apprentis, parsemant leur trajet existentiel sinueux de maux métaphysiques et sociaux, qui les détermineront à changer « d'univers de croyance » (Martin 1983, 36-37). « Le monde de ce qui est » (Martin 1983, 36-37) est bien loin du « meilleur des mondes possibles » - c'est la leçon qu'ils apprennent à leur propre dépens, secouant leur certitudes.

Le long et pénible apprentissage du doute remet les choses dans la voie du *cogito* cartésien, rétablissant les valeurs des rationalistes du XVIIIe siècle. Si l'on ne vit pas dans « le meilleur des mondes possibles », on doit s'accommoder tant bien que mal du monde réel, en y « travaillant sans raisonner » et en y « cultivant son jardin ».

Bien qu'il contredise apparemment l'esprit de l'époque, en fait ce "travaillons sans raisonner" n'incite pas du tout au refus du raisonnement, mais à l'élimination des spéculations métaphysiques inutiles, qui détournent l'homme de ce qui est vraiment important pour son existence. Quant au jardin évoqué, point final du voyage initiatique du héros et de ses compagnons, il est la métaphore de la stabilité dans un monde dépourvu d'illusions, dans lequel le travail a plutôt une fonction thérapeutique. Aussi Voltaire propose-t-il, en contre partie à la construction leibnizienne, un univers désenchanté, médiocre dans son essence, de par la réduction du bonheur à un simple exercice de subsistance. Conclusion point optimiste, qui confère au titre du conte un caractère antiphrastique et ironique.

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Le drame de la conscience moderne entre savoir et vérité

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Abstract

This paper aims at analysing the rapport between certainty and uncertainty by "immersion" in Mallarme's poetics where we can witness the dissolution of the subject as final fortification of acquired certainties. The tragic interval which insinuates itself within the linguistic sign, between the signifier and signified, and alters the references to the other and to oneself is a consequence of the identification failure of the self as subject, after consecutive researches. The "witnesses" of this dissolution process are *Hérodiade*, *Igitur* and Saint Jean the Baptist, the last one suggesting by decapitation the irrepressible disjunction of the linguistic sign and of the self but in the same time, the triumph of a certain fact: the acquisition of a pure self.

Keywords : Certainty/uncertainty, subject, signifier/signified, alterity, drama

 « La seule certitude, c'est que rien n'est certain » disait Pline l'Ancien et c'est sous le signe de cette affirmation que je vais placer les considérations qui suivent et qui sont centrées sur la crise du sujet regardée à travers l'altérité qui définit la subjectivité mais qui, paradoxalement, aboutit à la brisure de la fonction du sujet entre un désir de réconciliation et un principe interne de division.

   La définition même du « sujet » qui nous intéresse comme instrument opératoire est censée être transitive et ambiguë en raison des frontières assez labiles qui circonscrivent cette entité, mais qui fondent les représentations et les actes de l'être humain. Alain Renaut pense « le sujet » en termes de « subjectivité » du fait qu'il ne se réduit pas à l'idée d'individu, « mais implique, au contraire, une transcendance, un dépassement de l'individualité » (1995, 64), ce qui assure à travers la subjectivité un champ commun de principes et de valeurs. C'est dire que le sujet ne prend consistance que dans l'altérité qui le libère du solipsisme de la subjectivité. Mais l'altérité rend encore plus problématique le rapport du sujet à l'autre, que ce soit une entité extérieure, historique, ou intérieure, psychique –

l'inconscient – et déclenche le drame de l'homme moderne, l'aliénation morale et la dissolution de l'être même du sujet.

La Renaissance ouvre le trajet qui conduit de l'affirmation de l'homme en tant qu'unité intégrative de l'humain et du divin à sa dissolution commencée dans cet élan de dépassement de l'individualité subjective au XVIIIe siècle et, surtout, vers sa fin, dans une intersubjectivité souhaitée, garant d'un rapport équilibré entre le moi et le monde, mais qui a fait avorter la communication arrivée au point de la brisure du sujet au XXe siècle (*cf*. Habermas, Heidegger, Derrida, Foucault, etc.). Le cogito cartésien représente dans l'histoire du sujet un moment de définition apologétique, compris entre une période de recherche du sujet chez les troubadours et le « qui suis-je ? » de Montaigne qui se découvrait à travers chaque expérience et celle qui, selon Habermas (2011), proclame « la mort de l'homme ». Dans *Les Mots et les Choses* (1966) et *l'Archéologie du savoir* (1969) Michel Foucault considère que le langage renaît au moment où meurt l'homme. La littérature enregistre ce passage du *moi haïssable* à « Je est un autre » et jusqu'à l'abolition du sujet. Le vers de Mallarmé « aboli bibelot d'inanité sonore » semble plus que suggestif, presque prophétique, pour « la disparition élocutoire » du sujet et pour les discontinuités et les ruptures mêmes qui lui arrivent au XXe siècle. Comme Montaigne, Mallarmé convertit ses défaillances physiques en crise métaphysique et révélation de soi, traverse l'expérience du néant, ressentant comme Pascal le gouffre béant prêt à l'engloutir, mais qu'il transforme en concept esthétique pour le faire présider à la déconstruction programmée de tout parti pris poétique et des sentiers battus en littérature. « La destruction fut ma Béatrice » disait celui qui contredisait avant la lettre Benveniste dont « l'ego » n'est que « l'émergence dans l'être d'une propriété fondamentale du langage » (Benveniste 1974, 259-260) et propose conséquemment la dissolution des marqueurs déictiques spatio-temporels, définitoires pour le sujet. Il faut préciser que le sujet dont on parle doit être considéré en dehors de sa valeur empirique de pronom personnel bien que la présence ou l'absence de cette séquence linguistique, « je », soit le reflet d'un principe de représentation et d'organisation du monde extérieur des choses. L'expérience du néant que Mallarmé provoque, en étant à la fois sa victime, vise l'écroulement de tout édifice canonique du sens par un retour à l'origine, à la fraîcheur impersonnelle des vocables au moment où la « dépendance » allocutive n'existait pas et où les mots vivaient par eux-mêmes. Hérodiade devant le miroir où elle cherche la vérité de son être non-divisé me semble inaugurer une littérature de l'intervalle tragique issu d'un double rapport. Le sujet essaie de recouvrer sa consistance en relation avec l'autre, mais cette relation devient problématique parce qu'il n'est jamais le même. « […] Comme des feuilles sous ta glace au trou profond/ Je m'apparus en toi comme une ombre lointaine » (Mallarmé 1998, 19).

Faire l'analyse de la subjectivité dans le langage c'est identifier la part d'immanence et de transcendance dans tout énoncé en tant que synthèse entre un « je » qui dépasse sa condition et les représentations symboliques/signifiantes de la chaîne énonciative. La poésie de Mallarmé se refuse d'emblée à toute entreprise critique qui ne tiendrait pas compte de la désintégration programmée de l'identité sémantique courante des mots et d'une refonte des vocables ainsi disloqués dans « un mot total, neuf, étranger à la langue et comme incantatoire » (Mallarmé 1998, 678), incandescent, par une coïncidence multiple son-sens, signifiant-signifié, passé-présent, etc. Dans la *Lettre à H. Cazalis* il fait l'aveu de toute cette alchimie poétique : « Je veux me donner le spectacle de la matière, ayant conscience d'elle, et, cependant, s'élançant forcément dans le Rêve qu'elle sait n'être pas, chantant l'Âme et toutes les divines impressions pareilles qui se sont amassées en nous depuis les premiers âges, et proclamant, devant le Rien qui est la vérité, ces Glorieux Mensonges ! » (Mallarmé 1998, 697). De ce point de vue, son *Hérodiade* peut être considérée comme une œuvre expérimentale où il renverse les rapports établis entre matière et âme, rêve et réalité, vérité et mensonge par une opération poursuivie de sublimation, transfiguration, mutation symbolique qui s'accomplit au niveau linguistique-poétique par le glissement subreptice des catégories grammaticales et la reconfiguration dynamique des synonymies textuelles et contextuelles (« Simplement parole et geste », *Igitur*) et, au niveau symbolique-métaphysique, par une rhétorique de l'illusoire. Le miroir est dans ce sens le reflet symbolique de la distance réflexive qui opère, d'un côté, la séparation du signifiant du signifié et, de l'autre, le libre épanchement de l'être dans les mots. Il doit, pour se recréer, se réfléchir et se distancier à la fois de sa présence réelle (*cf.* Marchal 1988, 47). Et comme argument, cette citation d'*Igitur* : « […] les complétant de sa splendeur, le frémissement amorti, dans de l'oubli, comme une chevelure languissante, autour du visage éclairé de mystère, aux yeux nuls pareils au miroir de l'hôte, *dénué de toute signification que de présence* » (Mallarmé 1998, 496). On ne peut nier que son histoire personnelle reste et se filtre dans tout le processus d'élaboration d'un mythe personnel dont l'urgence est de le séparer du contingent. *Hérodiade* est dans le même temps l'aveu de la grande crise d'identité traversée par Mallarmé quand il a eu la révélation du néant ; donc, regardée de cette perspective, elle reflète le profond drame du poète, un drame de la disjonction intérieure, lequel converti en texte lyrique rend compte de l'anéantissement qui le hante : « Moi seul moi seul je vais connaître le néant. Vous, vous revenez à votre amalgame » (Mallarmé 1998, 494) - formule qui consacre par cette répétition « réflexive » (moi - moi / vous - vous) dans le poème *Igitur* la disparition du sujet et du sens par la réflexion du même, mais, à la fois, par la séparation de l'autre. Il est aussi à rappeler la conception de la poésie comme miroir qui se reflète elle-même sans aucun rapport dénotatif ou référentiel, par une sorte de

conversion/consubstantialité symbolique qui s'actualise lors de chaque lecture. Par ailleurs, il faut rappeler que dans le jeu de sens engendrés par le géno-texte (*cf.* Kristeva 1974, 83) naît la confrontation entre la certitude et l'incertitude, entre les significations habituelles unanimement acceptées et leur actualisation indéterminée et permanente sous la pression des changements allocutifs et des pulsions inconscientes.

L'idée de « certitude » ou d' « incertitude » qu'on se fait à propos du vécu se rattache d'habitude au procès dynamique pensée-langage qui nourrit et équilibre le rapport du signifiant au signifié dans une sorte de cohabitation traditionnelle. Au moment où ce rapport se modifie à force des conversions interlocutives, l'incertitude mine la position des certitudes acquises et on assiste aux décalages sémantiques qui se produisent à l'intérieur du langage.

Dans l'*Ouverture ancienne d'Hérodiade* tout un passage lyrique pivote autour d'un seul verbe fini « s'élève » qui semble séparer l'image réelle et l'image reflétée en enchaînant plusieurs valeurs symboliques. Désir et refus d'élévation infinie, division du « je » et lutte avec l'autre, désir et refus d'intégration individuelle, dualité irréductible du rêve et de la vie, séparation de la réflexion attendue (dans le miroir) et la réalité existentielle, coupure épistémologique et vide existentiel.

Ombre magicienne aux symboliques charmes !
Une voix, du passé longue évocation,
Est-ce la mienne prête à l'incantation ?
Encore dans les plis jaunes de la pensée
Traînant, antique, ainsi qu'une étoile encensée.
Sur un confus amas d'ostensoirs refroidis,
Par les trous anciens et par les plis roidis
Percés selon le rythme et les dentelles pures
Du suaire laissant par ses belles guipures
Désespéré monter le vieil éclat voilé
S'élève : (ô quel lointain en ces appels celé !)
Le vieil éclat voilé du vermeil insolite,
De la voix languissant, nulle, **sans acolyte,** *(-sans écho/reflet, n. n.*)
Jettera-t-il son or par dernières splendeurs,
 Elle, encore, l'antienne aux versets demandeurs,
A l'heure d'agonie et de luttes funèbres !
Et, force du silence et des noires ténèbres
Tout rentre également en l'ancien passé,
Fatidique, vaincu, monotone, lassé,
Comme l'eau des bassins anciens se résigne.
(Mallarmé 1998, 136)

Cette « phrase » poétique nous intéresse sous plusieurs aspects qui tiennent, d'une façon ou d'une autre, du symbolisme du miroir en tant que passage d'un monde reflété à un monde reflétant et virtuel, d'une symétrie des moments de la journée soutenue par un axe médian qui rappelle le minuit d'*Igitur* et qui sépare le crépuscule et ses couleurs éclatantes de sa retombée dans le « silence et des noires ténèbres », retombée qui évoque la décollation de Saint Jean. Sur l'intériorité réflexive se joue le pari poétique de Mallarmé pour qui l'écriture accomplit le rôle de distanciation par rapport à l'immédiateté sensible et d'effacement de l'irréalité qui est le propre de la subjectivité. L'écriture qui décroche par ce jeu réflexif ses qualités de réflexivité est destinée à défaire le mensonge de l'unité du sujet et du monde pour faire place à l'incertitude de l'existant. Mais, on se demande si au bout de l'incertitude engendrée par cette suite d'affirmations et de négations (tout le symbolisme de la dentelle y concourt : *trous anciens, plis percés, dentelles pures, belles guipures,* etc.) on est en possession de la vérité, si c'était à suivre la démarche cartésienne qui mène de l'incertitude à la postulation des vérités. Il semble que pour Descartes, comme pour Mallarmé et pour Sartre, plus tard, le rapport du doute à la vérité, de l'incertitude à la certitude ne puisse se rattacher qu'au moment présent puisque le passé comme l'avenir qui multiplie les hypostases du sujet, altère la perception des choses. Devant la glace, *Igitur* « se sépare du temps indéfini et il *est* », parce qu'il se soustrait de son existence contingente et immédiate pour devenir « infiniment autre » (Valéry 1974, 211). Pour que le moi existe il doit se renier ; « le moi est négation » disait Valéry (1974, 301). *Hérodiade*, *Saint Jean le Baptiste*, *Igitur* sont les témoins symboliques de tout un processus d'aliénation et d'identification auquel Mallarmé soumet son être poétique. La dénégation qui élimine le contenu présent (le signifiant) pour conserver la forme du présent (le signifié) apparaît, selon Freud, comme le paradoxe d'un sujet qui s'expérimente comme division du savoir et de la vérité. Au bout de ce drame expiatoire le sujet n'est plus Mallarmé – être éphémère et physique mené par les caprices d'une existence bornée - mais « une aptitude qu'a l'univers spirituel à se voir et à se développer à travers ce que fut moi » (Mallarmé 1998, 242).

   Igitur devient la scène où le sujet subit cette série de transformations sous le signe d'une négation fondamentale, premièrement au niveau formel par le dédoublement de l'instance pronominale [il] [je] en se niant, négation qui évoque la soustraction de tout conditionnement extérieur et, au niveau symbolique, par la métaphore de « la glace » qui requiert les attributs de l'identification et de la révélation d'un moi pur qui n'apparaît que dans et par ce refus. Par l'acte de soustraction le moi se manifeste pour lui-même c'est-à-dire *pur*, aboutissant à « la meilleur image de soi qui est Zéro» (Valéry II, 297). En voilà comme argument deux citations tirées d'*Igitur* :

*Il se sépare du temps indéfini et il est ! [...] remplir une glace d'ennui où, suffoquant et étouffé, je suppliais (identité acquise) de rester une vague figure qui **disparaissait** complètement dans la glace confondue* (Mallarmé 1998, 499).

Et quand je rouvrais les yeux au fond du miroir, je voyais le personnage d'horreur, le fantôme de l'horreur absorber peu à peu ce qui restait de sentiment et de douleur dans la glace, nourrir son horreur des suprêmes frissons des chimères et de l'instabilité des tentures, et se former en raréfiant la glace jusqu'à une pureté inouïe (Mallarmé 1998, 499).

Tout ce qui arrive au niveau de l'être physique et spirituel se reflète par et dans l'écriture parce que la parole est « la liaison à soi et à la contingence » (Valéry, C. II, 293). On pose donc une relation triadique qui établit des équivalences entre le moi / le sujet/le langage censées subir le même processus régressif de restitution par négation, anéantissement, pour arriver au lieu idéal où « un sujet nouveau surgi de l'annihilation d'un moi ancien qui se réfléchissait dans un absolu objectif, qu'il s'agisse de l'univers lui-même ou d'une œuvre à créer. » (Marchal 1988, 86) On a remarqué que tout ce parcours de décantation, de purification rappelle le doute cartésien qui amène le poète à tout reprendre à zéro. Mais, tandis que chez Descartes *le donc* marque le passage de la subjectivité à l'objectivité et, par là, à l'authenticité du moi, chez Mallarmé le *donc/igitur* ne relève que dans la fiction constitutive du sujet qui s'enroule sur lui-même en se reflétant seulement dans son nom comme dans un miroir (Marchal, 1988, 96). Le miroir qui absorbe son reflet « dans son cadre gelé » est plus qu'un lieu symbolique, il acquiert une valeur épistémologique. Et Hérodiade de dire : « Comme des feuilles sous ta glace au trou profond// Je m'apparus en toi comme une ombre lointaine// Mais, horreur ! des soirs dans ta sévère fontaine, // J'ai de mon rêve épars connu la nudité » (Mallarmé 1998,19).

Dans la même lignée interprétative, on peut conjecturer que dans la décapitation de Saint Jean du *Cantique...* Mallarmé a sublimé la dualité, « l'altérité », du signe linguistique – signifiant = le corps ; signifié = la tête/l'esprit – pour le faire s'identifier à lui-même par l'acte même de négation-décollation. « Et ma tête surgie/Solitaire vigie/Dans les vols triomphaux de cette faux//Comme rupture franche/Plutôt refoule ou tranche/*Les anciens désaccords/Avec le corps* » (Mallarmé 1998, 148).

La pensée poétique de Mallarmé dévoile une disjonction fondamentale à l'intérieur de l'être, reflet d'une crise générale de la société « sans stabilité, sans unité », menée par « l'inquiétude des esprits » qui « naît l'inexplicable besoin d'individualité » ((Mallarmé 1998, 697). C'est une société qui perd la certitude de ses repères du fait d'une discordance entre les représentations qu'elle s'est faites, comme le note Bertrand Marchal, et une réalité qui les nie (Marchal 1993, 23). Considérée de ce point de vue, la perspective que

propose Mallarmé en devient une critique et rejoint ainsi l'ironie déconstructrice de Lautréamont ou l'antitotalitarisme du surréalisme pour ressourcer l'opération déconstructiviste de Derrida. Tous ces parcours littéraires, critiques, philosophiques sont redevables à l'intention de vérité qui justifie la recherche de *la perspective* – j'ai emprunté ce terme à Ricœur – en tant que dépassement des limites de l'être, du sujet et affirmation de l'altérité, la seule qui définisse la différence de moi à moi-même et de moi à l'autre, pour atteindre ainsi à la concordance de l'exigence - en langage aristotélicien signifiant « bonheur » que l'homme poursuit – et sa propre contingence, qui repose sur la conscience de la différence à autrui.

Au terme de cette dialectique de l'affirmation originaire par une suite de négations, le sujet se trouve-t-il identique à lui-même ou différent à force d'être entraîné dans ce décalage entre la réalité hors de lui-même et la médiation fragile pour soi-même, entre l'Apparaître et le Dire, entre l'Incertitude et la Certitude ? Qui pourrait répondre à cette question ?

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Chapter 3
Media

The expression of certainty and uncertainty in social communication campaigns

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Abstract

This study represents the final step in a wide research intended to compare the print, television and radio advertising campaigns on issues of racism and immigration, launched in Italy since 1990s. Verifying whether the communicative process, the linguistic and extra-linguistic features expressing the status of the foreigners, the kind of relationship between natives and non natives and the social roles assigned to immigrants in the social communication campaigns vary in accordance to the kind of the advertising agency (governmental/ non governmental/ private bodies), and to the Italian political context (left wing/ right wing) we determine the way the advertising agencies express the degree of certainty and uncertainty towards the message they are conveying to Italian hearers and readers.

Keywords: Social communication, political context and representation of foreigners, prosodic features

1. Introduction

The term social communication refers to those forms of public communication that share the following key features: they do not produce commercial profit, are politically super-partes and attempt to inform, persuade and motivate changes in behavior for the sake of societal benefit (Kotler and Lee 2009). In the last decades, the importance of this kind of communication for shaping citizens' behaviour and knowledge towards desirable social outcomes has caused the launch of numerous advertising initiatives addressing health and environmental issues, social development, instruction and religion.

In Italy, the use of social communication as a vehicle for promoting behavior and knowledge changes dates back to the early Seventies, with the experience of the Foundation Pubblicità Progresso (Contri 2005). Since then, private bodies, governmental agencies and Non Governmental

Organizations (NGOs) have relied on this kind of communication to encourage individuals' awareness of important social questions (Gadotti 2001, 2005). In particular, the early Nineties marked the launch of various advertising campaigns designed to build in the Italians' mind the certainty that social cohesion, xenophile and collaborative behaviour towards foreigners were the only and most effective ways of overcoming the human and organizational problems related to the growing immigration phenomenon.

2. The Study

This study represents the final step of a multi-phase descriptive study intended to compare the print, television and radio advertising campaigns on the issues of racism and immigration, launched in Italy from the Nineties to nowadays (Pellegrino et al. 2011, 2012, 2013). The guiding thread of the different stages of research was to verify whether the communicative process, the linguistic and extra-linguistic features expressing the status of the foreigners, the kind of relationship between natives and non-native Italians and the social roles assigned to immigrants in the social campaigns varied in accordance to the kind of the advertising agency (governmental/non- governmental/ private bodies), and to the Italian political context (left wing/ right wing). On the basis of these considerations, in this study we aim to determine the way the advertising agencies express the degree of certainty towards the message they were conveying to Italian audience.

3. Materials and Methods

The corpus of social communication campaigns under study is drawn from the web gallery of Fondazione Pubblicità Progresso and the web archive of the Osservatorio delle Campagne di Comunicazioni Sociale. Querying the two databases by Country, Topic and Category, fifteen advertising campaigns dedicated to racism, immigration and refugees resulted.

However, most of the campaigns above mentioned consisted either of printed materials or of music videos and radio ads that deliver the campaign message without displaying any kind of interaction between Italians and foreigners. Consequently we analyzed print, radio and TV advertisings that permit to verify whether the political context and the nature of the advertising institution might have influenced the representation of the foreigners and the kind of relationship between Italians and immigrants. The campaigns that fulfill this requirement are five:

1. "Say not to racism, Say yes to tolerance". The campaign was promoted by the Foundation Pubblicità Progresso in 1990-1991.
2. "Integration Project". The campaign on social inclusion for immigrants, was launched by the Ministry of Labour, Health and Welfare, in 2008-2009.
3. "Dosta!" The campaign against prejudice towards Roma was launched by UNAR - the National Office for the fight against Racial Discrimination of the Ministry for Equal Opportunities, in collaboration with the NGO *Immigrazione Oggi* in 2008.
4. "Do not be afraid!" The campaign against racism, indifference and "the fear of the Other" was promoted by many national and international NGOs, both religious and lay, in 2009.
5. *"Made in Italy!"* It was an awareness-raising campaign against discrimination, launched in June 2012 by UNAR, in collaboration with the Observatory of the Ministry of the Internal Affairs for the protection against discriminatory acts and the Ministry for Equal Opportunities.

3.1 Method

In reference to the components characterizing linguistic interactions (Hymes 1974) for each campaign, settings, participants, ends of speech, act sequence and the overall tone of interactions were considered.

For printed advertising the focus was on the structure of the body copy, the use of visuals and the characteristics of headline and pay-off between spoken and written advertising campaign.

Relevant studies on the effects of spokesperson's speech on advertising outcomes have pointed out that the quality of voice, the modulation of the rhythmic and prosodic parameters and the segmental accuracy of the testimonials can affect the processing and interpretation of the Ad itself (Lambert et al. 1960, Ryan and Sebastian 1980; Brown et al. 1985). Consequently, following a consolidated methodology adopted in experimental phonetics an acoustic analysis was carried out on the dialogues between the native and non-native Italian speakers presented in the radio and TV ads (Giannini and Pettorino 1998; Giannini 2005; Pettorino and Giannini 2005, 2010).

By means of a software for speech analysis, i.e. Wavesurfer 1.8.8, for each speaker the following measures were made:

a. the number of speech chains, that is the portion of speech between two silences;
b. the number of syllables and duration of each speech chain,
c. the duration of silent pauses (SP) and disfluences,
d. the maximum and the minimum $f0$ value for each speech chain.

Furthermore, some calculations were carried out in terms of:

a. articulation rate AR, i.e. the ratio between the number of syllables and the speech chain duration (syll/s),
b. speech rate SR, i.e. the ratio between the number of syllables and the utterance time (syll/s),
c. the silence and disfluence duration percentages,
d. the mean duration of silent pauses (s),
e. fluency (F), i.e. the ratio between the number of syllables and the number of speech chains(syll/SC),
f. the tonal range (TR), i.e. the difference between the maximum and minimum f_0 value in an utterance, calculated in semitones (st).

4. Analysis

4.1 Say not to racism. Say yes to tolerance

The campaign entitled translation "Say No to racism. Say Yes to tolerance" by *Fondazione Pubblicità Progresso* dates back to 1990 and 1991, when the Italian government was led by the Christian Democratic Party and during which time the immigration boom was underway. The campaign consisted of three phases (Spring '90 – Summer '90 – Winter '91). The materials were a radio advertising campaign, one black and white and one color TV ad, five black and white posters and eleven color posters.

4.1.1 Print Campaign
In a context flooded by messages of all kinds, the certainty towards the campaign message was achieved by means of a body-copy that strikes the reader's attention, can be easily memorized and produces a particular behavioral choice as a final effect. Five posters highlights the absence of color and the combination of black and white images, strongly emphasizing the lack of warmth, affection and love. The campaign uses two textual versions, one with images, one without. The first version focuses on the black and white contrast, the font size and the spatial location of the body copy (See Figures 1-2).

Figure 6

Figure 7

The text is a single justified block, differing clearly from the headline and consisting of two nominal sentences, one affirmative and one negative centered at the top ("No al razzismo. Sì alla tolleranza" equivalent to "Say No to racism. Say Yes to tolerance"). The black background with white lettering is made to impact the reader, instead the white background with the black lettering is more conventional. The headline centrally positioned and written on two lines with very large letters immediately strikes the reader, who may choose not to read all the text below.

The second version of the print campaign focuses, instead, on the combination of a written text and a provocative image of a black Christ on the Cross gazing the reader, making him/her feel guilty (see Figure 3).

Figure 8

The poster wanted to evoke a series of associations related to the collective imagination of a society still heavily imbued in Catholicism. The image of Christ in Italian popular culture has typically Nordic physical traits. In this campaign, instead, he is transformed into a black man with typical African traits. The headline is placed on top without further explanation.

The third phase of the campaign introduces colors and its approach is not as disturbing as the previous. The protagonists were all minors. In one poster there is an African child teaching white child how to write. Their eyes are on the notebook and their hands are touching lightly (see Figure 4)

Figure 9

In another poster two happy and smiling children are cycling, the white boy is sitting behind and holding on to his black friend (see Figure 5).

Figure 10

The headline changes from "No al razzismo. Sì alla tolleranza" to "Saranno amici per la pelle" ("They will be bosom friends"). The previous slogan becomes the pay-off and it is placed near the mark of the advertising agency. The new slogan plays with a very common expression in Italian, "to be skin-friends" which literally means "to be inseparable". The tense is the future that is used to evoke the certainty, the hope that younger people can succeed in building a better world. The slogan is adjacent to the image

of the two boys, one white and one black, embracing each other or are very close to each other. The black boy has a leading role and the text is realized by the alternation of black and white. "They will be friends" is written in black on a white background and overlaps the image, while "Skin" is written in white on a black background and appears as an appendix to the original message. It uses the metaphorical and literal meaning of the term: skin will not be a problem for most young people because they will be friends.

4.1.2 TV campaign

The TV campaign is based on two ads, one corresponding to the campaign with the Black Christ, the other similar to the print campaign "They will be bosom friends". The first advertising reutilizes the image of Christ on the Cross and the technique of using black and white. Unlike the posters which focuses on the figure and the eyes of the Christ, the TV campaign emphasizes all the stages of the actual Crucifixion, making the viewer feel as guilty as the executioner. The black Christ is pictured in an isolated place, lying on his back, with his hands and ankles tied to the cross with ropes and fixed with nails. The man, as silent as the Christ in front of his executioners, raises his eyes and directs them to the public-executioner. His disconsolate expression and dismay are intended to blame and induce the public to avoid xenophobic behaviors. The feeling of bewilderment and anxiety of the spectator, the dramatic intensity of the scene is accentuated by the use of black and white image and by some undistinguished overlapping and repetition of multilingual utterances external to the scene. It is not casual that the only clearly understandable speech sequences are "love" and "I am not a racist". Similarly to the radio ad, the slogan is recited at the end, so that it can be easily remembered and imprinted in the listener's mind. In the radio ad, the listener's attention is directed towards the end of the message, while in the print campaign the attention is directed to the initial part or on the text written in larger fonts. On the contrary, in the TV campaign, the visual and the acoustic channels overlap, the one enhancing the communicative effectiveness of the other. In the final frame of the campaign the public can read and listen to the slogan, written on two lines and pronounced with a silent pause between the first and second nominal sentence. This adds to the fact that the slogan "Say yes to tolerance" appearing with the mark of the advertising agency, reveals its aspiration both to promote tolerance in a society undergoing deep transformation and to guide the public opinion, indicating which elements to consider (tolerance) and which to refuse (racism).

The second advertising campaign is completely different from the previous. Like the 1991 posters, it uses colors and adopts a more encouraging approach towards the public. The campaign is softened with images of hope, picturing children, youth and adults of all races

acknowledging each other in simple and spontaneous gestures (being under the same umbrella in the rain, shaking hands to greet each other) and moments of sharing (playing football in the street, cards at the bar, quitting school, dancing). Cafés, restaurants, streets, concerts become places for people to meet and to coexist peacefully. Both in the pay-off of the print campaign and in the slogan of the TV campaign there is an explicit reference to a world still to be built. In the first case, this message is expressed linguistically by using the future tense "they will be bosom friends". In the second one, it is emphasized by the use of the imperative with an exhortative function "Let's prepare to live in a multiracial society" In both cases, the receivers of the messages appear to be the younger generations, and, indeed, in the print campaign the head-line appears next to the image of the two boys. In the TV campaign, the slogan is recited when two girls, one white and one black, appear under the same multi-colored umbrella. Both in the print and TV campaigns different social groups establish ordinary symmetrical interactions and none of the two is socially or discursively dominant.

4.1.3 The Radio campaign
The radio campaign is based on a single ad, whose text corresponds exactly to the body-copy of the press campaign in black and white with no pictures. The ad is characterized by the presence of two voices: one male, which reads the text of the campaign, the second one female, which concludes the campaign by providing technical information about the communication campaign, with reference to its targets and its promoter institution.

The ad lasts 30 seconds, where the percentage of silence is about 28%. The male voice has an AR of 4.8 syll/s, so it is very slow, professional, listener-oriented speech. In fact, compared to average conversational speech, with an AR of 5-6 syll/s (Giannini 2000), this speech is much closer to the characteristics of baby talk or speech addressed to deaf people (4 syll/s). The analysis of the TR also shows the presence of a monotone speech which is quite low compared to conversational speech, that is to say 80 Hz compared to 100 Hz (for male voice). The fluency is also very low, with an average value of 7.5 syll/SC, which confirms our considerations mentioned above. Moreover, the very low value of SR average of 3.4 syll/s shows the presence of many silent pauses, which do not correspond to syntactic pauses, but they are purely emphatic. The analysis of examined radio speech shows dominance of the speaker rather than the listener, against whom he feels superior. The message is transmitted from top to bottom with a clear didactic purpose: the speaker seems to be addressing to racist listeners or potentially racist ones, so his voice will deliberately be intimidating and cause anxiety. The slogan "No to racism. Yes to tolerance" closes the advertising text, as in the TV ad, but differently the print campaign.

4.2 Campaign: Integration Project

Integration Project is a print, television and radio advertising campaign about immigrant integration, sponsored by the Ministry of Labour, Health and Welfare. The campaign is divided into two phases. The first one started in October 2008, the second one in October 2009, funded by the European Fund for Integration of non-European countries. In this period, Italy was governed by a right-wing political coalition which dealt with the intensification of migration with severe restrictive policies designed to penalize illegal immigration.

The campaign is officially intended to foster intercultural dialogue between foreigners and Italians and to support peaceful cohabitation and coexistence between regular immigrants and Italians. It is addressed both to immigrants and Italians, because it aims officially to inform the former of their rights and duties, and to promote in the latter the knowledge of the migratory phenomenon itself. Nevertheless, what emerges from the campaign is not as noble: the objective is to communicate the certainty to Italian and foreign audience that social integration of immigrants is achievable through work and knowledge of language. However the jobs and language varieties associated with the immigrants are questionable. Since the campaign is launched by the Italian Ministry of Labour, Health and Welfare, and is expected to mirror the government position towards immigrants, it is very significant to note:

- the way social integration was carried out in the advertising campaign;
- the nature of the relationship between Italians and Foreigners displayed in the television and radio advertisements;
- the social roles assigned to immigrants in the campaign.

The campaign consists of three press posters distributed in 2008, a television advertisement campaign and two radio advertisement campaigns broadcast in 2008 and 2009.

4.2.1 Print Campaign
The campaign is addressed to immigrants and focuses on reassuring images of foreign people, smiling and engaged in low-profile jobs Italians are not interested in (see Figures 6,7,8).

Figure 11

Figure 12

Figure 13

Thus, there is a maid, a worker and a pizza chef, whose language knowledge is represented by dialect. The TV and press campaign are very similar in structure, contents and actors who are involved. In fact, in both cases there is a sentence in dialect and the immigrants are not introduced as Italians, but with name of their home country first, followed by the name of the inhabitants of the cities where they live and the years spent there. As for the textual part of printed campaign, it consists of a sentence in typical dialect from Milan, Roman and Neapolitan, written in italics, to resemble speech, and some information written in bubbles with a smaller font. The main feature of the campaign is colors. The colors blue and orange, recall serenity and radiance.

4.2.2 Television Campaign
The video advertisement campaign is characterized by four consecutive sequences, whose main characters are the same three immigrants present in the print advertisement campaign and a new fourth immigrant, Andrj, a Ukrainian, who has been living in Palermo for 1 year.

Each scene opens with an immigrant who is working and singing in dialect the most popular song of the city where he/she works. A voice-over draws attention to the complexity of being integrated in a foreign country, but it also underlines awareness and respect for the law as a vehicle for successful integration into the Italian society. These advertisements, officially targeted towards foreigners, reveal the uncertainty of advertising agency of how they have to deal with integration. The spot indeed are very difficult to understand, due to both the choice of dialects and the very high value of AR, SR and F (AR 7.34 syll./s; SR 7.04 syll./s, Fluency 20.25 syll./speech chain). Additionally, the choice of dialect for immigrants supports the validity of a model of integration/assimilation to the host culture which would prevent them from obtaining the Italian national identity.

4.2.3 Radio Campaign

The radio campaign consists of two advertisements that share the same textual structure but differs in some respects. Both ads last thirty seconds, of which about 5.4% is silence. They are based upon a conversation between an Italian speaker and a foreigner. The Italian with a strong regional accent tries to teach the foreigner a popular expression in his/her own dialect and the foreigner attempts to repeat it. When the conversation ends, the voice of the institutional speaker gives technical information about the campaign. The differences between the ads are the gender of the Italian speakers, the home country of the immigrants and the content of the advertisement text. In the first ad, a woman from Northern Italy tries to explain to Aziz, a worker from Senegal, that he is in Italy to work. In the second a Neapolitan man tried to teach Wassef, a pizza chef from Egypt, that no one is born with the knowledge of how to do everything.

Analyzing the exchanges between Italians and immigrants and the values of the suprasegmental features of speech, some important inference about the social roles assigned to Italians and to immigrants and the nature of the relationship between the speakers can be drawn. The conversations reveal the strong political and ideological connotation of the campaign. Reflecting the governmental policies towards immigrants, the ad presents the Italian speakers and the foreign immigrants involved in an institutional speech where asymmetrical relationships among participants were established. The conversational rights and duties as well as the social roles are not equally assigned to both groups of speakers. In both ads, the Italian speakers represent the discursively and socially dominant figures. They act like teachers, who offer the foreigners pearls of wisdom in Milanese and Neapolitan. Conversely, the immigrants play the subordinate role of the pupils who repeat the teacher's input until they receive their teacher's approval. Like the speakers representing the institution, the Neapolitan man and the Milanese woman exercise quantitative, interactive and semantic

dominance in the dialogues (Linell and Luckmann 1991). The percentage of phonation time per speaker is not equally distributed. In both radio advertisement the foreigners occupied the least amount of ad space compared to the length of speech uttered by the Italian and Institutional speaker reciting the pay-off (see Table 1).

1st Ad			2nd Ad		
Aziz	Milanese speaker	Institutional speaker	Wassef	Neapolitan speaker	Institutional speaker
9%	29%	62%	14%	22%	64%

Table 1. Percentages of phonation time per speaker and per radio ad.

Aziz speaks for only about 3 seconds out of 30, Wassef for 4. In addition, the dialogical turn is never started by immigrants, in other words it is always the Italian speaker that directs the interaction, chooses the topic of conversation and controls the sequence organization. The reference to the institutional speech of the class is more openly displayed by the use of synonyms; expansion of the topic; starters, like "allora"; and the occurrence of sequences of direct repair "no, no" started by the native and accomplished by the foreigners (Piazza 1995; Boulima 1999).

The certainty of the dominance of the Italian speakers over the immigrants and the pedagogical purposes of their discourse is also supported by the very low AR and SR values of the speech produced by the natives (Tusing and Dillard 2000; Dunbar and Burgoon 2005).

Generally speaking, the Italian speakers have an average AR of about 4.4 syll/s, which is typical of a hyper-articulated, listener-oriented speech. Moreover, the female speaker's articulatory movements are even more accurate than those produced by the Neapolitan man (see Table 2).

	AR (syll/s)	SR (syll/s)	F (syll/SC)
Milanese speaker	4.3	3.6	6.7
Neapolitan speaker	4.7	4.5	7.5

Table 2. Prosodic features for Italian speaker.

Her message "Mi sun chi per laurà", that is "immigrants can stay in Italy only if they have a job" indeed, is much more politically oriented than the

more neutral and encouraging "Nisciun' nasce 'mparato", therefore it deserves more accuracy when uttered. Indeed, her speech is much closer to baby talk, and teacher talk or speech addressed to deaf people (4 syll/s) than to the average conversational speech, which has an AR of 5-6 syll/s [33].

The third male voice which gives useful information for immigrant integration is characterized by accelerated and speaker-oriented speech (AR=7.4 syll/s; SR=7.1 syll/s; F=21.8 syll/SC), which is very difficult for foreign people to understand. This datum is in direct contrast to the official target of the campaign which is the promotion of integration for immigrants.

These considerations linked to social roles assigned to the immigrants in the television advertisement lead to the certain conclusion that, according to the Italian government, immigrants are destined to occupy only the lowest position in Italian society. In fact they are not taught Italian, but a regional dialect unintelligible in other parts of Italy and they are presented while doing the jobs that Italians often do not want themselves: pizza chef, waiter, workman, domestic. The Italian speakers dominate the foreign listeners, who are never introduced as Italians, but with name of their home country first, followed by the name of the inhabitants of the cities where they live and the years spent there (i.e. Patricia / Philippines, Romana for two years). Immigrants are placed in the context of a dialectal and socially low subculture that locks them into a low social niche.

4.3 Dosta! Campaign to Eliminate Prejudice against Roma

The Campaign to eliminate prejudice against Roma was launched in 2008 by the National Department against Racial Discrimination, part of the Ministry for Equal Opportunities and the NGO Immigrazione Oggi. While it is a part of the international Campaign Dosta! - a Romani word meaning "enough" - promoted by the Council of Europe, the Italian version is specifically aimed to sponsor the Old Roma Tailor's Shop, a social cooperative founded by Roma women in Rome. The campaign consists of a television advertisement which represents Roma and Sinti community members in their daily lives with the aim of reducing the level of prejudice and discrimination.

The protagonists of the spot are a child – even if only his voice is heard – , a female Roma tailor, a young Roma man, who is studying at the Music Academy Santa Cecilia in Rome and, finally, another Roma man, who is a gardener. The narrator is the child who repeats all the stereotypes his father has told him about the Roma while the images and the words uttered are in direct contrast.

On the textual level, the first stereotype uttered by the child is: "My father says that Roma women only steal and beg". Soon after, there is the image of a Roma tailor who says: "We steal the colors of the rainbow to make your clothes". In the second scene, when the child says: "My father

says that Roma men only steal", there is a Roma young man with an accordion who says: "I'm studying at Santa Cecilia. Is that stealing?". Finally, the child claims: "My father says that Roma make their children steal and beg". A scene with children going to school immediately follows.

In the second part of the television advertisement, there is a sudden reversal of the above stereotypes. A soundtrack of Balkan music begins and the child says: "My father met them (Roma people) and says that they are not all the same and that it is possible to live together". Therefore, the initial goals of the campaign – the elimination of social prejudice and the promotion of integration – are reached through a reversal of all the stereotypes which are refuted by the reality represented. Although one of the purposes was to promote the social cooperative The Old Roma Tailor's Shop, it never actually appears in the spot.

The analysis of this discrepancy between the words and images shows that the advertisement develops on two tiers. On the one hand, the chiasm "images vs. words" seems to be effective if we relate it to the initial goal of the advertisement. Yet, Roma people are not represented as they really are, but as they are expected to be: the woman is represented as a worker, not as an entrepreneur; the young man seems more like a street musician, rather than a student of a music academy; and the man is a rather innocuous quiet gardener.

On a prosodic level, the spot develops through an indirect dialogue, where characters deliver short monologues addressed to television watchers. However, through their monologues, characters seem to reply to each other. Indeed, speech analysis reveals a twofold structure of the ad as well. The AR, SR and F are quite uniform, not only in terms of the relationship among Italians and foreigners, but also in terms of utterances for each speaker (see Table 3).

	AR (syll/s)	SR (syll/s)	F (syll/SC)
Italian child	4.9	2.3	13.9
Female Roma tailor	6.8	6.0	21
Roma student at music academy	7.2	3.0	9.2
Roma man	5.0	2.6	8

Table 3. Prosodic features for each speaker.

However, if we consider the percentage of phonation time for each character during 1 minute and 12 seconds - 64.5 child, 8.43 the woman and about 13% the two men - the phonation time is totally imbalanced in favor of the

child. In particular, the time dedicated to the woman, who is one of the members of the above-mentioned social cooperative, is the shortest, while it should have been one of the largest.

In conclusion, we note that in this campaign there is a superficial level, characterized by a social message that appears quite effective, and a deep level, characterized by a less enthusiastic governmental message Italian television watchers want to listen to.

4. 4 Campaign: Do not Be Afraid

The campaign entitled "Do not be afraid", organized by 26 secular and religious organizations, is not politically oriented. The campaign is designed to promote mutual understanding and dialogue between natives and the "Other" and to break down prejudices and stereotypes that often result in discrimination and violence. The campaign consists of a print campaign, a television campaign and a radio one.

4.4.1 Print campaign
The print campaign is based on a poster that strikes for its visuals, since it uses the image of a smiling child whose features resemble a Southern Italian, or a North-African, or Romanian boy (see Figure 9).

Figure 14

He comes out of a white net that traps a man and a woman, in a blurred background. The verbal text labels the white net of the image as a "cage" and specifies its nature: prejudices ("Exit cage of prejudices").

4.4.2 Television Campaign
The television advertisement campaign uses the image of the net of prejudices from the print campaign and take it a step further.

Five people are trapped in it, two Italians (one woman from Northern Italy and a man from Southern Italy), along with two foreigners, a man and a woman, and a child from Romania. Similarly to the radio campaign, the television campaign consists of several communicative exchanges in two

voices, where participants, with an attitude of both suspicion and fake solidarity with their interlocutor accuse each other. The woman from the North stigmatizes the man from the South, who in turn blames Arab man, who in turn accuses the African woman. The African woman blames gypsies for the evils of society while the woman from Northern Italy glares at the Neapolitan. This would seem to start the vicious circle of stereotypes which is broken by the Romanian child who distances himself from all this and with his candour and smile symbolically breaks the chains of intolerance and leaves the cage built by prejudices.

Unlike "Integration project" and the campaign "Dosta!" against prejudice towards Roma, the spot is designed to widespread the certainty that there is no difference between Italians and foreigners in terms of social status, working position or dominance in the interaction. The "Other", referring either to the foreigner, or to inhabitants from Southern Italy is depersonalized and becomes an extremely generalized representative of ethnic groups (Arabs, Africans, Gipsies, Southern Italians, Romanians) and identity is rebuilt through the reallocation of prejudice and stereotypes. In fact, the Southerners are Mafiosi, all the Arabs are terrorists, the Africans are lazy, Gypsies are thieves.

4.4.3 Radio Campaign

The radio advertisement lasts 60 seconds. Voices alternate equally and even music has a significant part, not just as background but also to cover silences between one interlocutor and another. The total duration of speech is about 74.8%. There are two females and two males. In addition, there is a male voice that says the slogan, and a woman who indicates the website promoting the advertising campaign. In detail, these voices, taking into account gender differences, present an average conversational speech, with an AR of 6.5 syll/s.

This is a talk that reflects normal conversation because the aim is precisely the reproduction of daily speech where prejudices and clichés often arise. This finding is confirmed by an SR average of about 5 syllables per second in all voices. Excluding the woman from Northern Italy who opens and closes the chain of stereotypes, the impression is that there is no dominant voice.

4.5 Campaign: Made in Italy

Made in Italy is the title of a communication campaign broadcast in Italy in July 2012 under a right-wing government. It was promoted by UNAR, in collaboration with the Observatory of the Ministry of the Internal Affairs for the protection against discriminatory acts and the Ministry for Equal Opportunities. One TV spots represent its promotional material. The campaign, co-financed by the Ministry of Interior and the European Fund

for the Integration of non-UE Countries, aims to give the real picture of the presence of Italians and immigrants in Italy and to foster among the former anti-discriminatory attitudes towards foreign citizens. The campaign, therefore, addressees two kinds of receivers: on the one hand, the foreign national who is a victim of racism; on the other hand, the Italian citizen who wants to report racist or xenophobic acts.

The TV spot lasts 36 seconds and focuses on the work done by foreign workers in Italy. Indeed, the spot is set in a tailor. The camera captures some brief moments and the facial expressions of workers of different ethnic groups demonstrating satisfaction with their jobs since they are allowed to create new products. Finally, after some finishes, the suit is ready and on shirt hem and on collar there is the label 'Made in Italy' that, rather than listing the fiber content, it presents the percentages of the ethnic groups living in Italy. The certainty of the message is conveyed through meaningful sentences going directly to the heart of the matter and where the present tense leaves no room for doubt or misunderstanding: "A strong country is based on sharing and equality", "People who discriminate prevent themselves and their country from moving forward, working and developing", "Real Italy knows how to integrate" (the claim closing the spot). The male speaker utters these sentences calmly (TR=11.4 st) - expressing confidence and control - and emphatically, producing very long silent pauses (mean duration =0.5 seconds) that allow listener to metabolize each step of the spot. Despite AR (7.3 syll/s) and SR (6.3 syll/s) exceed the attested average for standard Italian (respectively 5-6 and 4-5 syll/s), the message is clearly understandable even by foreigners, not only for the high number of pauses (F=20 syll/SC) and their duration, but also because the contact details to report a crime also appear on video while they are being uttered by the spokesperson.

5. Conclusions

Data from the survey have highlighted that if the communicative channel changes there are linguistic and extra-linguistic differences in expressing the certainty towards the advertising message.

In the campaign "Say not to racism. Say yes to tolerance" of the '90s, when the Italian government was led by the Christian Democratic Party, the foreigner was a person to protect. On the one hand, there is a threatening campaign, aimed at teaching Italians tolerance. On the other hand, it uses the image of children as the symbol of hope for a future of peaceful coexistence, a typical New Testament stereotype.

In the campaign "Integration Projects" launched between 2008 and 2009 by a right-wing government, which implemented severe restrictive policies designed to penalize illegal immigration, foreigners seem destined to

integrate and interact only within the lowest working sectors in the country. Accordingly, this advertising influences the creation of specific social representations of minority groups, legitimates the belief that there are differences in status between the natives and immigrants and supports the validity of a model of integration/assimilation to the host culture which would lead immigrants to abandon their cultural identity.

The campaign "Do not be afraid" that was promoted only by NGOs is not politically oriented. It tries to distance itself from this discriminating attitude towards immigrants. The most important certainty is that Italians and foreigners are on the same level and both are objects and bearers of stereotypes. The Otherness, referring either to the foreigners, or to inhabitants from Southern Italy is depersonalized and his/her identity is rebuilt through the reallocation of prejudices and stereotypes. Nevertheless, in this campaign there is probable unintentional discrimination between Italian southerners and northerners. The North is only the bearer of prejudice, and never the object of stereotypes.

The campaign against prejudice towards Roma "Dosta!" lies in the middle, perhaps because it is promoted by both a governmental institution and an NGO. Roma are objects of stereotypes, and are accused of being thieves, beggars and child-exploiter, but at the same there is the attempt, partially carried out, to launch the certainty that they are not the same.

In the 2012 campaign "Made in Italy" the official purpose is to provide the foreigners constituting the Italian social fabric with the certainty that their safety and protection is defended by political institutions. Nevertheless, this certainty is susceptible to a subtler interpretation: foreign people safeguarding is not granted primarily because it is a right of the immigrant or for a philanthropic defensive attitude towards whoever lives in Italy. On the contrary, as stated at the beginning of the spot, sharing and equality between natives and non natives are to be fostered because they are the only and certain distinctive features of all developed countries. Discriminations, instead, represent an obstacle to the progress of the countries.

To sum up, the advertising initiatives examined in this paper reveal that the social and political contexts as well as the institutional or non-profit nature of the advertising institution are influential variables in determining the degree of certainty towards the message they are conveying to Italian hearers and readers. In addition, they show how social communication is not politically super partes, but rather it reflects specific ideological values related to the universe of promotion and acceptance.

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Facing uncertainty in a risk context:
the role of Social Networks (SNSs)

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"Social networks are not the affirmation of something like truth, but the creation of truth trough an endless series of clicks (Lovink, 2012, 42)

"Some certain news: an earthquake cannot be predicted, so do not be alarmed if they say that aftershocks will come" (posted by a user on the Facebook page Terremoto Mirabello, May 20 2013)

Abstract

The literature on risk communication stresses the discrepancy related to the different perception of risk and the consequences on the life and safety of persons. The consequences of this mismatch are relevant in emergency and risk management. The article argues the particular nature of capital channeled from social networks. In the context of particular risk and insecurity (after the earthquake in May 2012 in Emilia-Romagna), social networks provide tangible and intangible resources to cope with uncertainty. The primary resource is constituted by sharing information in real time. Other important conditions are the contiguity between information and communication, the peculiar subjective and emotional language. In a condition of risk and in a very uncertain situation, the social networks enables individuals to cope with a condition of extreme insecurity and to feed emotional reassurance.

Keywords: Risk management, social networks, uncertainty, social capital

1. Introduction

This article aims to argue how new sites of online relationships can represent devices for coping with uncertainty in risk conditions. The new communication context, represented by the Web and especially, social networks sites (SNSs), works both due to the type of communication and the particular form of social capital that can be built.

This hypothesis is discussed on the basis of research on the Facebook pages created spontaneously after the earthquake in May 2012 in Emilia-Romagna. In the context of particular risk and uncertainty, such as produced by the earthquake, social networks are able to provide tangible and intangible resources to cope with uncertainty. The primary resource is based on information sharing in real time, on contiguity between information and communication, on the peculiar language and subjective narrative of SNSs.

The implications for risk communication in social emergency contexts are relevant. However, research on the subject is still at its beginning.

2. Problems in risk communication

The literature on risk communication relates the response of individuals in emergency situations to three main aspects: a) the quality of communication related to the risk, b) social capital and, not least, c) the capacity of individuals to manage the uncertainty derived from the event. In a risk context, communication faces a threefold uncertainty: the first is concrete, related to the natural/physical event, the second is a matter of communication, the third is at an existential level.

Regarding the quality of communication, the literature underlines a mismatch between those emitting a message and those receiving it: the risk perception of the communicator is radically different to the risk perception and its consequences by the parties involved in the risk itself (Pagano 2001). Risk perception and vulnerability are factors influencing the ability of individuals to make decisions. However, people respond differently to the same facts and, consequently, the same uncertainty because they are influenced by their perceptions of the problem (Patterson et al. 2010, 128).

This discrepancy is due, in large part, to the fact that the interpretation of the message is always filtered by the set of direct and indirect experiences of the subjects and the social images settled around the theme. Furthermore, as is well known, people construct their risk perceptions on the basis of many factors, not least on ethical, political and social criteria (Beccastrini Cerrai 2004, 123).

For these reasons, risk communication cannot only be arranged through information, but must take into account different risk perceptions, which go beyond pure experience, to connect to the cognitive constructs of those involved and to the dynamics of the mental interpretation of the facts (Pagano 2001, 115). Perceived risk is made up of two elements: firstly, the assessment of natural hazards and vulnerability, that is, the "capacity to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the impact of a natural hazard" (Patterson et al. 2010, 128); and secondly, the social protection resources available to the individuals.

Communication with other individuals in the same condition is crucial because the perception of risk is grafted onto a body of knowledge processed and transmitted by individuals in interpersonal relationships (Beccastrini Cerrai 2004, 122). It is easy to see how the new context of SNSs is becoming an issue, while the investigation of these implications is at its absolute beginnings.

The resources arising from traditional forms of aggregation have been widely explored: a rich literature revolves around the concept of social capital. Social capital allows a person to draw on the resources of the members of the network to which they belong. Bourdieu (1984) defines social capital as all the social relations that an individual or group which they belongs to can mobilize. Contributions emphasize different aspects, such as the value of trust and rules of coexistence that allow individuals to act collectively (Putnam, 2001) and the role of interpersonal relations (Granovetter 1973, Coleman 1988).

Social capital is associated with a variety of positive social results such as, for example, better health, lower crime rates, more efficient financial markets. Among the benefits generated by social capital, the increased capacity to take collective actions is emphasized, as well as greater psychological well-being, higher levels of self-esteem and greater satisfaction in general terms.

Social capital has, therefore, several implications: it is related to well-being derived from interpersonal interactions, produces aggregation, encourages participation in charities and in political organizations offering participants the opportunity to articulate demands and to achieve objectives. It fosters a sense of belonging and increases organizational involvement in collective projects (Wellman et al. 2001, 450).

In any case, when referring to social capital, we mean a set of resources accumulated through relationships with people. So, can we assume that relations are, in themselves, a tool which can be used to reduce uncertainty in risk situations? Uncertainty, associated with a constitutive condition of existence can be emphasized in particular risk conditions. In sociology, uncertainty is related to constitutive aspects of late modernity: in particular, a loss of solid guidelines (Bauman 1999), and the reflective approach adopted by individuals regarding every choice made (Giddens 1990). Each person takes on the task of building and rebuilding their judgment categories and "reassurance" horizons by themselves, even by criticizing knowledge from official sources. The risks in question may not necessarily be physical, but rather existential, relating to events that we cannot work out using conventional categories. Risk as a concept can also be referred to as the consequence of human actions and technology (Beck 1980).

This experience can be understood, in anthropological terms, if we refer to the pages written by Ernesto De Martino (1977), on the identity crisis which occurs when individuals lose their usual horizons of reference. The

category of "crisis of presence", as existential feeling, indicates subjective experiences of "disorientation" that may occur in different cultural contexts where some radical changes or traumatic events take place. In these cases, the subject, losing the references relating to their domestic horizon and not recognizing the boundaries of their family background, experiences the "end of the world."[1]

Recent studies have revealed that well-networked people are living longer and are more resistant to diseases. Threats to social connection could activate the same warning mechanisms of individual survival. Indeed, some authors, confirming this anthropological approach, argue that psychological distress and psychiatric disorders arise from social deficits (Meyer-Lindenberg Tost, 2012).

The construction of "reasonable" certainty for individual actions, today takes place in a context characterized by conversational networks. Networking emphasizes relationship initiation, often between strangers. While networking is possible on these sites, it is not the primary practice on many of them, nor is it what differentiates them from other forms of computer-mediated communication (CMC) (Boyd Ellison 2007). SNSs form relevant connective tissue where people form beliefs, representations of reality and make decisions (Franchi Schianchi 2011)[2].

Communication and cooperation, therefore, are the means used by individuals to cope with uncertainty. And communication and cooperation are made possible by the existence of social ties offering a variety of benefits, including access to information, emotional and material support (Donath 2007).

Through conversation, individuals feed their daily construction of provisional certainties that remain constantly open to revisions and adjustments (Franchi 2012a). It can be argued that these pages provide useful social resources to cope with uncertainty and develop social capital, triggering forms of operational cooperation for facing emergencies (Franchi 2012b). Can SNS be considered as the new places where the rite of

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[1] In the notes on so-called cultural apocalypses, De Martino relates that once he got into a car in Calabria and he asked a shepherd to show him the right way, promising to bring him back later to the starting point. The man got into the car with suspicion, which turned into real distress, when he could no longer see the Marcellinara tower, near where he lived. The bell tower was the reference point of his limited domestic space. Only when he saw the bell tower again, did his face finally find peace (De Martino 1977, 480).

[2] We define social network sites (SNSs) as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site. While we use the term "social network site" to describe this phenomenon, the term "social networking sites" also appears in public discourse, and the two terms are often used interchangeably. We chose not to employ the term "networking" for two reasons: emphasis and scope (Boyd Ellison 2007).

"reintegration of presence" in the face of risk takes place today? More generally, can SNSs be considered as individual devices where people seek reassurance through the communication of uncertainty and information sharing? The article will argue this hypothesis.

3.   Social networks sites (SNSs) and social capital

Social capital can be defined as "the sum of resources, actual or virtual, that an individual or a group can reach, thanks to virtuous possession of a durable network, more or less institutionalized, providing relationships, knowledge and mutual recognition" (Ellison et al. 2007, 1145). It is therefore legitimate to wonder about the ability of online networks to produce social capital. The argument is still open, since the phenomenon of mass participation in SNSs is recent and empirical research on the subject is still insufficient.

What is clear is that Web 2.0 dramatically expands access to information, making a virtually unlimited quantity of knowledge easily available. We are aware that the Web organizes and filters information, deciding the hierarchy of news, using our preferences or company advertisements as parameters. The utopian vision of a globally transparent Web democracy allowing direct forms of mass participation (Hindman 2008) was followed by radical disappointment (Morozov 2011).

Web 2.0 changes individual access to information resources, not only in terms of ease of access, speed and plurality of sources, but especially for its growing intertwining with interpersonal communication. Information is conveyed and filtered in relational contexts and is subject to a process of continuous monitoring and reinterpretation (Franchi 2012a).

In the experience of millions of people, the Web is increasingly intertwined with everyday life, in particular, the use of SNSs makes online practice a personal, almost intimate experience: an archive of images and memories, a vehicle for relations, a tool to express feelings, emotions, personal stories, positions on world events, preferences, choices and so on. The interplay between information and communication is becoming increasingly tight. This happens not only because it is impossible to separate what belongs to one or more domain, but more importantly, because the network changes the very nature of information, which is interwoven inextricably with the communication of everyday life. It can be said that any information adopts an inherently dialogical, communicative dimension authorizing reciprocity. As Watzlawick (1967) has already recalled, communication is always for others, communicating means to share, build cultural spaces and shared values.

Even with regard to the use of the Internet, there is no contradiction between its use to keep contacts and its use to practice them face to face

(Wellman et al. 2001). Indeed using the Internet could increase online as well as offline communication, since members of the network become more aware of the needs of others and their relationships could be stimulated by more frequent contacts. Moreover, the Internet allows users to share music, photographs and materials, to meet in person, to exchange information. The Internet, like any other type of network, could therefore increase share capital by fostering contacts offline, participation and commitment to the community.

Much has been written regarding changes introduced by SNSs in the context of communication. Accelerating and multiplying communication between individuals, technologies shaping forms of sociality and language, affecting social discourses, worldviews and ways of thinking. Information and communication are forming a continuum, investing everyday life, becoming part of the set of materials that contribute to the construction of individual identity and, not least, shaping people's language (Franchi, Schianchi 2011).

The use of social networking has become part of everyday life for millions of people of all ages around the world. SNSs provide part of the support which is needed the world over, in order to keep track of constantly changing relationships (Donath 2007); they are able to provide resources and benefits of various kinds (Riva 2010), represent a mirror device (Franchi Schianchi 2011). Digital communities enable new abilities, at both individual and collective level, and form the basis of new forms of collective action (Lanzara 2011, 374-375).

Investing in SNSs allows individuals to develop dimensions such as trust and reciprocity, to have information shortcuts applicable in any context of choice (Franchi Schianchi 2011). Social networks can promote reciprocity and trust, triggering dynamic collaboration, by connecting participants to a community and increasing knowledge of other members. Even if the Web increases interpersonal connections, cooperation is the result of a number of conditions and developments affecting technology, as well as cultural orientation converging in supporting the deployment of new collaborative models (Franchi 2012b).

Strong and weak ties do not seem to be in contradiction, as well as online and offline participation: individuals with a large number of contacts online, have larger relationships in their life, and could be more active in the community. Valenzuela et al. (2009, 893) claim that Facebook not only helps the individual in the construction of personal identity, but that it is also a key ingredient for strengthening weak links and promoting collective action. Entertainment needs might not be contrary to information needs. Therefore, technology might not, by itself, influence individual capital. Extending this concept to social networks, we can say that their impact on social capital depends on their use.

Research conducted among the students of Michigan State University (Ellison et al. 2007) indicates a positive correlation between the use of SNSs, social capital and well-being. Students using Facebook intensely are more satisfied with college life and have higher self-esteem. This can be explained precisely by the fact that SNSs are able to increase bonds which increase information and opportunities. Practices relating to information and community building (e.g., online news, political blogs, virtual communities) are positively associated with the individual's level of production of social capital. On the other hand, practices related to entertainment and recreation (such as games and movies online) are negatively associated with social capital.

The role of SNSs in forming social capital in emergency situations has been little explored. Patterson et al. (2010) point out that in a situation of high risk and uncertainty, as in Hurricane Katrina 2005 in the United States, the community's role was decisive in all phases of recovery management and, indeed, local organizations, voluntary and non-governmental organizations played a leading role.

This has been confirmed by the research presented here concerning the pages created on Facebook after the earthquake in Emilia Romagna in May 2012. It emerges, in fact, that when faced with a situation of extreme emergency and uncertainty, users react immediately by using opportunities provided by SNSs to spread news, to respond to questions and promote solidarity initiatives. Can it be said that social networks are able to produce useful resources to cope with uncertainty? This contribution focuses on this question.

4. Objectives and research methodology

4.1 Objectives

The role of SNSs in facing situations of uncertainty, is still unexplored, despite being an almost universal practice today: in particular, Facebook has seen an extraordinary expansion in each age group (from early childhood to second adulthood).

The research carried out on the pages created after the earthquake on May 20, 2012 in Emilia-Romagna aims to analyze the role of SNSs and their reassurance characteristics in the context of particular risk and uncertainty.

What kind of resources were individuals accessing Facebook pages in such a context looking for? Aid, information, contacts? As we shall see, these were mainly focused on the opportunity to receive and validate information through sharing.

On the day of the event, Facebook was populated by a number of pages dedicated to the earthquake. The pages have names referring to the event and the location, and sometimes indicating, in the title, the slant of the page. The pages may be based locally, may refer to limited geographical zones, or have a regional area. Alongside the pages created by individuals, Facebook is also home to pages by official institutions, which the private pages relate to.

Why were pages created? What is their relationship to official pages? What kind of resources do Facebook pages provide? How do they contribute to individual protection in a context of uncertainty and risk?

4.2 Methodology

In the first phase we considered five pages created by users (*Terremoto Emilia-Romagna Informazioni*, *Aggiornamenti Terremoto Emilia-Romagna*, *Terremoto in Emilia di Magnitudo 6*, *Terremoto Mirabello*, *Terremoto Mirandola*).[3]

Subsequently, on the basis of parameters such as the number of subscribers, the number of posts and comments, and the number of likes, we decided to focus on two pages: a regional page, *Terremoto Emilia-Romagna Informazioni*, and a local one, *Terremoto Mirabello*. The analysis is based on parameters expressing the level of interest the pages created. It should be noted that the currently existing literature on the subject does not provide predefined metrics that can be used as parameters for analysis.

In addition to these quantitative parameters (adhesions, number of posts, number of comments, number of likes), qualitative parameters have been used in order to understand the type of content conveyed in the pages. The contents of the posts have been grouped according to three types: conversations (comments of various kinds, thank you messages, support messages, photos, criticism of official information, emoticons, conversations, games, hate mail), information (demand, supply, sharing information, links to official websites, etc.) aid (requests and offers, solidarity initiatives etc.).

We proceeded to an analysis of the qualitative and quantitative posts between May 20 and July 21, comparing the local and regional page and the conversation contents in the first (20 May-20 June) and second month (June 21-July 21) in order to analyze how communication changed after the emergency[4].

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[3] We have quoted the names of the pages in their original language.
[4] Thanks to Nicolle Bonetti for her contribution to the research.

5. Analysis

An analysis of the pages confirms their role in addressing user needs for emotional reassurance in the face of uncertain situations. However, this role is emphasized on pages close to the local community. A comparison between official and spontaneous pages shows that the latter plays the role of reassurance, creating social capital, activating forms of practical cooperation, psychological and concrete support.

Pages perform both practical and psychological roles: they help in organizing aid, in getting information in real time, in keeping in touch with friends and family; they help people to feel less alone, to face anxiety, to find anchors for a devastated daily routine. These two aspects are intertwined: the need to have real-time information is accompanied by the need to keep talking to people involved in the same experience: sharing exerts a protective effect on identity.

The use of images is crucial. Equally crucial is the informative role played by these pages, compared to official sources mediated by traditional media (newspapers and television).

The page which was created to give information, fed by direct relations between participants without local roots, loses its function in the second month, when the emergency seems to be over.

The regional page, which was only created for information sharing, loses bulk and attractiveness as the emergency stops, while the local page dominates due to the size of the conversation that continues to support the virtual group rooted in the real context. So, while in the second period, on the *Terremoto Emilia-Romagna Informazioni* page, the category of conversation disappears completely, the *Terremoto Mirabello* page, presents an amount of conversations similar to the previous period.

The following table summarizes the quantitative parameters referred to on the two analysed pages: *Terremoto Emilia-Romagna Informazioni* and *Terremoto Mirabello*. Reference was made to different parameters, in relation to the different page characteristics (individual or group page) in order to measure the degree of adhesion[5].

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[5] The values have been translated into percentages to make comparisons between the two pages. The data refer to the entire period of analysis (May 20 to July 21).

Parameters	Emilia-Romagna Terremoto Informazioni	Terremoto Mirabello
Add	603	1331
Number of posts	101	537
Number of ratings	29	1492
Number of like	147	3873
Type of exchange	Information	Communication

Table 3: **Degree of adhesion**

The highest level of interaction on the *Terremoto Emilia-Romagna Informazione* page is recorded in the period immediately following the earthquake. The following table compares the two pages, in relation to the degree of consent posted (measured by "I like") and the degree of interaction (measured by the number of comments for each status)[6].

Number of likes for each post		
	First month	Second month
Emilia-Romagna Terremoto Informazioni	1.4	0.2
Terremoto Mirabello	1.8	2.0
Degree of interaction (comment for each status)		
	Initial period	Secondary period
Emilia-Romagna Terremoto Informazioni	0.4	0.07
Terremoto Mirabello	2.7	2.9

Table 4: **Degree of interacion**

Regarding conversation content, the messages are grouped into three main categories (news, chatting and help), each of which has been divided into subcategories. The following table shows the weight of each subcategory.

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[6]In the Terremoto Informazioni Emilia-Romagna page, we have detected the total "like", while membership of the Terremoto Mirabello page was calculated by members of the group. In fact, there is no a "like" table in a group. The measurements refer to the periods in which the analysis was performed (May 20-June 20 and June 21 to July 21).

Type of message	Terremoto Emilia-Romagna Informazioni	Terremoto Mirabello
Information	62%	13%
• Information sharing	30%	7%
• Information request	2%	3%
• Link to other sites or pages	30%	3%
Conversations	26%	78%
• Thanks Messages	1%	3%
• Support Messages	8%	5%
• Photographs / Images	2%	2%
• Disputing information from official sources	1%	1%
• Conversations, games (text and pictures)	0%	10%
• Various comments (experiences, emotions, social activities, etc.)	14%	57%
Help	12%	9%
• Requests	2%	1%
• Answers	0%	2%
• Solidarity initiatives	10%	6%

Table 5: **Contents of the conversations**

The table confirms the different nature of the two pages. In particular, on the *Terremoto Emilia Romagna Information* page, most messages belong to the information category. Within it, information sharing and links to other sites are crucial, while in the *Terremoto Mirabello* group more than half of the comments fall into the conversation category. And, in this case, the comments remain on the page for more time after the earthquake. The various kinds of comments relate mainly to narrating personal experience, sharing hopes and fears.

Incidentally, the playful dimension of these pages is an interesting, non-marginal aspect, which increases in the second period. In the first stage, it contributes to reducing anxiety and fear caused by the earthquake, despite

the fact that in the second, it is related to fundraising initiatives for reconstruction projects. While, in the first period, the photographs depict damage to the land, in the second phase, they are mainly oriented towards recovery.

Protest messages are few and far between, although there is an increase in the second period. Contrary to what we might imagine, the demand for aid supplies plays a marginal role in both pages. Which resources are mediated by SNSs?

SNSs offer two types of information: the first is based on sharing information captured from official sites and sources, the second is produced by those involved in the event. People show their photos of places involved, pass on impressions and personal stories.

Many posts respond to information needs about the incident (danger levels, damage to houses and injuries, the most affected areas, etc.) and share some kind of support. Personal help is expressed in different ways: special materials and resources are provided: tents, materials, accommodation, practical advice, information on the availability of tents, camp beds and blankets.

From the start these pages have a psychological "protection" value, as well as an operational function in terms of emergency organization. Communication between the people involved in the dramatic event is maintained and strengthens the feeling of belonging to a community. The community faces its trauma through this communication (expressions of solidarity and closeness) with the outside world (“We are not alone”).

In summary, we can say that SNSs pages offer practical and psychological resources. The practical pages help to organize aid, keep in touch with friends and family and receive real-time updates. The psychological resources use communication to help contain anxiety over continuing uncertainty and find anchor points for everyday lives which have been devastated. Sharing experiences exerts a protective effect: producing and exchanging images is crucial.

Information posted by individuals is considered more reliable than information received from official sources. SNSs play a role in mediating information provided by official sources. In this sense, the dynamics of "Us and Them" type triggers (criticism of either defects in information sources or an excess of scare stories), demonstrate an attempt to find those responsible (territorial instability, interests, inappropriate construction regulations which were not followed.) The search for responsibility becomes an additional element of reassurance. During the week, there emerged additional types of resources that were projected towards recovery, and preserving the memory of the event. These pages served to host photographs and memorials, testifying to events and archiving collective traumatic experience and helped to attract attention towards the place in order to promote local tourism.

6. Conclusions

In particular, the following aspects can be related to the resources on the Facebook pages which have been analyzed: a) information available in real time, b) sharing as an organizational resource to enable collaboration, d) the ability to aggregate people on a territorial basis.

What is made available to all is not only information, but also an emotional burden that, if managed in isolation, can produce confusion and dismay. So, these pages have a social integration, anxiety control and protective function regarding the risk of identity disintegration.

The community serves as a filter/validation for information from official. information sources which become more reliable when sieved through the direct experience of individuals. These testimonies are functional to building individual coping resources for fear and uncertainty. The narrative dimension of the experience is an important part of such reassurance devices: putting your story together makes it more bearable and reduces anxiety. Narrative has a cognitive function (it is not just the description of events, but the selection of signals allowing you to make some predictions about the evolution of the events themselves). Finally, all storytelling protects, stores and transmits the memory of the events involved and subtracts them from the passing of time.

Sharing different kinds of news appears to be an organizational resource: it can enable collaboration, just as requests for everyone to participate do (Sennett 2012). The pages allow direct expressions of solidarity that call for and organize individual initiatives, activate cooperative actions and allow events involving the local community to be organized.

We can see different forms of help on these Facebook pages: not only outsiders helping those involved, but even working arrangements regarding those receiving the help are activated by internal community resources (Franchi 2012b). The correspondence of the online network with a local community is a discriminating factor: online networks feed into a group which exists in real life, organizes and promotes opportunities for people to meet and takes part in concrete projects.

7. Discussion and further research lines

An initial exploration was conducted into how SNSs can provide elements for dealing with uncertainty relating to particularly risky events, through the ability to produce social capital. SNSs can be considered as new places where the rite of "reintegration of presence" can be played out, using weak ties, such as sharing, filtering (and re-appropriating) elements of official information and personal experience.

This proposed analysis has implications that go beyond the exceptional case considered and invests, more generally, the role of interpersonal communication in a social context. Firstly, it is clear that institutional communication in such exceptional events can be aided by informal exchanges of information by those involved. Since information is filtered subjectively, what is required is a move from mere communication on objective risks, to the management of subjective uncertainty, a process that can be powered by the social capital available to individuals.

With regard to whether SNSs are inherently capable to producing collaborative resources or not, we can assume that network communication only functions if organized around anthropological contexts promoting collaboration: indeed, collaboration is more active in a local community context.

The research opens up further questions. Under what conditions does the density of weak bonds intersecting SNSs become a collaborative resource? Can SNSs open new scenarios in terms of the relationship between public and private spheres?

Finally, if message sharing is liable to strengthen this relationship, can we use SNSs for social communication? To this end, it is worth stressing that in the face of risk, subjectivity and social filters do not represent elements of noise, interference or disturbance to institutional communication, but a resource which should be made use of.

Can we assume that SNSs ought to be used to build more effective dynamic communicative contexts, contributing to annulling the distance between the message transmitter and receiver, inducing a convergence of observation points?

The participation of individuals in producing and sharing information helps to reduce uncertainty. Facebook - the prototype of the new "social language" - can be treated as a device which produces forms of mass reassurance, based on contiguity between information and communication, the cancellation of distance between the message communicator and recipient, the dynamics of identification and sharing induced by peculiar narratives, the subjective and emotional language of networks. It can be said that the narrative device of SNSs tends to reassure people, firstly, because it calls on them to express consent, aggregating homogeneous groups. Secondly, through conversation, mechanisms of protection are enacted. So, we can conclude that sharing gives people the opportunity to replace emotional security with objective uncertainty.

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Discourse Analysis of Mood Structures in Oprah Winfrey Show

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Abstract

This article examines a meaningful part from the interview of Oprah Winfrey with Queen Rania of Jordan. The dialogue is explored from a critical discourse analysis approach (CDA); it focuses on Functional Systematic Linguistics (FSL) and on grammatical approaches (SFG). The transcript of the episode was analyzed to investigate the type and function of the sentences used by Oprah throughout her conversation concerning certainty and uncertainty.

The results suggest that Oprah uses various types of sentences mainly probing questions as expression for her uncertainty. Another interesting way of asking questions is by using emotional questions, expressing uncertainty. Oprah used rhetorical questions revealing her knowledge and certainty.

Keywords*: Discourse Analysis, Mood structure, Oprah Winfrey, Probes, Rhetorical questions.

1. Introduction

The mood structures indicate how speakers and listeners, and writers and readers, use language for expressing themselves in verbal exchanges. This implies that mood structures in speech reflect interactional or interpersonal meanings. In other words, the speaker or writer can choose between declarative, interrogative and imperative sentences and also decide whether to front the subject or the finite according to the "type of exchange going on, the roles of the participants and attitude and judgment of the speaker" (Opara 2005, 51). The choice of each of these moods (i.e. declarative interrogative, imperative) involves further choice to be made, for instance, the choice of representing or not representing the subject. The choice of each of these moods involves further choices to be made, the interrogative mood demands further choice between yes/no questions, wh questions and so on (Opara 2005). Quirk et al. (1985, 179) define questions as "a semantic class, which is mainly used to seek information on a specific

point." This function of information seeking reflexes in complexity of sentences, length of utterances and use of paraphrase. Additionally, indirectedness and amount of talk questions are among strategies that have been registered to reflect the relationships between speakers.

This article examines a meaningful part from the interview of Oprah Winfrey with Queen Rania of Jordan, dated on May 17, 2006. The aim of this article is to investigate the type of sentences used by Oprah throughout her conversation with Queen Rania of Jordan. Addressing the following questions: what kinds of questions there are in the talk show? What kind of functional questions are present in the data, what are their functions with regards to certainty and uncertainty?

2.   Functional categories of questions

Questions in talk shows are generally related to the purpose of interaction, which can be to challenge, comment, accept, reject, or evaluate ideas and opinions. The basis of this classification is according to their function in interaction. The functional categories of questions are based on the questions' functions in interaction, which can be categorized into standard questions and non-standard questions. Non-standard questions are "those, that do not exhibit a primarily answer eliciting or information eliciting functions" (Ilie 1999, 979). Ilie in her books (1999) and (1994) suggests that such questions are expository questions, rhetorical questions and echo questions, which can, however, co-occur or overlap with each other. Echo questions are considered as one, among different types of probes, under the category of probing questions. In this study, only the two types of questions: Probing questions and Rhetorical questions would be tackled, revealing their function of certainty and uncertainty.

Probing Questions help to get under the surface of an initial answer. Having got the interviewee talking, the interviewer can use probing questions to bring out more detail. While the same questions are asked of interviewees, the use of probing questions will vary according to the interviewee's response particularly useful for encouraging people to concentrate on specific points, for clarifying uncertainties, testing the validity of a more general response and seeking evidence. As cited by Hargie (2010, 144), Stewart and Cash (2008) referred to them as secondary questions in that they follow on from the main or primary question. They are ubiquitous, so that in-group discussions some 90 per cent of all questions asked have been shown to be probes (Hawkins and Power 1999, 251). Once a respondent has given an initial answer, it can be explored further by using one of the following types of probe: clarification probes; justification probes; relevance probes; exemplification probes; extension

probes; accuracy probes; restatement probes; echo probes; nonverbal probes; consensuses probes; clearing-house probes (Hargie 2010, 144).

Rhetorical questions are actually not questions at all. The one asking a rhetorical question is not asking for information. Instead, he is using the questions to communicate information. According to Greenbaum and Quirk (1990, 240), a rhetorical question is interrogative in structure but has a force of strong assertion. The speaker does not expect an answer to it or information because the answer is known to the addresser, who has reason to assume that it will be inferred by the addressee. Rhetorical question conveys an evaluation of information assumed to be already known (Ilie 1994, 38). Roberts and Kreuz (1994, 159-163) found that rhetorical questions are used to emphasize a point, to provoke thought, to clarify an issue, to show positive and negative emotion, and to manage discourse.

Turner (2002 111-112) suggests that rhetorical questions intent to indicate different kinds of meaning: an emphasis on the negative or positive aspect of the statement, the certainty and uncertainty of a speaker, the speaker's evaluation of a situation whether favorable or unfavorable etc.

3. Theoretical background

According to Stubbs (1983, 1), discourse is concerned with the organization of language above the sentence or above the clause and therefore larger linguistic units such as conversational exchanges. This implies that, discourse is basically concerned with linguistic structures that are larger than the boundaries of a sentence or utterance (i.e. conversation), and can be presented in spoken form, which have definable communicative function.

Fairclough (1992) sketches a three-dimensional framework for conceiving of and analyzing discourse. The first dimension is discourse-as-text i.e. the linguistic features and organization of concrete instances of discourse. Choices and patterns in vocabulary (e.g. wording, metaphor), grammar (e.g. transitivity, modality), cohesion (e.g. conjunction, schemata), and text structure (e.g. episoding, turn-taking system) should be systematically analyzed. The second dimension is discourse-as-discursive-practice. The third dimension is discourse-as-social-practice. According to Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999, 6), Critical Discourse Analysis brings social science and linguistics, together within a single theoretical and analytical framework, setting up a dialogue between them. The linguistic theory referred to here is Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL). On the other hand, Systemic functional grammar (SFG) sees language as a source of meaning. It is functional because it explores language on how language is used rather than on how language is formed as suggested by Halliday (1985, 6-7) that language is an introduction to functional grammar because the conceptual framework on which it is based is a functional one rather than a

formal one. Systemic functional grammar (SFG) derives from the discussion of systematic functional linguistics (SFL). SFL is defined as a theory about language as social process and an analytical methodology, which permits the detailed and systematic description of language patterns (Eggins 2004, 184).

The mood structure is one of the schemes of functional systemic linguistics adopted in the present study. Mood structure facilitates our ability to account for the various options that are available to the speaker in the use of language (Osisanwo 2003, 31). According to Alo (1998, 55), the sentence, for example, may be used to approve or disapprove, to express doubt (uncertainty), to ask questions or give answers; to greet, instruct, or to command others; to include others within the social group or to exclude others from it and these various uses or functions of the sentence correspond to grammatical categories.

We adopted M.A.K Halliday's (1985) systemic functional linguistics as the theoretical model for the study, in view of its emphasis on the correlation between form and function, focusing on the form and the function of questions. The different type of questions employed by Oprah such as probing including confirming, clarifying, exemplification, nonverbal probes, echo probes, accuracy probes, exploring points and emotional questions as well rhetorical and multiple questions have also been analyzed.

4. Analysis and Result

The analysis of the dialogue explores the mood structure (different type of questions: probing and rhetorical questions).

Oprah used questioning utterances including facts based on different discussed topics. This is influenced by her role in the program as the host whose main job is mediating the audiences and guests as the source of information. Questions asked during the interviews are part of the interaction and therefore cannot be interpreted apart from the analysis of the interview itself and, as Penz (1996) and Ilie (1999) suggest that questions in a context of talk shows are not restricted to interrogative forms only.

In fact Oprah used an interesting way in asking questions where she makes some of the questions in a declarative mood structure which is according to Thompson (2004, 54) is an interesting phenomenon in a real language use. This shows us that to ask a question, Oprah does not use or stick only to interrogative mood structure. She uses another mood, which is declarative, with a certain tone, as a way to ask for certain information from her interlocutor. As for interrogative mood structure, we find that Oprah uses two types of questionings. Those types of questions are probing questions and rhetorical questions. Probing questions are follow-up questions designed to encourage respondents to expend upon initial

responses. The key successful in interviewing is learning how to probe, which Oprah Winfrey as a host is a master in it.

Throughout her interview, Oprah uses some types of probing questions such as confirming, clarifying, exemplification, nonverbal probes, echo probes, accuracy probes and exploring points. By confirming, she uses certain word like *"really?"* to make sure that what she asks is right. Clarifying is used to elicit a clear, more concisely phrased response in situation where the questioner is either confused or uncertain about the content or meaning of the initial responses. Since, an important purpose in this case is to obtain more details; the reason behind naming them as informational probes (Hargie 2010, 144). As noted by Stewart et al. (2005, 167-168), this type of clarifying questions is motivated by the need to understand more clearly.

In other words, when Oprah asks whether she is in a right position or interacting appropriately with her guest as her interlocutor, she comes with utterances like *Do you pray five times a day? Well, I heard that you had once said being queen is not who I am, it's what I do. Is that true?* and also when Oprah asked about the King , *So I heard that your husband, the king, is--he barbecues?* Oprah uses her existing knowledge on the topic and confirms this to the speaker. This is meant to evaluate her understanding and at the same time ask for the right information. Oprah's question acts not only as a way to confirm or deny something. There is also some uncertainty in the question and therefore the respondent interprets it as a need for clarification, as Oprah wants to know if what she heard is true or not.

Throughout watching the video of the episode, it is noticeable that Oprah is able to use language in such a way that leads her interlocutors to give detailed answers. Oprah was able to combine her utterances or questions with certain non-verbal language use like gesture and facial expression. This use of non-verbal probes seems to be her way in strengthening points she would like to ask, confirming or clarifying to her guest as the information source. Included here is the use of appropriate paralanguage to accompany expressions such as *yeah*, with inquisitive nonverbal behaviors like a certain gesture or facial expression, to attract her guests to sharing more detail information of the topic discussed. Friedman (1978, 147–150) suggests that the vast majority of the messages communicated are nonverbal as the estimated amount of information communicated nonverbally ranges between 65% and 95% of the total messages conveyed.

Oprah also used the exemplification probes, which require responds to provide, or specific instances of what they mean by what may, at first, appear to be a rather vague statement (Hargie 2010, 137). Asking for an example to illustrate a general comment often helps to clarify it and provides further insight into the thoughts of the respondent, just like when Oprah asked Queen Rania to give her an example about how she takes away

some of the things from her son while they live in a palace, *like what? like what?*

Accuracy probes check the correctness of what has just been said. They are most useful in situations where either it is absolutely vital that the respondent is certain about the accuracy of response, or where the questioner knows the correct answer and wishes to give the respondent a chance to reflect upon an initial response (Hargie 2010, 137), as it was said in the following lines:

Oprah Winfrey: *How old were you?*
Queen Rania :   *Well, at the time I was 29.*
Oprah Winfrey: *You were 29?*
Queen Rania :   *Uh-huh, I was 29.*

As for echo probes used by Oprah, they are questions that 'echo' the words used by the respondent in the initial response, by repeating these in the follow up probes (Hargie 2010, 146). Echo questions may also convey an attitude of surprise and disbelief with regard to the interlocutor's preceding utterance as well as emphasizing the speaker's challenging attitude (Ilie 1999, 980).

Considering the following echo questions from the data:

Oprah Winfrey: *Ok. Tell me this. So what makes you deliriously happy?*
Queen Rania: *Chocolate.*
Oprah Winfrey: *Chocolate? What's your favorite kind, because I've been on the search for the world's best chocolate.*
Queen Rania: *The darker the better.*
Oprah Winfrey: *The darker the better?*
Queen Rania: *Uh-huh.*
Oprah Winfrey: *And the darker, the better it is for you, too. OK.*

Oprah's echo questions express the host's disbelief and surprise of the fact that Queen Rania prefers dark chocolate and for her 'the darker is better'.

Exploring points are used when Oprah manages to explore the case using her existing knowledge or information upon the topic being discussed. With respect to the use of extension probes that are usually uttered to encourage a respondent to expand upon initial answer by providing further information pertinent to the topic under discussion (Hargie 2010, 145).

As in Oprah utterance like *So what would be--we be most surprised to see or experience with women if we were to come to your country?* Oprah extends her question by exploring her knowledge on her guest's experience. This is done, probably, so that the guest could have a feeling and give more information, which is important for her audiences.

Another interesting feature that is present in the data is the way of asking questions by using emotional questions. Emotional expression in talk shows is used in order to create audience involvement. The very format of the show, which allows the guests to present their personal stories and experiences, is geared towards the expression of emotion. In addition, the hosts often topicalise emotions (Penz 1996, 181). Considering the utterance:

But this is interesting, though, because look, I feel that, you know, coming from my background, being raised poor and poor negro child and all that, to have risen to where I am in life, sometimes I look around at my life and I go, Lordy! You know, and I feel--I do feel that my life is a fantasy. Do you?

In this kind of question, Oprah tries to uncover what she and her guest probably feel about something, as a common feeling they both experienced. Since Oprah was poor and becomes rich and titled as Queen of media as well as Queen Rania who was an ordinary girl, and becomes Queen of Jordan, this change was experienced by both women. Oprah was uncertain about the Queens 'answer and feeling, but she expected that Queen Rania would understand what she feels sometimes like all this does not seem real, when she said *sometimes I look around at my life and I go, Lordy! You know, and I feel--I do feel that my life is a fantasy. Do you?* Apparently, Queen Rania did share the same experience by answering: *It does sometimes feel surreal*. This type of questions can be considered as a case phenomenon that attracts people attention. Oprah expressed her feelings about what her life was, describing her childhood as poor, and become what she is now rich and Queen of media, she feels like this is not real, *sometimes I look around at my life and I go, Lordy! You know, and I feel--I do feel that my life is a fantasy. Do you?*

Another type of questions is used by Oprah called *rhetorical questions,* which are not really questions, but statements given in question formats. It indirectly conveys an assertion or a denial like any statement (Ilie 1999, 978). Rhetorical questions in talk shows are usually used to shape arguments and influence public opinion. This can happen by defending or attacking particular points of view or by reaching a shared agreement, rather than just winning a debate by imposing a particular viewpoint (Ilie 1999, 980).

The rhetorical questions in the following lines reveal a shared agreement, in addition to Oprah's assertion statement. Considering the following lines from the data:

Queen Rania*:*   *Because once she has the education, she can then have control over her income, she can change her life, she can have choices. And I truly believe that education—and when we talk about poverty, in my mind, poverty is a she.*

> *You know, so many women around the world are just condemned to a life...*
Oprah Winfrey*:* *Poverty is a she? Yes.*

Even though, Oprah's rhetorical question is interrogative in structure, it carries a strong assertion. The example above, a declarative question has a strong affirmation and stresses a certain point. This strong affirmation indicates Oprah's certainty. In other words, the addresser does not only know the answer but she is also committed to it, since she excludes all other answers.

Queen Rania*:* *Yeah. So many women around the world are condemned to a life of misery, of hopelessness, of no future. And the most important thing is, you know, when a woman is educated and her life is improved, then she can improve the life of her children.*
Oprah Winfrey*:* *Her entire family. That's why you educate the future, yes.*
Queen Rania*:* *Mothers are mothers all over the world. They want the best for their kids.*
Oprah Winfrey*:* *Mothers are mothers. Kids, yeah.*

Oprah questions above function rhetorically in that it elicit no response at all, but are rather meant to induce or reinforce some kind of awareness in the addressees. Oprah's self –response functions rhetorically in that it reinforces her underlying commitment to the answer that is meant to be inferred by the addressee. According to Ilie (1994, 39), the addresser's actual purpose is to convey this commitment to the specific answer to rhetorical question. This answer is intended to indicate the addresser's commitment to an opinion or an idea about facts supposed to be known by the addressee. The addresser's expectation is for the addressee to recognize and agree with this commitment. Moreover, rhetorical questions in the data are indicated shared agreement as both Oprah and the Queen gained agreement with each other as Oprah agreed on what the Queen said and vice-versa.

Oprah expressed positive attitude towards educating women:

Oprah Winfrey: You know, I believe in educating girls, too. And I love your—I quote you all the time when you say educating a girl, you educate the future.
Queen Rania replied: *Absolutely.*
Then Oprah confirms her agreement by saying *yes.*
Then Queen Rania proceeded: *And one of the most important things that you can do for a girl is to empower her with her education.*

Despite the difference between Queen Rania who is from Jordan and a Muslim, and the host Queen Rania and the audiences which is an Americans, the similarity of culture was established in the value of education, which this latter was a common value reflected in their conversation, as the addresser intends to instill a sense of mutual understanding and trust by pointing to commonly shared values and values (Ilie 1994, 53).

Another positive attitude which reflects the similarity of culture as well and agreement is shown in the following lines:

Queen Rania *:*   *Yeah. So many women around the world are condemned to a life of misery, of hopelessness, of no future. And the most important thing is, you know, when a woman is educated and her life is improved, then she can improve the life of her children.*

Oprah Winfrey*:*   *Her entire family. That's why you educate the future, yes.*

As it is seen both women shared the same education value 'educating the girl'.

Considering the following lines:

Queen Rania: *Mothers are mothers all over the world. They want the best for their kids.*

Oprah Winfrey: *Mothers are mothers. Kids, yeah.*

These lines reflect similarity universality in values, as it is therefore assumed that the basic building blocks of ideologies are sociocultural values, such as equality, justice, truth or efficiency. Typically, such values are not limited to specific groups, but have broader cultural relevance. This means that they may be culturally specific and culturally variable, although some values may be universal (Hofstede, 1980). Oprah and Queen Rania had the same universal values regarding mothers and kids *Mothers are mothers. Kids*.

Multiple questions consist of two or more questions in a sequence. Investigating the conversation suggests that Oprah uses her time asking questions to her guest. Oprah uses various ways of digging more information from among them the multiple questions.

Linke (as cited in Penz 1996, 132) distinguishes two types of multiple questions. The first type addresses the same topic but refers to its different aspects and therefore requires different topical focuses in the answer. An example of this is in the following lines:

Oprah Winfrey: *So you would stop in the middle of the day where you are—wherever you are and have a prayer? So what are the times?*

In the second type, the questions may be related in terms of content but the first question is more open-ended and general and the following question is more restricting. An example of this type of question:

Oprah Winfrey: *That's a wonderful quote. So how do you give a strong value system when you have everything? How do you do that?*

Linke (as cited in Penz 1996, 133) argues that multiple questions are restricting because it makes possible to narrow down the possible range of answers. Therefore, multiple questions are an important tool of topic control, and conversation channeling in talk shows.

However, Penz (1996, 134) notes that the addressee may avoid giving specific information asked in the second question and stress, for example another aspect of the second question or just concentrate on the first part of the question as illustrated in Queen Rania 's answer:

Queen Rania: *You try to take away some of those things.*

This strategy gives a choice of answers to the respondent. Moreover, this type of questions asked by Oprah shows that she is very selective in using words. She is able to explore more details of the issues under discussion.

5. Conclusion

The questions presented in this study are typical to the talk show; however, there are no specific question patterns for interview. In other words, different types of questions are asked during the interview and there is no specific question pattern that is followed.

Different types of questions are used by the host during the interview. Questions in talk show interaction have two functions. The first function of certain type of questions is to express certainty or uncertainty, i.e. rhetorical and emotional questions and clarifying probes. The second function of questions in talk show interviews is to channel the conversation within episode, i.e. the host may confirm information, ask for clarification, specification, invite more collaborative answers from the guest.

Oprah Winfrey revealed, an interesting fact represented by her ability in integrating words and non-verbal language, which made her successful enough in conversing and gaining more information from her guest as

source of information. Oprah's choice of mood and types of questions bring the dialogue into a dynamic interchange during the progress of the dialogue itself.

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Chapter 4
L1 and L2

Measuring something that cannot be grasped. Reflections about Methodology in Elicitation of Spoken Competence

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Abstract

The focus of this article is on reflections about methodology and the methodical choices in empirical research into the role of consciousness in the acquisition of spoken competence in German as second or third foreign language. Seeing language as a complex, dynamic system, I want to show how learning fluctuates. I would like to demonstrate that there is a continuous fluctuation between nonlinearity and stability which depends on particular driving forces. These forces have to be captured by methods whose aim is to increase the certainty of data. These reflections were proved by a case that wants to demonstrate how a multi-methodical approach works in this direction.

Keywords: Spoken competence in German, consciousness in the acquisition of a second or third foreign language, dynamic systems theories, multi-methodical approach

1. Some considerations about methods in foreign language acquisition research

Foreign language learning is a dynamic construct which shares different process levels (Grotjahn 2006, 248), leading to a different degree of certainty in the learning result. This can be calculated on the basis of how accurately the interacting forces have been detected in the course of learning and to what extent one can set the learning outcomes in this relationship.

Nevertheless, some precariousness is always linked to any result of any research, as dynamic systems theories have made increasingly clear in recent years (de Bot et al. 2005, 14 and the following pages; Dörnyei 2009, 99 and the following pages; Ellis 2008; Thelen and Bates 2003, 388). These theories originated in biology and, passing through social and cognitive science research, have entered the field of foreign languages. These approaches could be described by their non-linearity and self-organization

(Dörnyei 2009, 105; van Geert 2008, 188), in which the items constantly find a new balance: "dynamic systems is not a specific theory but a general view on change, change in complex systems, in particular, or, systems consisting of many interacting components, the properties of which can change over the course of time" (van Geert 2008, 183).

Basically, everything that contributes to the development of this system can not be predicted, but creates itself anew in a continuum of static and dynamic moments. Such models were first developed for L1 acquisition, and then attempts were made to use the idea of *dynamic systems* as explanations in foreign language learning (Schmidt 2010, 812 and the following pages). It should be remembered, however, that in contrast to L1, such a complex interaction acquisition is subject to a different dynamic when learning a foreign language, because the frequency of the stimuli, which acts as a major driving force for the processes engendered by interaction, is expected to be smaller. It is also reasonable to suppose that there are not only unconscious associative processes, but also information processing mechanisms that are stored consciously and successively.

But even if these approaches have provided no theory for foreign language research so far and to operationalize them is certainly a serious challenge for empirical research, they challenged the (linear) principle of "cause and effect", which has dominated the development of different models of language research. In their attempt to substantiate the multidimensional nature of human learning theory (Dörnyei 2009, 210), they have shaken up the methodological lines to learning processes that can be increasingly difficult to grasp.

What does this mean for the methodological approach in current empirical language research? As indicated above, foreign language learning processes can not be reduced to unconscious associative processes. They also contain more or less pronounced conscious linear processing and retrieval procedures. Here, however, it is necessary to show how the learning phases are constituted by dynamic and static moments. In the opinion of Dörnyei, in order to grasp these learning dynamics, longitudinal qualitative studies are appropriate (Dörnyei 2009, 81, 109 and the following page; see also Norris and Ortega 2003, 733, 747; Marschollek 2002, 127). Furthermore, more flexible methodological procedures like "hybrid methodology" are needed, too (Riemer 2007, 450).

The focus on conscious learning processes leads to especially intro- and retrospective methods, which also have the potential to demonstrate a clear dependence on conscious and unconscious processes of emotional states. For external monitoring of the learning process, videographies are suitable and should preferably be used in a natural classroom situation (see Mackey 2006), because partly conscious or pre-intentional factors, doubts or/and inhibitions come to light in action, factors to which the learner, as a reflexive subject, has only limited access. While videographies and the

intro- and retrospective methods quite accurately reflect the oscillation between dynamic and static moments, a language assessment is used to check the learning outcome. This assessment is a static moment in the overall learning process, and it needs to be situated in the "right" place in the learning flow and has to be must be considered in connection to other emerging elements.

2. Studies on the acquisition of spoken competence

One complicating factor in the study of orality in foreign language learning consists in the problem of objectivity, mainly because of the complexity of the evaluative process. First, both receptive and productive competences are part of communication. Secondly, there is no other type of assessment where external factors play such an important role as in testing oral foreign language performance.

In addition to appearance, voice, interaction patterns and so on of the examined but also of the examining person, which significantly influence the result, a variety of personal characteristics have to be added. You learn to speak by speaking, so different people speak differently. Some people love to talk while others do not. Some people speak quickly, use more or less non-verbal forms of communication, intentional or not, while others suffer from speech anxiety or, on the contrary, enjoy testing situations. Also, with respect to the specific countries, there are significant differences in how people are accustomed to being tested. In view of these uncertainties, Lennon (2000, 165) suggests that "there probably is no single or monolithic oral skill, but each linguistic performance depends on different variables like situation, interlocutor, communicative goal". That makes it clear that even the static level is not as static as we previously supposed.

The same question exists for the elaboration of data. We require fine-mesh methods for the reprocessing of visual and verbal data. The way in which differentiated pause lengths, volume, stress, acceleration of the rhythm, nonverbal communication, actions and so on are noted in the transcripts makes the difference in the following steps of the data analysis (Heine and Schramm 2007, 181, 189, 225; Göbel 2010; Dittmar 2009). On the other hand, it is true that transcribing recorded speech requires a lot of time and energy. Hence, every researcher has to evaluate and measure the effort in relation to the research that he or she wants to carry out.

3. Research project[1]

The research project I conducted for my *Habilitation* aimed at examining the role of awareness in oral competence in German as a second or third language in adult Italians. It was based on the following presupposition: adult learners employ, partly and with individual differences, conscious and interest-oriented processing and retrieval processes (also in speaking, which is apparently the skill with the most implicit learning), which could be differentiated into "deliberately consciously", in "starting routine" (conscious and associative processes) and in "progressive automation" (reinforced associative processes). For my empirical study I used a model which was inspired by the *Rubicon model* (Heckhausen 1987, 1989) and incorporated the *noticing hypothesis* of Richard W. Schmidt (1990, 1993, 2001 and others) to reveal the interest-focused and conscious parts of the foreign language learning process.

The study was conducted at the Goethe Institute in Palermo from October 2010 to June 2011. Eighteen students (10 in the experimental group – EG - and 8 in the comparison group - CG) attended two B1-level courses and were awarded a "Certificate of German" after an exam. I used an exploratory-interpretive longitudinal study with a qualitative cut and quantifiable measures in the measurement phase. In both groups I used a questionnaire to study students' interest (FB) in learning German, then a language assessment (SSE) for oral speech, which was the primary learning objective as emerged from the survey of the students' needs. The SSE was repeated at the end of the course and six weeks later in the two groups. An expert interview (EI) was also conducted. In the experimental group, a language learning consultancy (LB) took place three times during the course and the students documented it by keeping a learning diary (TB). The experimental group's lessons were video recorded for four months. The transcription of the audio recordings of the language learning consultancy was limited to word- and content-faithful reproduction of standard Italian language. The video recordings were made together with my participant observation of the same learning lessons recorded (see Schwab 2009, 122). The workup of selected units of visual speech data used the basic version of GAT 2 (Selting et al. 2009). The comparison group was not used for the verification of data in this research design, but represents a complementary methodology, thereby increasing the internal validity of the study.

The following case aims at demonstrating how each method interacts, first in terms of the interplay of dynamic and static moments in observable learning behavior (instruction recordings) and unobservable processes

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[1] The complete research is documented in Hoffmann (in press).

(language learning counseling), then in terms of the learning product (language assessment).

Liliana is a self-employed, 30-year-old woman, who has already attended several German courses, both at the Goethe Institute in Palermo and in Germany, where she stayed as part of the Erasmus program. She discovered by chance at one point of her life that she was interested in learning German (according to the information she provided in the questionnaire), and she continues to study German because she is still amused that her Italian friends don't understand her when she speaks German with native speakers of German. However, she does hope to have better opportunities in the job market if she speaks German. She believes that German is learned basically the same way as other languages: a learning method, characterized by imitating and repeating, which benefits the most from the language input given:

> […] certo poi a scuola l'inglese c'erano brani scritti da leggere e da comprendere, però per quanto riguarda me apprendo di più oralmente, ma tutto comune, pure le materie giuridiche, cioè apprendo di più quando mi si racconta qualche cosa, io poi la memorizzo nel momento in cui mi viene raccontata e detta anche una parola utilizzata e mi rimane, più che leggerla. (LB 1/22)

As she explained during the language learning consultancy, her approach to language learning is connected to speaking frequently, which seems tailored to Liliana who has not only a good auditory skill but also a good visual memory, in addition to being very communicative. When asked about the disadvantages of her learning method, she mentioned she has ortografic and grammatical uncertainties that have accompanied her from the very beginning of her study of German, but are also present in her native speech (as evident in the video). She forgets grammar faster than words. Her problems with grammar are identified in the first consultation meeting and formulated as an improvement project. The (only) two entries in her diary between the first and second consultation report that she did only a few grammar exercises because of time problems. What is conspicuous is the contrast she noted between the rapid comprehension of a text, "guessing" the correct answers, and not remembering the gender of nouns and the verb-preposition compounds.

In the second consultation she justified the fact that she did not do what we had agreed upon together by saying she did not have enough time. Liliana clarified that the gaps in her knowledge do not relate to the knowledge of rules (which she knows), as emerges in classroom discussions when, for example, grammar rules are formulated. Hers is a cognitive problem on the declarative level: for example, that "Auto" is neuter or that the participle of "kommen" is not "gekommt":

```
01    K²      das ist jetzt vergangenheit. genau.
02    L       er sagt dass er in unsere wohnung ähm ge (.) kommt habe no
((asking help
she looks in direction of Sandra)) gekommt (.) sei;
03    K       gekommt?
04    B       gekommen.
05    L       gekommen sei.
06    K       okay.
Video 1/Liliana 16
```

Two weeks later, as part of an exercise of the passive form:

```
01    K       und liliana machst du weiter,
02    L       das MIkrofon muss hm ge getest werden.
03    K       wie ist das partizip von testen?
04    C       getestet.
05    L       getestet- ((quietly, while she is nodding and writing))
06    K       ja, getestet.
Video 3a/Liliana 10
```

In neither sequence is the request followed by self-correction. Rather, the participle is suggested by a classmate. It is surprising that it was not Liliana who provided the participle, considering the fact that Liliana had done quite a few basic courses and the verbs have been used frequently. In the following sequence, uncertainties about forming the past tense of "sagen" also come to light:

```
01    K       so jetzt zur frage von liliana.
02    L       ich hab wiederholen?
03    K       kannst du nochmal fragen? genau.
04    L       was passiert, wenn ich habe er äh mit präteritum im hauptsatz
so er s äh weiß                        es ich nicht präteritum er sagt- ((she
looks around in the class))
05    S       er kam.
06    L       nein die frage-
07    K       also die frage, was passiert wenn ich hier (.) im hauptsatz
kein präsens habe,                      sondern vergangenheit.
Video 1/Liliana 19
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² K = teacher of the course, L = Liliana, B = Bettina, C = Claudia, S = Sandra.

When Liliana encounters difficulties, she looks around the class for help. Apparently, she wants to leave the action to others and we can observe her unwillingness to produce the answer herself when reflection is needed. In the first meeting of the language learning consultancy, I talked about this episode and I ask her to tell me if she had found the correct form with the help of her knowledge of rules:

| 19 | H | *[[...]du probierst es, und dann wendest du dabei vielleicht Regeln an, weil du gekommt gesagt hast und dann bei gekommen landest [...]* |
| 20 | L | (Hm, ja, da kommt n hin.) |

LB 2/19-20

Her response, however, indicates that she remembered the participle form as a word, without any reference to rules of grammar. In order for her to incorporate her knowledge of grammar into her speech, she must make a greater effort, because her knowledge gaps are the result of the ways in which she has worked in the past. Liliana is well aware of this:

> In generale, ho capito, sì, no, no, secondo me sono stati utilissimi, anzi mi hanno fatto riflettere sul fatto che effettivamente se voglio utilizzare il tedesco nel mio lavoro futuro dovrei proprio, diciamo, approfondirlo bene, nel senso riuscire a parlarlo in maniera abbastanza corretta con un cliente, perché se mi dovesse capire qualcuno che è tedesco, se, di sicuro ha difficoltà a capirmi se sbaglio tutti i casi, non metto la desinenza giusta o una preposizione giusta, se sbaglio preposizione cambio il senso, quindi ho capito questo sicuramente, che se dovessi vedere in futuro che mi dovesse servire proprio fare il tedesco per lavoro lo approfondirei in maniera molto più seria, tipo non so, fare i lezioni private, forse non andrei al corso, ma per problemi di tempo, e farei una cosa proprio più mirata, anche un mese in Germania, lezioni private, qualcosa di proprio massiccio, più (LB 3/20).

In her list of methods for "more serious learning" Liliana does not mention the fact that she needs to recognize that learning implies effort if she wants to acquire a certain knowledge. She agreed, at least in the language learning consultancy, that there are ways to change her learning habits:

> Questo sì, sì, a voglia. E ho capito che ci sono i metodi per farlo, io pensavo sempre che ho imparato oramai le cose in maniera sbagliata non le posso correggere, cioè nel senso le ho imparate male e non posso correggerle e invece no, si può correggerle, basta pensarci (LB 3/28).

In the case of Liliana, clearly the principle of fun while learning German is overwhelming, despite the fact that she admitted her weakness, as I mentioned above. What Liliana shows is a functional access to language learning, which was already expressed in the first language learning consultation. This approach includes active and attentive classroom participation, which the student feels is comfortable and not exhausting. Liliana relies primarily on implicit storage and retrieval of knowledge, simply by being very attentive in class and taking advantage of the frequency of input and output. The resulting learning flow freezes as soon as she meets grammatical difficulties, as confirmed by the teacher of the course:

> Fehler sind da und werden wohl auch immer und ewig bleiben. Großen Wortschatz, tollen Wortschatz, viele idiomatische Ausdrücke (33.31). Sie ist sehr bereichernd für die Gruppe (33.52), ohne auf diese Druck auszuüben, vielleicht auch, weil sie nicht so perfektionistisch ist. Sie hat Spaß an der Sache, macht Fehler, was aber für sie kein Problem darstellt. (EI)

The language assessment[3], however, reveals another dimension of her learning action:

SSE	communication skills	Task management	correctness	pronunciation	Tot.
1.	2	2	1,5	3	8,5
2.	3,25 (+1,25)	3,25 (+1,25)	2,75 (+1,25)	3	12,25 (+ 3,75)
3.	4 (+0,75/+ 2)	4 (+0,75/+ 2)	3,75 (+1/+2,25)	3	14,75 (+2,5/ +6,25)

Table 1

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[3] The oral language proficiency test is the same of the ZD test at the Goethe Institute. The criteria are: communication skills (content-and addressee-oriented language, vocabulary, realizing speech intentions), task management (participation, use of strategies, fluency), formal correctness (syntax, morphology) and pronunciation and intonation; their assessment is based on a 4-point scale (3-point scale in the pronunciation/ intonation part of the test).

The three tests (see table 1) confirmed a continuous and significant improvement of speaking skills (+6,25). In pronunciation, the student achieved the highest score in the first test; in the other three areas, she makes a significant improvement (+1,25) during the course year, which is also repeated in the post-test with a slight weakening (+0,75 / +0,75 / +1). The most significant increase is noted in formal correctness (+2,25). She is visibly concentrated on making as few mistakes as possible, especially in the third test, but which in no way has a negative effects on fluency. During the test, she focuses her attention particularly on her main difficulties. We can see that she has learned more than what is possible to assess or detect through the methods of my research. It seems that in the classroom, which for her was a place for fun, she usually avoided making an effort which, instead, she made at the moment of testing.

4. Discussion

Foreign language learning consultancy and diaries provide information about the unobservable level of learning events and are supplemented by video testimonies and interviews with experts on the observable action level. These methods offer access to triangulate dynamic moments in the course of her learning experience, whereas static moments are documented in the form of language assessment. In the case of Liliana, consideration of these various methods is very complex, because the results which emerged in the language test can not be confirmed either in the classroom video or in the interview with the expert, and only partially by the introspective data. The different degrees of effort that she put into learning shows the non-linearity of the learning process. Her good performance in the testing situation derived from additional effort, translating into action what she had recognized during the language learning consultancy, perhaps also from partially implicit action operations that can not be measured by the methodology used in the present research project.

5. Conclusion

The case example shows that the results of testing a language level are far from clear and, indeed, do not mark a static moment but must be interpreted as movable elements in the learning flow with the help of other data. This makes it clear that you cannot assign certain methods for dynamic moments and others for static ones.

However, the data also point out that even if the interaction of various factors create a learning flow, it does not resemble an aimless drifting: in foreign language learning, tracks are quite recognizable and also

predictable. The more successful the interplay of methods, the greater significance of data will be. That is the only way to obtain more certainty in the uncertainty of the learning process.

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Vagueness, uncertainty, certainty.
Reflections on native and non-native speakers

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Abstract

The paper aims at discussing the notion of vagueness and the relationship among vagueness, certainty, uncertainty. First of all, we refer to Peirce's definition of vague proposition, the works of Bühler and Wittgenstein on uncertainty and certainty, and De Mauro's definition of vagueness. The 'banks' of vagueness - grammar, epi-linguistic use of words and phrases, possibility to re-define the area of use of the words – are analyzed. The second part of this paper is dedicated to the analysis of the strategies of vagueness on the pragmatic dimension of language and the connection that vagueness sets with uncertainty and certainty. Based on a corpus of spoken Italian as FL, the analysis shows the dominance of the epi-linguistic use.

Keywords: Vagueness, uncertainty, certainty, epi-linguistic use

1. Introduction

Our paper aims at analyzing the relationships between vagueness, uncertainty and certainty. We could define vagueness as a generally semiotic characteristic that also affects natural languages, and uncertainty and certainty as effects of vagueness. Our analysis starts from the beginning of the last century, and aims at reviewing the theoretical debate within the language sciences, in particular in linguistics and semiotics. From this point of view, the analysis shows a certain degree of originality, due to the absence within the language sciences of previous research focused on this subject, as well as of theories of vagueness as a generally semiotic characteristic. The second part of our paper aims at considering the relationship among vagueness, uncertainty and certainty applied to the semiotic processes of meaning production, transmission and negotiation. The analysis focuses on natural language, in particular on spoken interactions between native and non-native Italian speakers, and aims at showing how the balance between vagueness, uncertainty and certainty plays a crucial role in the effectiveness of communication.

2. Vagueness, uncertainty, certainty: a semiotic perspective

Vagueness is a general semiotic characteristic that affects not only natural languages but also other communication systems. In natural languages, vagueness is the condition for 'non-regular creativity', offering the possibility to constantly open up to innovation, precisely because vagueness can violate or even change the 'normal' linguistic rules (Machetti 2006). In this sense, vagueness is also a good condition for the generation and negotiation of meaning and for the effectiveness of communication. In this regard, vagueness is constantly interacting with certainty and uncertainty, as effects of vagueness. Linguistic vagueness makes it impossible to "decide on the basis of formal considerations if an expression, when we know both the referent and the expression, is always applicable or not to the referent" (De Mauro 1982, 99). However, vagueness is a characteristic of linguistic signs, and not merely a semantic characteristic, and involves both the signifier and the signified. Paraphrasing De Mauro (1982), each sign does not set an exact limit on a class of expressions, indicating the terms of a limited class with the same precision, but it is the tool for an allusion, a game that leads us to evaluate an expression in relation to others and to a group of similar meanings. In these circumstances, it is obvious that the vagueness of the linguistic sign - the signifier and the signified, as well as its boundaries - requires the intervention of users/speakers. The objective is to manage uncertainty and avoid the risk of incomprehension. Vagueness can correspond to a permanent availability of innovation, but at the same time, it requires the continuous renewal of agreement between language users/speakers. First of all, the updating begins at the moment of production, reception and negotiation of each signs, in a process of continuous interplay between producers and receivers, indicated as 'tolerance upon the field' (De Mauro 1982). Vagueness is a boundary for uncertainty, but it does not correspond to the possibility to eliminate uncertainty. The result is a balance among vagueness, uncertainty and certainty aimed to guarantee the possibility to use and adapt our language to our various communicative needs.

3. Peirce, Bülher and Wittgenstein on vagueness, uncertainty and certainty

The relationships among vagueness, uncertainty and certainty can be analyzed from a theoretical point of view, and from a pragmatic perspective. The problem seems to emerge from the reflection of three twentieth-century scholars: Peirce, Bülher and Wittgenstein. Linguistic and semiotic studies

very often refer to these scholars, but rarely focus on vagueness. Peirce (1893-1914), in Baldwin's *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology*, defining "vague propositions", aims at highlighting their effects:

> A proposition is vague where there are possible states of things concerning which it is intrinsically uncertain whether, had they been contemplated by the speaker, he would have regarded them as excluded or allowed by the proposition. By intrinsically uncertain we mean not uncertain in consequence of any ignorance of the interpreter, but because the speaker's habits of language were indeterminate; so that one day he would regard the proposition as excluding, another as admitting, those states of things. Yet this must be understood to have reference to what might be deduced from a perfect knowledge of his state of mind; for it is precisely because these questions never did, or did not frequently, present themselves that his habit remained indeterminate (1901, 748).

According to Peirce, there are propositions that refer to borderline phenomena, a state of affairs that the application of a particular proposition can neither affirm nor deny; these propositions are vague or uncertain, not because of speaker's lack of knowledge, little- or mis-informed about a particular state of affairs, but because of the uncertainty inherent in some linguistic habits, destined to remain uncertain. The uncertainty could not be solved even by an increase in information from the real world. Peirce expresses a strictly negative judgment towards these propositions: they are part of everyday language, but that does not mean they can represent an advantage for speakers.

Karl Bülher (1897-1936) proposes an analysis of language focused on functions: in this perspective, vagueness has a fundamental role, because it is linked to pragmatics. In the first part of his theory of language (1934), Bülher claims that any "act of speaking" operates through "linguistic representations" leaving in the boundaries of indeterminacy. Indeterminacy can't be overcome, except in relation to the 'obiective possibilities', as in every linguistic use (Bülher 1983, 118). In Bülher's theory, vagueness is a kind of semantic indeterminacy, and produces a positive uncertainty in natural language. Vagueness management is a positive process aimed at "transferring meaning", rather than an extraordinary event within natural languages:

> Certainly, it's not indifferent if in a text the word "horse" refers to an individual or to the zoological species. On the other hand, you can decide on the basis of morphological rules that this word in Latin or in Indo-European languages possesses the article. The sense that the speaker has in mind or wants to mean can be inferred only if coupled with the context and conditions of the speaking act. What follows from this? That we, as

receptors of a speaking act, can grasp the intention of the producer referring to the context more than through an isolated word (Bülher 1983, 115).

Bülher argues that context and speakers play a fundamental role, serving to define meaning and control uncertainty. In this sense, vagueness is linked to linguistic creativity and can reduce the risk of misunderstandings among speakers, providing the language tools to ensure certainty. If language does not work through representations, associations between words and referents broadly characterized by indeterminate meanings, it would be deprived of what is most surprising and useful. It would miss the amazing ability to adapt to the inexhaustible richness of what is involved in a specific linguistic expression (Bülher 1983, 118). Precisely because languages operate with symbols with many different senses, this fact consequently involves the need of adjustments of their meaning. On the other hand, languages must obtain multiple aids.

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) has never reflected explicitly on vagueness, certainty and uncertainty. However, before the *Philosophische Untersuchungen* (1953), his suggestions on the indeterminacy of meaning and the role of speakers in managing uncertainty deal with this relationship. Many works confirm the accuracy of this reflection:

- *Notebooks* (1914-1916): the need for clear propositions and definitions, their truth and their lies, leave the door open to vagueness. Vague situations and links to vague language are very frequent in the real world. In these situations, vagueness and uncertainty can be reduced, but we can not eliminate them completely.

- *Big Typescript* (1932): In *'Proposition' and 'language' as vanishing concepts*, we can find the first formulation of the concept of 'family resemblances', as propositions that invoke vague concepts, not determined by a set of well-defined properties. Speakers can use them with accuracy, but also with a significant degree of uncertainty, a positive characteristic that can be reduced but not completely eliminated in natural language.

- *Philosophische Grammatik* (1929-34): Wittgenstein reflects on the unknown plurality and diversity linked to the dimension of language use: every day we use different codes, calculations, different language games, and this use amplifies the uncertainty and the lack of uniformity.

- *Blue Book* (1933-1934); *Brown Book* (1934-1935): Wittgenstein aims at showing how the word "game", which emphasizes uncertainty, and its association with "activity" and "form of life" can replace "calculation". "Game" refers to an indefinite and alternative language use, which leads simultaneously to different meanings. The meaning of a rule depends on the way it is used. No rule is definitively the last rule.

- *Philosophische Untersuchungen* (1953): As shown in the following *PU* paragraphs, Wittgenstein reflects on natural language and defines it as a

game for different purposes. Language is described in relation to use, and vagueness is a form of uncertainty that assigns innovation and creativity to linguistic games. The concept of "game" identifies activities with fuzzy boundaries, with similarities and differences.

491. Not "without language we could not communicate with one another" – but for sure: without language we cannot influence other people in such-and-such ways; cannot build roads and machines, etc. And also: without the use of speech and writing people could not communicate.

66. Consider for example the proceedings that we call "games". I mean board-games, card-games, ball-games, Olympic games, and so on. What is common to them all?-Don't say: "there *must* be something common, or they would not be called 'games' " –but *look and see* whether there is anything common to all.-For if you look at them you will not see something that is common to *all,* but similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that. To repeat: don't think, but look! [...] As the result of this examination is: we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing.

4. Vagueness, uncertainty, certainty: a question of balance

The provision of a theoretical framework enables us to consider vagueness, certainty and uncertainty as endemic characteristics of natural language. We can't eliminate them, and indeed if we did we would be left with a poverty of language, the limitations of semantics, and the difficulty of adapting to the varied and new communicative needs of users/speakers. Vagueness is not synonymous with absolute uncertainty, which would equate with the collapse of communication. Theoretically, each language user could speak or write using new, free, unusual words and syntactic rules, but the result would be incommunicability. Fortunately, natural language is a vague and fuzzy system which "rules itself" (Zadeh 1969), and provides tools to balance the risks of "schizophasia" (incomprehensible and meaningless words, phrases and expressions, De Mauro, Fortuna 1995, 506). These tools are:
- Grammar: we can anchor the meaning of words and phrases to the here and now, but also to another time and another place;
- Epi-linguistic use of words and propositions (Petrilli 2009): we can say words and propositions, quote them and discuss their meaning, questioning and reflecting, explaining and asking for explanations;
- Possibility to use a language to define the areas of use of a word.

4. Results

In this part, our aim is to analyze some strategies that vagueness triggers in spoken interaction between native and non-native speakers. These strategies affect the outcome of communication, which is heavily dependent on the implementation of the balancing tools. The examples we discuss here are drawn from a corpus of spoken Italian as FL – from A1 to C2 level (Barni and Gallina 2008). The spoken interactions on which we have focused our attention mainly belong to the levels of autonomy, produced by speakers that De Mauro (1982) would define as "informed". These speakers know and apply the rules and structures of the Italian language independently, like a native speaker.

First of all, the analysis shows the importance of epi-linguistic use as a control strategy in the relationship among vagueness, certainty and uncertainty. Epi-linguistic use contributes to determining meaning and improving effectiveness of communication. In the following sequence, the examiner invites the student to provide an explanation. In doing so, he re-formulates the question *che cosa è successo?* (what happened?). The new question aims at reducing uncertainty and improve the effectiveness of the communication.

(1)
C: *buongiorno sono* XY
    good morning I'm XY
E: *posso aiutarla?*
    May I help you?
C: *io ho un appuntamento*
    I have an appointment)
E: *sì lei aveva un appuntamento con me alle sei alle diciotto e non è ancora in studio che cosa è successo?*
    I know, you had an appointment with me at 6, at 6 p.m. and you are not in my office, what happened?
C: ehm
E: eh ma signora mi telefona alle diciotto e venti per dirmi che alle diciotto non poteva venire?
    You call me at 6.20 to tell me that you could not come at 6 o'clock?
C: [silenzio][silence]
E: cosa è successo di così grave
    what happened so serious?
C: ehm [silenzio]
E: cos'è successo di così grave cioè come mai non è venuta non mi ha avvisato prima?
    what happened so serious, I mean why didn't you come before didn't you inform me before?

C: perché io ho avuto un impegna impegno e <?> università
because I had something to do at the … university
E: ho capito e allora devo darle devo trovarle un altro appuntamento?
I understand and so I have to find another day for a new appointment?
C: *eh sì io vorrei un'altro appuntamento per domani se possibile*
Oh yes, I wish another appointment for tomorrow .. if it's possible

The same use appears in the following sequence, where the examiner tries to reduce the uncertainty associated with the use of the adjectives "light" and "sweet" by prompting the candidate to clarify the meaning of these adjectives. The result is the use of a new adjective ("artistic"), as a strategy of vagueness management that improves certainty .

(2)
C: *eeh vorrei_ avere delle informazioni su_ corsi di ginnastica ginnastica della vostra palestra*
I'd like to have some informations about gymnastic classes at you gym
E: *sì*
yes
C: *vorrei sapere che_ tipi di ginnastica avete fra_ ge<> leggera eeh dolce*
I'd like to know what kinds of gymnastic do you offer … light … gentle
E: *leggera dolce?*
light … gentle?
C: *leggera dolce sì artistica*
light gentle yes artistic
E: *sì abbiamo diversi corsi eeh ginnastica # artistica soprattutto per_ le i bambini*
Oh yes, we offer many different gymnastic courses artistic in particular for children
C: *ah avete anche dei corsi per i bambini bene?*
Do you offer also courses for children right?
E: *sì*
yes

As a vagueness control strategy, the explicit request of an explanation is evident in more than one sequence, as in

(3)
C: *bene tutto questo è cominciato quando avevo dodici anni andavo alla scuola al settimo anno della scuola e bene facevano dei corsi della lingua e ho deciso di di fare qualcuno perché bene i genitori dei miei*

nonni erano italiani e perciò ho pensato che poteva darsi che al futuro eeh dovessi eeh potessi ricercare qualcosa riguardo a loro eeh
well all has started when I was twelve I used to go to school in the seventh grade of the school and well language courses were organized at school and I decided to attend one of it well because the parents of my grandparents were Italian and so I thought that it could be possible that in the future eeh I had to eeh I could investigate something about them

E: *ricercare in che senso?*
to investigate in which sense?

C: *ricercare riguardo al passato diciamo della mia famiglia eeh anche perché volevo fare la cittadinanza italiana e perciò avevo bisogno di di tutta questa informazione eeh ed era più facile de trovarmela tutta in italiano quindi bene ho cominciato a studiare la lingua e anche per eeh per ragioni di studio perché al futuro mi piacerebbe studiare in un'università italiana*
to investigate about the past of my family eeh because I wanted to do Italian citizenship and therefore I needed all of this information and it was easier eeh to find all in Italian so well I began to study the language and also eeh for study because in the future I would like to study in an Italian university

and in

(4)

C: *bene quest'anno per&esempio ho avuto l'opportunità di visitare l'Italia e ho conosciuto molta gente italiana soprattutto i ragazzi e le ragazze e abbiamo fatto amicizia eeh mi hanno sembrato troppo amichevoli e anche socievoli*
well this year for example I had the opportunity to visit Italy and I met a lot of people especially Italian boys and girls and we became friends eeh I guess that they are very friendly and social

E: *troppo?*
too much?

C: *sì*
yes

E: *troppo?*
too much?

C. *molto socievoli e amichevoli e bene ancora ci sentiamo via e-mail e tutti i giorni ricevo qualche notizia di Chiara o di Giorgia e bene e*
very friendly ad social and well we keep in touch by e-mail even now and every day I get some news from Chiara or Giorgia and well and

The analysis shows that epi-linguistic use aims at balancing vagueness and uncertainty not only in spoken interaction but also within monologue (examiner and student monologue). In sequence 5., the examiner tries to reduce the vagueness and uncertainty of the student's speech using reformulation to determine the meaning:

(5)
C: *io sono laureata in musica eeh sono un'insegnante di musica quindi vorrei fare questo lavoro ma siccome qui in Italia non posso farlo qui faccio un altro lavoro che non mi non mi interessa troppo però dopo che ritorniamo in Ungheria vorrei provare eeh l'insegnamento di musica eeh prima di venire in Italia non ho mai fatto questo lavoro quindi non so com'è ma lavorare*
I have a degree in Music eeh I'm a teacher of music so I want to work in this field but in Italy I can't do this work and I do another work that I don't care too much when we go back to the Ungary I want to try eeh to teach music eeh before my arrival to Italy I never did this work so I don't know how it is but to work
E: *quale lavoro non hai fatto l'insegnamento dici?*
what kind of work have you never done teaching you say?
C: *sì*
yes
E: *quindi non sai dire se non sei sicura se ti piacerebbe farlo per tutta la vita oppure*
and so you can't say if you like to do this work for all the life or
C: *sì perché non non ho ancora l'esperienza però vorrei provarlo mi piacerebbe questo lavoro anche perché in scuola di musica si lavora nel pomeriggio così la mattina ho tempo*
yes because I don't don't have any experience but I'd like to try I'd like this job also because at the music school you work in the afternoon so in the morning you have free time
E: *avresti la possibilità di fare altro di fare qualche altra cosa eeh ma ritieni che un posto fisso cioè quindi fare un lavoro per tutta la vita può essere noioso perché ripetitivo perché quindi sarebbe meglio poter cambiare più volte nella vita tipo di lavoro cosa ne pensi di questo?*
Do you have the possibility to do another job another thing eeh but you think that a regular position I mean do the same job all the life could be boring because repetitive because it would be better to change job many times in your life what do you think?

Frequently, epi-linguistic use interacts with other strategies, first and foremost the re-statement of the uses of a given word and/or proposition, as in the sequences 6 and 7:

(6)
C: *mi piacerebbe andare a_ ai Caraibi mi piacerebbe andare ad una isola colonizzata dai francesi per&esempio la Martinique eeh perché eeh le isole dei Caraibi sono troppo belle e ci sono eeh molte attività relazionata al mare come giro in nave tuffo libero e poi palestra nell'acqua possiamo anche eeh*
I'd like to go to the Caribbean I'd like to go to an island from French colonization for example Martinique eeh because eeh Caribbean islands are too nice and there are many activities related to the see as ship around free swim and after gym into the water we can also eeh

(7)
E: *scusami cosa intendi per palestra nell'acqua?*
sorry, what do you mean with gym into the water?
C: *palestra nell'acqua? allenamento fisico nell'acqua*
gym into the water? Training in the water
E: *ah ginnastica*
ah gymnastic
C: *ginnastica*
gymnastic
E: *ho capito sì*
I understand yes

5. Conclusion

Data confirm the strong relationship among vagueness, uncertainty, certainty. This relationship forces the speakers to continuous negotiation of meanings, and seems to depend on three balance strategies. These strategies are normal features of spoken and written communication, entirely managed by language users/speakers, regardless of their language proficiency. The relationship among vagueness, uncertainty, certainty is not dependent on a particular context or a particular type of text, but every context and text call for the need to manage all the three language features.

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Linguistic Relativity and Universality
of Zero Personal Pronouns
in *Rakugo* Translation

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Abstract

According to linguistic relativity, differences in perspectives on reality often manifest themselves as specific features in those communities' language use. A lack of pronouns or zero-pronouns in Japanese discourse was revealed while translating *rakugo*, the traditional Japanese comedy. On a cognitive level, zero pronouns raise the level of uncertainty, because they rely on epistemicity, i.e., the ability to understand things on the part of the interlocutors. This study investigates the meanings of zero personal pronouns in *rakugo* on linguistic relativity hypothesis, combined with Hall's notion of high-context and low-context societies. Furthermore, how zero personal pronouns and the Japanese sense of self are related in terms of *seken* (life-world) is discussed within the framework of linguistic relativity and universality.

Keywords: Linguistic relativity, *rakugo* translation, zero personal pronouns, low-context society, high-context society, *seken* (life-world), Japanese sense of self

1. Introduction

There exists much diversity in linguistic forms in human societies and, translation is necessary in order to share literary works, as well as scientific works, among different language users. During the process of translating culturally-colored discourse, some very important features of a given society may well be revealed. In this study, a script of *rakugo,* which is the traditional Japanese performance art of telling comic stories, is used as the data for analysis because *rakugo* can be regarded as a genre of natural, spoken Japanese discourse.

This study investigates the difficulties caused by differences in the languages and cultures of Japanese and English, in accordance with linguistic relativity, using material from a *rakugo* script. In fact, Katz (as

cited in Wardy 2006) suggests that linguistic relativity threatens universal inter-translatability. In this study, focusing on zero personal pronouns, the notion of linguistic relativity is examined, closely related to the Japanese sense of self and the Japanese worldview that includes *seken* (life-world). Zero pronouns in Japanese discourse have been investigated before; however, they have mainly been analysed using centering theory (e.g., Nakagawa 1992; Okuyama and Tamura 1996), with no consideration of linguistic relativity. According to linguistic relativity (e.g., Humboldt 1999; Sapir 1921/2004), different perspectives on reality often manifest themselves as specific features of language use in speech communities, and some empirical studies for examing linguistic relativity have been conducted, starting with Humboldt's original research (1999) on the Kawi language. These differences cause complications in translation because some words are specific to a particular language and cannot be translated literally. Translating a culturally-colored script may necessitate the in-depth examination of given cultures or worldviews, including levels of 'certainty' and 'uncertainty'.

Therefore, the research questions are posited as follows: (1) Under what circumstances do zero first-person pronouns appear in Japanese? (2) Under what circumstances do zero second-person pronouns appear in Japanese? And (3) in what way can zero-person pronouns and the Japanese sense of self be related? Does linguistic relativity explain this relationship?

2. Methodology

2.1 Data

The roots of *rakugo* date back to the end of the 17th century. *Rakugo* developed from short tales that were told among common people. The style of performance of *rakugo* was established in the late 18th century and has not changed since then. When some of the early artists discovered that they could actually make a living as professional story tellers, they would rent a large room (*yose*) in a house and sit on a small mattress to perform *rakugo*. *Rakugo* performers are called *rakugo-ka* (Oshima 2007). *Rakugo* consists of the conversations between the characters in the story, and its performers, *rakugo-ka*, have to be able to play the role of different characters by changing their voices, facial expressions and mannerisms (Oshima 1992).

2.1.1 The Script Writer: Sanyuutei-Kyoraku

Sannyuutei-Kyoraku (Kyoraku, hereafter) started to perform *rakugo* with English subtitles in 1998. Kyoraku became a *rakugo* performer in 1988 and was promoted to being a *shinkata*, a senior position where one is allowed to have apprentices, in 1992. He wrote several *rakugo* scripts focusing on

social issues related to aging, health problems, cultural sensitivities and the environment, and has been awarded several prizes. He has also appeared in newspapers because of his involvement in social welfare activities. The data used in this study comes from the latest script he has written and it was performed in several institutions, including Harvard University, in 2006.

2.1.2 The Text
"*Himaraya no hokutoshichisei*: Septentrion over the Himalayas" is the title of the *rakugo* script used in this study. In this story, the main character is a younger sister who was originally happy-go-lucky and did not like to "get her hands dirty", but who changed her outlook on life through her experiences with some warm-hearted people living at the foot of the Himalayan Mountains. In the interest of space, the only lines of the text that are discussed in this study are shown, but the full text with an English translation is available on request.

3. Theoretical background

3.1 Linguistic Relativity

Based on Humboldt's argument of internal speech and language that engenders thought (e.g., Humbollt 1999), Sapir and Whorf established the hypothesis of linguistic relativity (Lucy 1997). Although the linguistic relativity hypothesis (Sapir 1921/2004; Whorf 1956) has failed to acquire sufficient support, as Davies (1998) has pointed out, both theoretical (Slobin 1996, 2003; Lucy 1996) and empirical (Davies 1998; Ozgen and Davies 2002; Wassmann and Dasen 1998; Boronditsky 2001; January and Kako 2007), research has been conducted in order to determine the degree to which linguistic relativity may apply. As Pinker (1995/2007) has stated, the notion of language has gained people's attention, and the relationships between language, thought, culture, and reality have been of great interest. Thus, a brief overview of this hypothesis should be provided.

Language vs. culture. Wardy (2006) stated that cultural differences produce incommensurable conceptual frameworks, because language affects how people perceive their reality and language coerces thought. Lucy (1992) explained that language is a reflection of culture, citing Boas, the predecessor of Sapir, and argued for the psychic unity of mankind and for a notion of distinct cultures. Boas' position is reflected in the following three robust propositions: (1) languages classify experience, (2) different languages classify experience differently, and (3) linguistic phenomena are unconscious in character, apparently because of their highly automatic production. Boas' essential view is that linguistic classifications reflect, but

do not dictate thought. Lucy (1997) also argued that language could be a dependent variable of thought.

Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. Sapir (1921/2004) postulated that language, race, and culture are not necessarily correlated, but there must be some relation between language and culture and between language and some intangible aspect of race, and that language and our thoughts are inextricably interwoven. Sapir also argued that human beings do not live alone in the objective world, nor do they live alone in the world of social activity as it is ordinarily understood. Rather, they are very much at the mercy of the particular language that has become the medium of expression for their society (Spier, Hallowell, & Newman 1941). In fact, the "real world" is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. Sapir elaborates on Boas' arguments and claims we anticipate or read experience in terms of language categories which, by virtue of their abstraction and elaboration in the linguistic process, no longer correspond to experience in a direct way. According to Handler (1986), Sapir saw a dialectical interaction of creative personalities and cultural forms, and of expression and tradition, and added that the human mind craves relationships.

Whorf (1956) extended Sapir's ideas, based on the work he carried out with American Indian languages. He suggests that the relationship between language and culture is not simply based on predisposition but is a deterministic one. In his view, the world is viewed differently by speakers of different languages because their languages differ structurally (Wardhaugh 1986). In Whorf's view, therefore, language determines how we perceive and organize the world around us. Whorf argued that language shapes culture and reflects the individual actions of people. Therefore, language shapes a person's view and influences thoughts. People who speak different languages may perceive reality and think differently, because categories and distinctions encoded in one language are not necessarily available in another.

Linguistic determinism vs. linguistic relativity. Boas, Sapir, and Whorf agree that language is classificatory, isolating, and organizing elements of experience. Their theory posits that language determines the way people perceive the world and think, something that is called linguistic determinism. In the softer version, their theory has been interpreted as saying that people who speak different languages perceive reality and think differently, because categories and distinctions encoded in one language are not necessarily available in another, which is so-called linguistic relativity. Indeed, this deterministic view of language has been criticized; however, their theory reflects the nature of language and explains the difficulties that translation work entails.

Bloomfield (1923), on the other hand, suggested that we should study people's habits of language—the way that people talk—without bothering about the mental processes that we may conceive of as underlying or accompanying these habits. Bloomfield adds that Sapir's presentation deals with the actualities of language rather than with any hypothetical, mental phenomena.

Empirical studies. Whorf (1956) argued that language manifests basic features that impact on human thought. This is based on research into the Hopi language, for example, into how it treats time. After long, careful study and analysis, the Hopi language is seen to contain no words, grammatical forms, constructions, or expressions that refer directly to what we call "time", or to the "past", "present", or "future", or to concepts of being "enduring" or "lasting". Therefore, Whorf argues, it would be difficult for a Hopi and an English-speaking physicist to understand each other's thinking about time (Carroll, as cited in Spier, Hallowell & Newman, 1941).

As another example, a case study of conditionals by Wardy (2006) supports Whorfian linguistic relativity. Wardy (2006) concluded that abstract thought which springs from hypothetical reasoning does not come easily to Chinese people because of the lack of conditionals in the Chinese language.

A more recent study about conceptions of time by Boronditsky (2001) conducted experiments to examine the differences between Mandarin and English speakers, with results that supported linguistic relativity hypothesis. However, her research was refuted by January and Kako's (2007) study, which replicated Boroditsky's (2001) study. The discrepancy in their studies is due to the fact that Borodisky's participants were native speakers of English and Mandarin while January and Kako's were native speakers of English and bilingual speakers of Mandarin.

In the area of color recognition, Davies (1998) and Ozgen and Davies (2002) conducted a cross-cultural investigation on language and color perception and found that some differences exist in color perception associated with differences in language. Earlier on, Lucy and Shweder (1979) had presented Whorf's contribution in their study on color memory. These studies support linguistic relativity with some universalism.

On the other hand, Lowie (1923) showed how the human mind has arrived at the same form of expression in two historically unconnected regions, using the example of some noteworthy parallels between Taklma and Greek regarding similar morphologies. In the same way, Tatara and Yagihashi (2007) argued that human recognition of physicality is universal and is beyond differences in language. Once it has been represented in the form of language, cultural factors then start to intervene. It is, therefore, effective to compare cultural constituents as well as linguistic homology when analyzing humans. By the same token, Pinker (1995/2007) has taken a

position opposing the notion that language shapes our worldview; instead, our mind shapes and constructs our language.

3.2 High-Context vs. Low-Context

Hall (1976) dichotomized societies based on the notion of high-context and low-context. As an example, in a high-context society, such as Japan, very little is said to be coded in language messages because most of the information is believed to be already known, whilst in a low-context society, such as the USA, many more things may have to be explicitly expressed than would be the case in Japanese. If presuming how much needs to be uttered is also regarded as a linguistic activity, this concept can be interpreted as a part of a wider framework of linguistic relativity. Based on this, the process of translating works between Japanese and English would require adjustment.

3.3 Seken

Abe (2001) established the notion of *seken* as a concept of life-world similar to that postulated by Husserl. Abe (2001) warned that the notion of individuals in Japan is clearly different from that in Western contexts, because individuals in Japan need to be viewed in the framework of *seken* and, indeed, such individuals cannot be liberated from *seken*. His definition of *seken* focuses on the dynamism among the members of a community, starting with family members, and he adds that each individual has a different *seken*. He also explains that *seken* is not produced, but is simply existent wherever you are. Furthermore, he elaborates that in modern societies we are expected to live where time and space are quantitative, but in reality we should be aware that our worlds are not so precisely quantitative, but are subjective. Therefore, we need to admit the fact that we live in *seken*, which is a given.

Based on Abe (2001), Sato (2001/2007) elaborated the notion of *seken* using some criminal cases in order to indicate how seriously and powerfully *seken* has been regarded even in judicial matters. Furthering Abe's account of *seken*, he labels *seken* as subjectivity in phenomenology. Sato (2001/2007) also explicated the gravity of *seken* for Japanese people based on the fact that even morals and ethics are constructed within the framework of *seken*. He suggests that the Japanese do not have a sense of self without the notion of *seken* because *seken* is embedded within each individual, which is different from the case of westerners. As a result, he warns that the more individualistic Japanese try to become, the more oppressive they become.

3.4 Japanese Sense of Self

Lebra (2004) clarified how the Japanese construct their sense of self, using opposition logic and contingency logic. Following opposition logic, in the process of constructing a Western sense of self, subject and object are sharply differentiated based on the principle of the subject-object dichotomy. Citing the Geertz definition of the Western self, she explicates that the Western self is externally bounded in opposition to the other or non-self world, and is internally integrated into a whole with one's own center. In contrast to opposition logic, Libra proposes contingency logic, where the subject and object share the same space. In contingency logic, the way of looking at the subject and object, or the self and other, there is no self without the other, an operation that Lebra (2004) named "binding". She further discusses the nature of this contingency logic in constructing the sense of self among the Japanese, as is revealed in their language where zero personal pronouns are ubiquitous.

4. Results

4.1 First-Person Pronouns

In order to answer research question (1), the portions that include first-person pronouns were taken from the script. In the original Japanese script, there are 28 cases (51.8%) of zero first-person pronouns and 26 cases (48.2%) with explicit first-person pronouns, out of a total of 54 cases. This means that the first-person pronouns are omitted in more than half the cases in the given script.

The following is a list of the portions without first-person pronouns:

(1)   *Nanika norimononi nosetekureruno?*
        Can <u>I</u> take a ride in some vehicle?
(2)   *Nande konnanoni nonnnakya ikenainoyo.*
        Why do <u>I</u> have to do such a thing?
(3)   *Zutto tanoshimini shitetan desu.*
        <u>We</u> have looked forward to it for a long time.
(4)   *Konna yuremakuttennno yadaa.*
        <u>I</u> do not want to ride on such a jerking vehicle.
(5)   *Norikaerannakya.*
        <u>I</u> have to change the vehicle.
(6)   *Soreja sou shiyou kashira.*
        In that case, let <u>me</u> do so.
(7)   *Zutto ofutariga irrassharunowo tanoshimini shiteorimashita.*
        <u>We</u> looked forward to seeing both of you.

(8)   *Hai, wakarimashita.*
      OK, <u>I</u> understand.
(9)   *Nee, onaka cho suichatta.*
      Hey, <u>I</u> am super hungry.
(10) *Sonnani isoganakutemo ii to omounn desukeredomo.*
      <u>I</u> don't think you have to hurry so much.
(11) *Anou, gyuufun dato omoimasu.*
      Well, <u>I</u> think they are cowpats.
(12) *Negaigoto kakemakuritte yatsu…*
      <u>I</u> make lots of wishes.
(13) *Un ima negaigoto shichatta.*
      Yeah, now <u>I</u> have made my wishes.
(14) *Hoshiimono atte.*
      <u>I</u> wish to have something.
(15) *Kore kiniitte moraeruka douka wakaranain desukedo.*
      <u>I</u> do not know if you like it or not, but...
(16) *Dakara ne, imanara ne, nandemo katteagerarunnda.*
      So, <u>I</u> can buy you anything.
(17) *Ki wo kittara, kanarazu, motonoyouni chiisana ki wo ueteiku.*
      If <u>we</u> cut a tree, <u>we</u> should plant a seeding.
(18) *Soshite sore wo sodatete iku.*
      Then, <u>we</u> should grow them.
(19) *Haitte ii?*
      May <u>I</u> come in?
(20) *Nobotte kite tsukare chatta.*
      After climbing up, <u>I</u> am tired.
(21) *Dakara saa, ammari otoosan tokatte yoku wakannnai dayo ne.*
      So <u>I</u> don't know what fathers are.
(22) *Mama to oneechan to zutto sanninde kurashite kitajan.*
      Because <u>I</u> have lived with mum and my sister.
(23) *Dakarasaa omoidette ammari nainda yone.*
      So, <u>I</u> do not have lots of memories.
(24) *Demo papaniwa kaoga kaoga omoidasenain daa.*
      But <u>I</u> don't recall my Dad's face.
(25) *Itsumo aitakkutte saa.*
      <u>I</u> do want to see him always.
(26) *Aitakutte shouganai noni saa.*
      <u>I</u> really wish to see him but…
(27) *Aitainoni sa, shinjimae nante icchaunnda.*
      <u>I</u> want to see him but <u>I</u> say, "you should die".
(28) *Choo omoun dakedo ningen igai nomono mo aisanakya ne.*
      <u>I</u> really think we should also love other things than humans.

In all the cases above, the English translation includes the first-person pronouns (underlined). In some cases, the first-person pronouns can be added in Japanese without changing the meaning in a drastic way (3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 12, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27), though the nuance may change a little. By adding the first-person pronouns, these portions are more assertive or emphatic. On the other hand, in other cases (1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 28), adding explicit first-person pronouns may make the utterance strange.

The following list shows the portions with explicit first-person pronouns:

(1)   *Atashisaa, sakkikara fushigini omottetan dakedo.*
        <u>I</u> had wondered a while ago.
(2)   *Moo, atashi sa*
        Well, <u>I</u>
(3)   *Moo atashi,*
        <u>I</u>
(4)   *Nee, oneechan atashi yadaa moo konnanotte*
        Hey, sis, <u>I</u> do not like this.
(5)   *Watashitachi wa zuibun omachi shite itandesu.*
        <u>We</u> waited long for you.
(6)   *Watashi, gakkaiga arukara ne.*
        <u>I</u> will have to attend the conference.
(7)   *Atashi, mou kaeru*
        <u>I</u> want to go back.
(8)   *Atashi kaerumon ne.*
        <u>I</u> will go back.
(9)   *Yappari kaeru, Atashii.*
        Yes, <u>I</u> will go back.
(10)   *Boku wa izen nihonni, kankyo no benkyo woshini sannen hodo ryugaku shitakotog arundesuga.*
        <u>I</u> studied ecology in Japan for three years.
(11)   *Boku wa gakkouni ittekuru yo.*
        <u>I</u> will go to school.
(12)   *Atashi konnani jagaimo gane oishiitte shiranakatta wa.*
        <u>I</u> did not know potatoes are so delicious.
(13)   *Boku mo ima kitatokoro desu.*
        <u>I</u> myself came here just now.
(14)   *Iyaa atashi saa kono sougen kono nohara konoaida ne maa-chan to isshoni kita noyo.*
        Well, <u>I</u> came to this plain, this field, with Maya, the other day.
(15)   *Atashi daisuki nano.*
        <u>I</u> love this.
(16)   *Boku mo desu yo.*
        <u>I</u> love this, too.

(17) *Watashi, docchikato iuto antano ho akkere kaette, hikkuri kaecchau youna kiga surukedo.*
      I rather feel you will be bowled over.

(18) *Atashi imamade konnani kokorono komotta presidentte morattano hajimete nanda.*
      I have never had such a heartfelt present.

(19) *Atashi sa konoaida chone baitode tammari okane moracchattan dayoo.*
      I got lots of money for my part-time job the other day.

(20) *Atashi mo sa kawarini kanika katteageru yo.*
      I can buy you something in return for it.

(21) *Boku no hoshii mono?*
      What do I want?

(22) *Boku no hoshiimono wa ne.*
      What I want to have is…

(23) *Chiisai kedo watashi dairuki nanda.*
      It is small, but I love it.

(24) *Watashitachi oneechan to mou ato mikkagoni kaeranakucha ikenaijan.*
      We will have to be back in three days, so...

(25) *Boku ga deattekita ookuno nihonjinno nakade ichiban shojikide soshite kokorono utsukushii hito desu.*
      You have the most honest and the most beautiful heart that I have ever met.

(26) *Watashi, kokonisa nokosashite moraouto omounnda.*
      I decided to stay here.

In the above list, all the utterances include first person-pronouns, but 13 (their numbers in bold face: 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23), which is 50% of the 26 cases, do not have to have the first-person pronouns, meaning the utterances are possible without them. These seem to have the pronouns in order to highlight the first-person nature of the utterances. On the other hand, the first-person pronouns are mandatory in the rest. In order to clearly differentiate among the cases where the first-person pronouns are mandatory, or are not necessary, or cannot be replaced, further examination will be necessary.

4.2 Second-Person Pronouns

In order to answer research question (2), all the portions with second-person pronouns are listed below. There are 32 cases altogether and 18 cases (56.3%) have zero second-person pronouns while 14 cases (43.7%) have uttered second-person pronouns.
    The following is the list of portions without second-person pronouns:

(1)   *Nepal, tte gozonji desuka.*
       Do <u>you</u> know where Nepal is?
(2)   *Mou, norikaerareru kara.*
       Now <u>you</u> can change the vehicle.
(3)   *Sonnani nagakuwa noranaikara daijoubu yo.*
       <u>You</u> will be fine as you don't have to take a ride for long.
(4)   *Hee, donna mono kauno.*
       Oh, what kind of thing will <u>you</u> buy?
(5)   *Kuichigirarechau wa yo.*
       <u>You</u> will be eaten.
(6)   *Are, Nepal no hito nandesho. Hee, nihongo shabererunnda.*
       Oh, <u>you</u> are a Nepalese, are <u>you</u>? Oh, <u>you</u> can speak Japanese.
(7)   *Korette mizutte iwanai.*
       <u>You</u> don't call this water.
(8)   *Oi, maya, maya, yokosan wo sorosoro okoshiteageta houga iinnjanai kana.*
       Hey, Maya, Maya. <u>You</u> should wake up Yoko.
(9)   *Oreini [niramekko] shitekurette?*
       As a thank-you, do <u>you</u> want me to play a staring game?
(10)   *Yooku warattekureru wanee.*
       <u>You</u> laugh a lot, don't <u>you</u>?
(11)   *Isshoni ikagadesuka.*
       Why don't <u>you</u> have them?
(12)   *Matta?*
       Have <u>you</u> waited long?
(13)   *Nanika negaigoto shitanndesuka?*
       Did <u>you</u> make some wishes?
(14)   *Kore kiniitte moraeruka douka wakaranainn desukedo.*
       I don't know if <u>you</u> like it or not, but.
(15)   *Moratte moraemasuka*
       Do <u>you</u> kindly receive it?
(16)   *Nanika hoshiimono aru?*
       Do <u>you</u> want something?
(17)   *Nani icchateru noyo.*
       What are <u>you</u> talking about?
(18)   *Crystal no koto, itomeyouto shitatte dame yo.*
       <u>You</u> cannot get Crystal.

In contrast to the cases of the first-person pronouns, explicit second-person pronouns are not acceptable as natural Japanese in any of the cases above. In fact, there are different types of pronouns in Japanese which correspond to the English "you"; however, the most common pronoun *anata* or *anta* is sometimes regarded as derogative (Lydia Sugawara, personal

communication, 2007, August). Instead of pronouns, people's names or social positions or roles are used. Thus, all the cases above could accommodate names or social positions, such as *oneechan* (big sister).

(1) *Atashii, oneechanga*
I, you, sis…

(2) *Nee, annta annta*
Hey, you, you.

(3) *Yoko-san norikae masuka.*
Yoko, do you want to change the vehicle?

(4) *Anta sukinee*
You really like it.

(5) *Anta dokkani switch motterun janai no?*
Do you have a switch or something somewhere?

(6) *Anata wa subarashii hito da.*
You are a really wonderful person.

(7) *Demo Anata wa muraju no kodomotachi wo, otoshiyoriwo, keganinntachi made yorokobasete kuretaja arimasenka.*
But you pleased the children, the elderly, and the injured people in the village.

(8) *Anata no ikutokoro kodomotachi no akarui waraigoede michiteiru.*
There are lots of happy children's laughter wherever you are.

(9) *Anata wa nihonhe kaette wakarukotono dekinai otoshiyori ya keganinn ya kodomotachi ni.*
I would like you to give your happy and beautiful heart to the elderly, the injured people and the children when you go back to Japan.

(10) *Anata no akarui kokoro wo utsukushiku tadashii kokoro wo todoketeagete moraitain desu.*
I would like you to convey your cheerful, beautiful and just heart to them.

(11) *Nani ittennnoyo annta*
What are you talking about?

(12) *Annta mitaina ne. wagamamana monoga kokoni nokotte doushiyoutte iuno yo.*
What on earth are you, such a selfish person, going to do staying here?

(13) *Anta nanka zotto kaeritai kaeritaitte wagamama bakkari ittete.*
You just said you wanted to be back all the time.

(14) *Anta nankane nanka takuranndenn janai.*
You are just planning something

Just as the cases of zero second-person pronouns cannot have second-person pronouns added, in the cases with uttered second-person pronouns there

seems to be no option for omitting the second-person pronouns. In other words, all the cases in the above list need second-person pronouns. In some cases, such as number 1, the social role or status is addressed instead of the second person. Watanabe (2007) pointed out that the deictic center moves to the social world by addressing the second person with his/her social role or status.

5. Discussion

The first- and second-person pronouns in *rakugo* translation can be interpreted using the theory of linguistic relativity (Sapir 1921/2004; Whorf 1956). For example, the notion of high-context and low-context society (Hall 1976) will explain the phenomena of zero personal pronouns. The importance of Japanese *seken* (Abe 2002; Sato 2001/2007), or Husserl's life-world, in constructing the Japanese sense of self (Kuwayama 1992; Lebra 2004) may also explain the absence of personal pronouns or zero personal pronouns.

Regarding the first-person pronoun omission, the first explanation may be made using the notion of high-context and low-context society (Hall 1976). Based on the notion of the typical high-context society, Japanese people may be economical with the length of the utterance when the information is regarded as obvious. In the case of first-person pronouns, when the individual talks about himself/herself, listeners should know about whom that individual is talking. Therefore, the first-person pronouns are not supposed to be uttered, especially in the culturally-colored *rakugo* discourse. Second, the theory of linguistic relativity may explain this phenomenon. Based on linguistic relativity, language may classify experience, reflect action, and shape a person's worldview. Thus, the linguistic system of Japanese that allows its speakers to omit first-person pronouns may classify their experiences, reflect their actions and shape their worldview (Whorf 1956). It is consequently hypothesized that Japanese people perceive their existence, in Kuwayama's (1992) terms, in a less self-centered and other-reference oriented way. This interpretation seems to be in accordance with Sato's (2001/2007) argument that the Japanese cannot construct the self without the notion of *seken*.

On the other hand, in the case of the mandatory utterances of first-person pronouns in the *rakugo* script, *atashi*, the informal version of the first-person pronoun, is more frequently used than the formal version *watashi*. Yoko, the main character in this *rakugo* script, uses *atashi* and many of the utterances, including the mandatory first-person pronouns, are Yoko's. In this *rakugo* story, Yoko represents a different type of woman from traditional Japanese women who value reticence and are less self-centered. Kyoraku, the author of this *rakugo* script, seems to have the intention of

projecting Yoko as an assertive and less typical Japanese. Yoko's language seems to successfully reflect her view of life, which is implied by the theory of linguistic relativity. In *rakugo*, where one person performs the roles of a number of characters, the language is expected to reflect the characters' actions and shape their outlooks.

Regarding the second-person pronouns, the omission of second-person pronouns predominates in the interrogative utterances. As with the omission of the first-person pronouns, the notion of high context (Hall 1976) may provide an interpretation for this linguistic phenomenon. In the dialogic interaction, interrogatives are obviously directed towards the second person in general. Therefore, in Japanese, where fewer utterances are preferred and a lot of information is presumed to be known, second-person pronouns are unlikely to be uttered. The common pronoun of *anata* and *anta*, which are less formal versions of *atata*, are sometimes regarded as derogative, as has been pointed out by Lydia (personal communication, 2007, August), a Peruvian living for a long time in Japan. In the *rakugo* script used for the present study, in addition, the Nepalese characters show negative reactions when referred to as *anta*. Instead of using the second-person pronouns, Japanese people use the person's name or their social roles or statuses, such as *oneechan* ("big sis"). As posited by Watanabe (2007), using social roles in addressing the second person may change the deictic center of the social world. Lebra's (2004) notion of having two sides of being in one individual, that is, the "subject I" and "object me", may explain the positionality of the interlocutors, which validates the theory of linguistic relativity. More specifically, using the person's name or social role reveals the way in which Japanese people situate themselves in dialogic interaction, which means that language influences perception of the world.

Lastly, zero pronouns in both the first and second persons may affect the way of constructing the Japanese sense of self, which is based on contingency logic according to Lebra (2004), in orchestration with the powerful effects of *seken* (Abe 2002; Sato 2001/2007). These findings may support the linguistic relativity hypothesis. It must be noted that there are other languages with zero pronouns; however, they have different linguistic features. For instance, Latin languages such as Spanish have inflections which suggest the pronouns. There have been some studies on zero pronouns (Chaudhary 2003; Na-Rae, 2006) that analyze the relationship with the construction of the sense of self. Chaudhary investigates the case of Hindi and Na-Rae examines the case of Korean, and they discuss how zero pronouns are related to their concept of self. Here, in this study, zero pronouns in the *rakugo* script may be considered to influence the way in which the Japanese construct their sense of self, requiring the involvement of *seken*, the life-world. In addition to *seken*, Japanese spoken discourse may shed some light on 'uncertainty', which may require 'epistemicity', through zero pronouns, to promote a certain degree of politeness (cf. Ohta

1991). This interpretation may justify linguistic relativity. As Humboldt believes, since there are diverse linguistic forms, language affects how human beings think (Adler 2009).

6. Concluding Remarks

The present study, focusing on first- and second-person pronouns in the process of translating a *rakugo* script in Japanese into English, clarified the research questions as follows:

(1) First-person pronoun omissions appear in more than half the cases where the English translation needs first-person pronouns. Moreover, half of the omitted first-person pronouns cannot be uttered in the natural Japanese dialogic interaction. In the rest of the cases where the first-person pronouns are used, approximately half of them cannot be omitted. Japanese may use zero first-person pronouns when the situation is obvious and it is not necessary to utter them.

(2) Second-person pronoun omissions appear more frequently than first-person pronoun omissions. The Japanese seem to use zero second-person pronouns wherever they are not mandatory. Additionally, the second-person pronouns in Japanese are occasionally regarded as derogatory and names or social roles are used instead to address the dialogic interlocutors.

(3) Linguistic relativity, including the notion of the high- and low-context society, and the way of constructing the Japanese sense of self with the powerful effects of *seken*, seems to interpret the linguistic phenomena of first- and second-person pronoun-use revealed in the process of translating the *rakugo* script. In brief, the linguistic feature of zero pronouns may support the notion of the high context society and facilitate the way of constructing the Japanese sense of self based on contingency logic, involving *seken*. This phenomena may enhance the degreee of the politeness.

For further study, a more minute analysis regarding first- and second-person pronouns in the context of the *rakugo* discourse could probe the in-depth mechanism of the linguistic system and clarify the inextricable relationship between human universality and linguistic relativity. This could be done through a thorough examination of the literature on linguistic relativity from multiple perspectives, such as Slobin (1996 2003) and Gumperz and Levinson (1996), plus more classical but axiominal studies by Humboldt (Adler 2009; Underhill 2013).

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Chapter 5
Philosophy

The certainty of the Ego, the doubt about the Other
A critical perspective

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Abstract

The idea of an Ego that can communicate certainties only about himself because he can have an immediate and so a certain knowledge only of his own interiority, is responsible of the doubts about the Other. Each Ego says to be doubtful about the innerself of the Other and so communicates uncertainties about himself. Behind this idea there is the misleading image inner/exterior: it is connected with a confusion between grammatical and empirical. We try to show the critical points of this misleading perspective, starting from the thesis that our innerself takes form in the language, from a common shared space, and so it is not private, solipsistic, or metaphysical.

Keywords: Innerself, mind, language, grammatical research, public we

1. Introduction

The Cartesian thesis, and not only Cartesian, from which the first and only certain idea (certain because it is a clear and distinct product of an inner movement of thought) evolves, is that the Ego thinks and so exists (Descartes 1641); it implies the doubt about the existence of the Other. This doubt is often formulated in the so-called problem of "existence of other minds besides his own". The question is: "How do I know that there are other minds other than mine?". Which means to ask: "How do I know that others suffer, hope, fear, desire, or think?" or "How can I prove that there are other minds and that others have not only a body?". At first sight the issue appears epistemological because it seems to affect the way we know things or the way we can demonstrate some beliefs (Avramides 2001, 2).

To justify the existence of other minds is difficult as much as the existence and contents of its own seem immediate and transparent. Therefore, the way we think about the mind of the Ego gives rise to difficulties: the thinking Ego, in the dominant metaphysical solipsistic view that sees the progress of thought in complete isolation in the Ego mind, is certain to have an authoritative, privileged and private access

to the objects, states or processes, of his own mind (Descartes 1641). In fact, only the Ego seems to have immediate knowledge of his own inner contents. In this purpose, we think of Locke's theory of ideas, according to which the ideas are inner products of thought: the senses convey in the mind sensible qualities such as *Yellow*, *White*, *Heat*, *Cold*, *Soft*, *Hard*, *Bitter*, *Sweet* and that means that "they from external Objects convey in the mind what produces there those *Perceptions*. This great Source, of most of the *Ideas* we have, depending wholly upon our Senses, and derived by them to the Understanding, I call *SENSATION*" (Locke 1690, 156). Perceiving is, for Locke, "having Ideas" (Locke 1690, 162): sensible qualities are not property of external Objects, but ideas into the mind[1]. When someone reflects on the ideas into his own mind, then these operations by mind "do furnish the Understanding with another set of *Ideas*, which could not be had from things without; and such operations are: *Perception*, *Thinking*, *Doubting*, *Believing*, *Reasoning*, *Knowing*, *Willing*, and all the different actings of our own Minds" (Locke 1690, 162).

Behind this perspective, there is the belief in the misleading image inner/exterior: the inner is always true and therefore certain, because each Ego, and only the Ego, can have a first hand knowledge of it, so it is synonym of depth; the exterior, the communication of the inner, comes from the inner and is its surface, like a faded picture of inner. We think that each Ego can only observe the surface of the Other, but not the depth: this implies the communication of uncertainty about the Other. According to this view that we are describing, the inner of the Other remains invisible and we can observe only signs which come from it. The signs represent the inner, but they are not exhaustive and often the correspondence between outer signs and inner is not certain. The signs, which we have only to speak about the existence of others, seem to make uncertain the inner contents of others. The existence of internal objects of others is essentially inaccessible: it can only be inferred through the analogy that the Ego observes between itself and other humans. So the Other, with his own interior, remains exposed to doubt. Each Ego can communicate only the certainty about his own inner, because he has a certain knowledge of it: he can be conscious only of it because he can observe in himself. Instead, about one of the Other he can communicate uncertainties, because he cannot really know/observe it.

2. The grammar of the word *mind*

We have to deconstruct the dominant metaphysical solipsistic view that sees the progress of thought in complete isolation in the Ego mind. Our thesis is,

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[1] About this point, see the four theses of Hobbes argued in *Elements of Law Natural and Politic* (1650, 9-10).

according to Wittgenstein's philosophy, that the thought is articulated in language (Wittgenstein 2000, 233-237): our certainties und uncertainties take form in a language. Our words, which told the interior, come from the public common language. The Ego speaks of his own interiority with the words that belong to all speakers, with words that come from others, without the need to translate mysterious private psychic processes. Doubts about Others arise because we begin to reflect on the mind, always reflecting in first person. Therefore, each Ego reflects on his own mind. The proposal is to show the misunderstandings hidden in the belief that what we call 'mind' is immediately accessible to the Ego, while the existence of one of the Others remains doubtful. To do this we discuss what we call 'mind' with a phenomenological methodology.

We need to deconstruct this "ontology in the first person", as it is called by Searle (1998, 46). There are some misunderstandings hidden in the belief that what we call *mind* is immediately accessible to the Ego, while the existence of one of the Others remains doubtful. Let me ask: "What do we call *mind*?". Following Wittgenstein we *look-through* the grammar of the word *mind*[2]. In this way, the epistemological problem concerning the existence of Others becomes a conceptual problem concerning the way we think about the mind and, therefore, the way we talk about it. The epistemological problem of knowledge of Others can be considered a conceptual problem because the conceptual framework puts together in a certain way to think about everything we call "mind" made doubting the existence of Others.

How do we play daily the word "mind"? We say, for example:

1) a. "Thousands of thoughts go through my mind"
    b. "An idea comes up in my mind"
    c. "I calculate", in Italian we could say, "by mind", but in English we say "I calculate by heart"
    d. "I read by mind", in English we can say "I learn by heart" to say what in Italian means "learning by memory".
    e. We order someone: "Think by your mind!", "Think by your head!".
    f. We say, too: "You are always on my mind"
    g. "I have a fixed thought"
    h. "I have in my head a beautiful color"; in English, there is the expression "I make up my mind" to say that we decided something, or, another beautiful English expression is "I give you

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[2] See paragraph 90 of the *Philosophical Investigations*, which describes the philosophical research as a grammatical research, saying that the philosophers should *look-through* the phenomena: the philosophical research does not address the phenomena, but, could be say, the *possibilities* of them (Wittgenstein 1953, § 90).

a piece of my mind", used to mean that we share a thought, an idea.

    i. And also: "I have a pain that I cannot take my mind off it"

    l. "So many memories in my mind"

    m. "What I have to do is written on my mind"

    n. "My mind is a complete blank": there are no thoughts nor ideas inside the mind

    o. "I didn't say, but my mind believed it"

    p. "My mind is somewhere else"

    q. "Your body is here, but not your mind"

We could go on, but we stop and ask ourselves: what can be observed in this grammatical research? The mind seems to keep internal states and processes which are vital mechanisms of external signs: memories, sensations, thoughts, pains, beliefs, are all in the mind. The mind produces them. The Others are on my mind; the world, in the form of an idea, is on my mind and I know it by introspection. Remembering, thinking, feeling, imagining and also reading, calculating, are activities on and by mind: the private space of the Ego. The mind is like an organ used to carry out the inner functions. It is a secret chest where there are the most important processes and states. The contents of the mind are priority. Since the seventeenth century what were the powers of the soul, which were in the hearth[3] as we can still see in some English uses, have been moved into the mind or into the brain (Descartes 1637, 1641) as shown in the *language games* with the word *mind*[4]. Mind and body could be separated[5]. They could be at the same time in different places: when this happens the body seems inanimate.

So we come to say sentences such as:

2)   a. "I cannot read your mind. Tell me what you feel!"

    b. "What goes through your head?"

    c. "I want to know what is on your mind"

    d. "You cannot know what flashes in my mind"

    e. "You cannot know what I imagine"

The Other is powerless before the secrecy of my mind as we are powerless before his own. Everyone's mind is impenetrable by other minds: the mystery of the human essence, the mystery around what constitutes the man in a way that seems deeper, is all on the mind. Each of us can speak about

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[3] See Aristotele 354 b. C. The soul with its powers describes in *On Soul* is localized, for the whole ancient gnoseology, in the heart.

[4] Before Descartes, we have had the other important step of the mechanistic science of Galilei, according to which when the human animal is removed, also the world is removed because only in the human animal would reside sensible qualities (Galilei 1623, § 46).

[5] The dualism of mind-body was introduced in philosophy by Descartes.

mind only at the first person: "I only know what happens in mine". In this regard, we *look-through* the following *language game*:

3)   "He seems to believe in the possibility to do it"

Someone observes that an Other seems to believe something. We can never speak in this way at the first person. Regarding the ideas which we know by introspection, as Locke has shown us, i. e. ideas such as thinking, imagining, believing, etc., we can speak only with uncertainty: they should be inferred. When these ideas are our own, we would rather say, for example:

4)   "I believe in the possibility to do it".

This sentence communicates a certainty. It is not necessary to observe my belief; I have not to interpret my behavior. I *know* to believe. I do not need to communicate to myself this kind of knowledge. Instead, I need to infer the Other's belief; I need to observe it through his behavior. In this sense Wittgenstein (1982, 167) writes in the *Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology*: "Seem to believe, a verb. The first person of the present tense is foolish, because I know my intention". And he continues saying: "Respect my words, I have a totally different attitude than respect the ones of Others". In fact: "I do not hear them to come to know something on me. The words are with my actions in a completely different relationship than with the actions of Others" (Wittgenstein 1982, 168). They are pictures of inner states and processes that I know already. In the case of Others, they refer to thoughts, states, actions, that I need to observe and check by inference. Therefore, we can observe, always with Wittgenstein, that "I am interested in my words and my actions in a different way from how I am interested in them of someone else (I'm thinking of my intonation, too). Respect them, I do not behave like an observer» (Wittgenstein 1982, 168). The intonation can be an indication of the degree of belief, certainty and awareness. We can say briefly that "I cannot observe myself such as I observe someone else" (Wittgenstein 1982, 168) and "I do not draw from my words from conclusions about my probable actions. I do not need it" (Wittgenstein 1982, 169).

Now we *look through* these other *language games*:

5)   a. "I have never doubted my mind"
         b. "I was convinced for a long time"
         c. "I kept it in my mind. I do not remember any more"
         d. "I thought of him all the time"
         e. "It is all day that I cannot take my mind off this idea"

f. "In my mind, I was hoping that it happens" or "Inside me, I was hoping that it would happen, even if I did not say it"

Believing, thinking, remembering and hoping, seem to be internal states or processes with a time and a place. They are inside each Ego, into his own mind or head. We think, for example, that we can believe something without saying that I believe it now or I believed it in the past: we could also never say it. We think, as Wittgenstein writes, that "the belief is a state of mind. It exists for a certain period of time, it is not tied to the time of its expression" (Wittgenstein 1982, 170). The belief seems to be a kind of disposition: "in the Other displays to me it his behavior and his words" (Wittgenstein 1982, 170). The external signs, behavior or words, are an instrument to display to the Others the private internal self, from which they come. This display is always uncertain: the interior displays me like a faded picture. Wittgenstein (1958, 184) says that is "a widespread disease of thought to look for (and to find) behind all our actions a state of mind that is their origin, a kind of tank".

Looking-through the concrete speech of an interior, it emerges that: we believe to have an interior, like a private space; that only the Ego knows immediately and therefore with certainty and that is the source of life of all that is manifested. The faded exterior based on the interior makes visible the precious interior, although still superficial and partial; and therefore it appears as a source of uncertainty. Each Ego can communicate certainties only about himself thanks to the immediate knowledge of its internal self. Instead, about Others, the Ego can communicate only uncertainties. The idea internal/external is quite misleading and it is responsible of this paradigm of the common thought. Where is it from? Where is the fault of our language that feeds it? We have been trained to think so. The grammar of our language taught us that this internal/external image is essential to understand the human essence. The grammar conveys a popular philosophy (Wittgenstein 2000, 421) and this philosophy leads us to think precisely that every external sign is powered by an inexhaustible and ineffable interior, which can be considered a secret treasure in which is guarded what each Ego is, what to the Other can never be fully shown by the external signs.

3. The difference between grammatical and empirical

Grammar has led for centuries philosophy: it has led to believe that to each verb corresponds an activity as to each substantive corresponds a substance (Wittgenstein 1958, 13). Therefore, we think, for example, that writing is like thinking: we write on the paper by hand as we think in the mind by head. We use pain as we use table and we think that the first is an object in the interior space as the second is an object in the space in front of us. Look

at, for example, the sentence "I have a pain": we think that the Ego who says it *has* in the sense of possession an *object* as he says that it has a jacket, his jacket. The verb "to have" is misleading here, too. There are misleading analogies in these uses. In this regard, Wittgenstein compares in *The Blue Book* the sentence "He has a gold tooth" with the sentence "I cannot feel the toothache that he has" (Wittgenstein 1958, 67). The first sentence means that the tooth is in his mouth and therefore I cannot see it if the mouth is closed; but, however, I can verify the certainty of the existence of it if he opens his mouth. In a similar way, we think that in the second sentence there is a reference to something inside the mouth. The verb "to have" leads us to think that there is a possession of a substance such as a possession of a state, with the difference that while in one case, that of the gold tooth, there is a material object that is visible and we can check it by the opening of the mouth, so it is certain, not doubtful; in the other case, the pain is not like the tooth, it is not a material object directly visible and therefore seems that it should be regarded as a metaphysical, ineffable object. Its existence is uncertain because it is not objectively demonstrable. Only each Ego is certain of this kind of internal object, states and processes. Before these internal objects, Wittgenstein says, we have to unmask a confusion of grammar sentences like "I cannot feel the toothache that he has" with empiric sentences like "He has a gold tooth" and so all becomes obscure (Wittgenstein 1958, 67). The grammar sentence tells us what we can and cannot do with the word "pain" or "toothache"[6].

The grammatical gives form to the empirical: for the humans the experience finds sense in the grammar of a language, but the sense of the experience is inexhaustible for the grammatical. However, the grammatical lets us go beyond the experience and the existent. The grammatical opens creative space unhooked from reality. Grammatical sentences tells the establishment of the empirical within the conceptual, but also those to talk about what transcends from it. They are, as Majetschak (2000, 256) clearly says, while commenting on Wittgenstein, "Regelformulierungen für den Gebrauch von Wortern in unseren Sprachspielen", that is rules for the use of words in our language games. In empirical sentences we find properties of objects of our experience. They give form to our experience. The fact that in the grammatical take form both the empirical as that transcends from it generates confusion: we are not more capable to discern what is object of science because it can be explained by the science and what, instead, can be only described by philosophy. "It can be thought what in reality does not exist" (Wittgenstein 1953, § 96) and this can be done because the language

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[6] About the confusion between grammatical and empirical, see Luigi Perissinotto's essay entitled "Wittgenstein: ricerche concettuali vs. ricerche fattuali" (1996, 627-47) and also Perissinotto's *Introduction* to Wittgenstein 1993, VII-XXVII.

allows to disengage us from reality. There is something that does not give concrete experience, something that lies in the concepts, which is of purely grammatical kind. Also the empirical, for us, human beings interposed by language, passes through the grammar, but retains its autonomy, that is the possibility of verifying based on direct trade with the world of our senses. While what cannot be given real experience can only be, so to speak, occurred in the language: grammar rules, in fact, delimit its building.

4. Certainty and uncertainty take form in a language

The words have many different functions. They play various *language games*. We cannot think that they are always denominations (Wittgenstein 1953, §§ 11-17, 23-30). The meaning is not a material object corresponding to the noun or an immaterial idea on the mind as argued by Locke (1690, 744-754). It is, in reality, a result of an interpretation of a sign and we need it to prepare the use of non-understood, strange or unfamiliar words (Wittgenstein 1953, §§ 1-3; 1958, 5-6). When we use signs, in the ordinary use, we do not think about this use: we talk, we write, we think (in signs) and it is enough without the interposing of mental processes or states[7]. When we do not understand a sign, we stop ourselves to ask the meaning of the non-understood sign: the explanation of this meaning is the result of a thought in other signs, an interpretation[8]. This is a great long goal that here we cannot analyze.

The philosophy has to become, as Wittgenstein (1969a, § 54) says, *Verwalterin*, that is in English *tutor*, *administrator* of grammar. Wittgenstein (1958, 76) writes that "when we say «I cannot feel his pain» we think to an insurmountable barrier" comparable to a case as "The colors green and blue can not be simultaneously in the same place" (Wittgenstein 1958, 76). On this second physical impossibility, confusing grammatical with empirical, the sentence about the pain is built, which expresses a metaphysical impossibility. But before the supposed metaphysical impossibility we have to ask with Wittgenstein's words: "If what I feel always is only my pain, what can the supposition that someone else has pain mean?" (Wittgenstein 1958, 77). The solipsist thinks: "Others cannot have my pain". But: "What are my pains? What is here the criterion of identity?" (Wittgenstein 1953, § 253). Wittgenstein argues: "Consider what makes it possible, in the case of physical objects, talking about two things exactly identical. As to say, for example, «This chair is not the same that you saw here yesterday, but it is exactly identical»" (Wittgenstein 1953, § 253). We

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[7] See the section of *The Big Typescript* dedicated to the meaning conceived as the explanation of meaning (Wittgenstein 2000, 31-63). About the meaning in Wittgenstein see Di Cesare 2006 and Majetschak 1995.

[8] In this regard, see Josef Simon's work *Philosophy of the sign* (1995).

observe that the language makes possible the establishment of the identity: it builds the bases of the community in which we can identify objects in different times and places, beyond space and time barriers. We have not access to a private use of words, that always come from a *public we*: from Others.

We cannot create a private language denoting states and internal processes that we consider private: they cannot be played as public functions. There is a paragraph of Wittgenstein's (1953, § 257) *Philosophical Investigations* now useful:

> "But if men do not express their pains (not groaning, not turn up the face etc..)? Then it would not be possible to teach a child the use of the word *toothache*" - Well, we suppose that the child is a genius and invent for himself a name for this feeling! – But, of course, this word would not be able to make himself understood by Others. – Now, he understand that name, but is he unable to explain the meaning to anyone else? – But what does it mean "He gave a name to his pain"? How did he give a name to the pain?

And we continue asking: "Where does the name from?". We think, understand, feel, in public words that were from Others. We can be certain about something because we have the certainty of a traditional, historical language connected with the *form of life,* in which we are situated. In this sense, we can say that certainty or uncertainty are communicated also without communication. The certainty, and so the uncertainty too, are articulated in the language that we speak. The language gives each Ego his interior[9]: with common words, it gives to each Ego the interior of the Others. In the language, it appears to us the inexhaustible world. Ego is a common word. We have stop using it like a proper noun. We can say "I", because someone else says "He": we need the words of the Other that give us the certainty of our speech about something or about someone (Wittgenstein 1958, 90-95). Within words, we share a common certain world. The agreement within words give us the certainty of Others beyond me. Wittgenstein writes in *On Certainty* that "who is not sure of any fact, cannot even be sure of the meaning of his words". So, "who wants to doubt everything, would not reach even the doubt. The same play of doubting presupposes certainty" (Wittgenstein 1969b, 22).

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[9] In this regard cfr. Johnston 1993.

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Uncertaintes and undetermination in the use of indexical terms: David Kaplan and Charles S. Peirce in comparison

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Abstract

Indexical terms and demonstratives can be used to refer to determined objects, even when their semantics presents a certain degree of underdetermination. There is an almost constitutive uncertainty in their use which excludes that they can function simply by applying mechanically some rules. The aim of the present paper is to search whether a semantical explanation of indexical terms can be given which accounts for this phenomenon. The requirements of such an account are: first, that it applies in the same way to uncertain and not uncertain cases; second, that the meaning of the term already implies that further information is required in order to determine which object is intended. By analysing four cases of uncertainties, two theories of indexicals will be compared: that of David Kaplan and that of Chalres Sanders Peirce.

Keywords: Indexical terms, demonstratives, underdetermination, Charles Sanders Peirce, David Kaplan

1. Introduction: Indexical terms and uncertainties in their use

The general features of indexical terms

Indexical terms and demonstratives are the most important linguistic devices used to link conceptual contents with spatio-temporally determined situations and entities. This power is guaranteed by their almost automatic functioning: An index refers to its denoted object for the very act of being uttered.

A sentence containing an indexical term has an incomplete set of truth conditions, which requires contextual saturation; this contextual saturation is rule-governed and ends with the individuation of a singular referent.

Given an indexical term and a context, the determination of a referent does not require other (conceptual or pragmatic) factors. An indexical term uttered in a context is usually saturated.

Four situations of uncertainty in the use of indexical terms

There are cases where the semantics of an indexical term left the term underdetermined, that is it does not individuate unambiguously a single referent. This involves a certain degree of uncertainty. This uncertainty, however, does not prevent it to be used to refer to something determined. The aim of the present research is to answer to the following question: how can an indexical term present this kind of uncertainty and still refer to a determined object? Is a semantical account of indexical terms possible which explains this phenomenon?

Four cases of underdetermination of indexical terms and demonstratives will be taken into consideration, namely: 1. The fact that certain indexicals have vague boundaries (i.e. "Now"); 2. The application of indexical references within fictional worlds; 3. The use of demonstratives accompanied by a false or incomplete description; 4. The use of referential definite descriptions with no demonstrative act accompanying it.

1. The first case of underdetermination seems to be the least compelling one. A determined referent is individuated, whereas the uncertainty lies only in the exact width of it. The word "now" refers undoubtedly to the present moment, leaving undetermined whether this 'moment' lasts few seconds, some days or even years. Therefore, the uncertainty does not affect the term having a single determined referent; it affects only our capability to evaluate of the truth of the sentence. The semantics of indexical terms could therefore leave the solution of this uncertainty to purely pragmatic elements. The reason while it is included in the present account is to furnish a systematical approach to the problem: a semantic explanation of the other three forms of uncertainty is naturally apt to explain also this one.

2. There are cases in which an indexical term is used to refer to an object which is not individuated from the context of utterance, but rather from another 'standing point' in which the hearer must ideally put himself. In other words, there are cases in which "here" and "now" do not refer to the place or time in which those words are uttered, but to another 'point of observation'. The most important of those cases is the use of indexical terms within fictional works (Bonomi 1998): in these cases an indexical term does not refer to some object that has to be individuated starting from the context in which the writer materially writes his work. It refers to an object which must be individuated from a point of observation 'internal' to the fictional world. This does not mean necessarily that the individuation occurs starting from a fictional context of utterance posed inside the fictional world. This would be the case, for example, of a character of a novel who says: "Now I am getting angry". "Now" refers to the fictional time in which the character utters that sentence. Yet a novel includes also sentences containing indexicals that are not uttered by any character, but are 'uttered', so to

speak, by the narrative voice. The 'point of observation' from which the referent of the indexical must be individuated must therefore be described with a different concept than that of 'context of utterance'. Those cases show how the semantics of indexical terms needs a different, wider characterization of the 'point of observation', which could be or not be the context of utterance, together with an explanation of the mechanisms which allow to pass from the context of utterance to the point of observation.

3. Demonstratives are such terms as "this" or "that", which are accompanied by an act of demonstration. Their reference is fixed given a context of utterance and an act of demonstration. Usually they include a *description* of the relevant object. We usually talk about "that book" or "this man" and so on. In the case of demonstratives a state of uncertainty can arise due to the use of a description which does not match the intended object either because it is incorrect (saying "that pen" when indicating a pencil) or incomplete for the aim of individuating a single referent (saying "that book" when indicating a shelf that contains more than one book). We often find that the individuation of the intended referent on the part of the hearer is possible even when the description is insufficient or misleading. The core point of the phenomenon is that the description cannot be a necessary and sufficient condition for an object to be the *denotatum* of the term (otherwise "that pen" *could not* be used to indicate a pencil), but it also cannot be completely stripped out from the referential mechanism of the term (otherwise it would be the same to say "this" or "that" without further qualification). The description must have a semantical role, but precisely *which* one? A theory of demonstratives must account for the successful use of the whole demonstrative (demonstrative term + description + act of demonstration) even in presence of an *underdetermined* or *misleading* description.

4. An interesting phenomenon that regards the use of description was individuated by Keith Donellan: it is the so called *referential definite description* (Donnellan 1966)[1]. David Kaplan (1989b, 583-584) showed how the latter can be used as sort of demonstrative which does not involve an act of demonstration; it is used, so to speak, as a sort of *implicit* demonstrative . Since they do not involve an act of demonstration, they lack of the element which could give an *automatic* link of the utterance to the object. There are no other explicit semantic elements besides the description. Yet, like the real demonstratives, they can be successfully used to refer to something determined in the context of utterance *even when the description is incorrect* (Ibid.). How is it possible? Is it merely the consequence of a pragmatic adjustment or is it rather that a semantic

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[1] A definite description is *attributive* when it is meant to refer to whatever object satisfies the description; it is *referential* when it is used to refer to a particular object which the user has in mind. A referential definite description can work even if it is incorrect: for example, when one refers to someone's fiancée by calling him "her husband".

characterization of indexicals and demonstratives could be given that accounts for this possibility?

I wish to stress the fact that all these cases of underdetermination could be handled by pragmatics. What shall be questioned is whether they could be accounted for by semantics, too. In other words, it shall be investigated whether there is a semantic description of indexicals which works the same way both in the 'normal', 'determined' uses and in the 'underdetermined' ones.

How to deal semantically with the uncertainties: two theories in comparison

The question will be handled by comparing two well-known theories of indexicals: the theory of David Kaplan and the one of Charles Peirce, which will be presented in a modified form[2]. The former claims that indexical terms and demonstratives introduce a determined object that is present in a context into the truth condition of a sentence. The latter is stated within a semiotical frame and deals with the concrete acts of indication more than with the truth conditions of propositions. Their comparative advantages and disadvantages will be analysed in reference to the four cases of uncertainty listed above.

A Peircean approach suggests treating indexicals as tools to increase information in situations that regard spatio-temporally determined objects. The growth in information needs also some inferential steps to reach its aim. The uncertainties listed above are accounted for by the semantics of the term because this admits a gap between *the information actually given by the informative content of the term* and the *information required to complete the identification and furnished by the inferential steps.* For this reason, a Peircean approach can account for the phenomena under examination *semantically*, whereas a Kaplanian approach is comparatively weaker.

2. Kaplan's theory: Indexicals as rigid designators

Exposition of Kaplan's theory of indexicals

David Kaplan proposed a complete theory of indexical and demonstrative terms within the frame of analytical philosophy. Only the essential feature of it will be described here. The core of Kaplan's proposal is that indexicals and demonstratives are *rigid designators* (Kaplan 1989a, 500). It is meant with this expression that they apply to the same referent in every

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[2] Peirce's theory is stated within a very different frame from that of Kaplan; therefore, to make a comparison some concepts will be translated in analytical terms. Moreover, some consequences will be drawn that are only potentially present in Peirce's texts. The theory which will be presented at the end will be a 'Peircean theory' and not 'Peirce's theory'.

counterfactual situation. Once the referent is determined, it is fixed for every possible circumstance of evaluation. The determination of the referent occurs thanks to the semantic rules of the terms in a determined context of utterance. The semantic rule connected with the term "I" is "the person who is uttering this sentence"; given an actual utterance of a sentence, the rule makes the utterer the referent of that sentence. Yet, the determination of the referent through both the rule and the context of utterance occurs *before* the evaluation of the truth of the sentence, and the semantic rule in particular *does not affect* the truth value. In other words, the semantic rule – or as Kaplan calls it the *character* – of the indexical term *does not belong* to the truth conditions of the sentence: the referent individuated thanks to the rule does belong to them, but independently from its matching the character. This means that a sentence of the referent individuated by the indexical term is true of false *regardless from the fact that it is individuated by the indexical term.* This would be clear if one thinks to some counterfactual statements. For instance, the sentence "I could have been remained silent now" is true, even if the referent of the term "I" is individuated by the fact that I have actually spoken. If the character of the term "I" had entered the truth condition of the sentence, then that would have been false (Kaplan 1989a, 498).

Thus, the rule individuates a referent given a context, and then the truth of the sentence is evaluated directly for that referent. After the individuation, the rule plays no further role (Kaplan 1989a, 523).

In Kaplan's theory there are therefore two essential distinctions: that between *character* and *content* (Kaplan 1989a, 500-507) and that between *context of utterance* and *context of evaluation* (Kaplan 1989a, 522-523).

The character is the descriptive meaning of the term, while the content is what is evaluated as true or false. The character is not the content: it *individuates* the content. Different kinds of terms have different ways to individuate a content; in the case of indexicals, it individuates a content *given a context of utterance.* In Kaplan's word, a character is a function from context of utterance to content:

CHARACTER (+ context of utterance) → CONTENT

From its side, a content is a function from context of evaluation to extension:

CONTENT (+ context of evaluation) → EXTENSION

There are therefore two contexts which have two very different functions. The context of utterance is essential to determine the referent of the indexical expression, but does not necessarily enter into the truth conditions of the sentence. The sentence "I could have been in Paris" is being uttered in

the present moment, but it is not evaluated in regard to the context of utterance. It is evaluated in regard to a possible word which constitutes the context of evaluation.

Kaplan's theory draws also a crucial distinction between *pure indexicals* and *true demonstratives* (Kaplan 1989a, 492). The main difference between the two classes of terms is that the referent of pure indexicals depends exclusively on the character and the context, while a true demonstrative can fix a referent only when accompanied by an act of indication (for example, the act of pointing a finger). Moreover, demonstratives are usually accompanied by a description and the referred object is the individual who shows the appearance given by the description from the *here-and-now* perspective: the standard form for demonstration is "the individual which has the appearance *A* from here now" (Kaplan 1989a, 524-526). "A demonstrative associates therefore the appearance of an object with the indexically specified direction in which to look for that object" (Kaplan 1989a, 524). A demonstrative with the wrong kind of demonstratum (for example, saying "that pen" while pointing to a pencil) is vacuous (Kaplan 1989a, 490). Another difference with indexicals lies in the fact that demonstratives behave differently in regards to counterfactual: "Contrary to indexicals, the same demonstration (indication of an individual that looks so-and-so from here now) may present a different demonstratum, if differently located" (Kaplan 1989a, 526). However, this sensitivity to counterfactual situation regards the fixation of the referent and not the evaluation of the truth value: the latter, as with indexicals, occurs in reference to the demonstratum which was actually referred to. Briefly, the demonstration introduces a further step of determination besides the two already seen for indexicals (character and content). The reference is not fixed by the demonstration, but by the demonstration in context (Kaplan 1989a, 527; Kaplan 1989b, 588).

Demonstratives:
1° Step: Description + Demonstration → Character
2° Step: Character + Context → Content
3° Step: Content + Circumstance of Evaluation → Extension

Kaplan's theory and the four cases of uncertainty

Kaplan's theory is remarkably complete and suitable to explain most of the characters of indexicals and demonstratives. Yet, it is not completely successful in the treatment of the four cases of uncertainties:
1. Kaplan does not handle the question of the vague boundaries of some indexicals. Therefore, the exact determination of the referent remains unfulfilled by the combination of character and context and needs further

information or pragmatic considerations in order to pinpoint the exact referent.

2. The application to possible or fictional worlds is more compelling. Although he does not explicitly treat this case, his overall theory seems to deny the very possibility. In *Afterthoughts* Kaplan states that the actual world is an essential aspect of the context; the context, in fact, is selected by a sort of indexical operator: "it is actually the case that..." (Kaplan 1989b, 594ff). So, every use of an index is centred in the actual world. This presents two problems. First, the indexical reference is based on the context of utterance, but this is on its side selected by an indexical operator: the functioning seems to be circular. Second, it is incompatible with the use of indexicals in fictional contexts. Perhaps the latter use could be considered as a particular case, ruled by pragmatic conditions and not by the normal semantics for indexicals. It would be preferable, however, to have an account of the semantics of indexicals which could work the same way in every use of it.

3. The case of the use of wrong descriptions seems to be considered by Kaplan as a misaimed demonstrative which does not fulfil its function: in fact, he states that a demonstrative with the wrong kind of demonstratum is vacuous (Kaplan 1989a, 490). There seems to be a sort of "all or nothing" presupposition: either a description is true for the object or it is nothing at all towards the object. The consideration of Peirce's theory will show that a third alternative is possible.

4. The latter case (use of referential definite description) is the most interesting one, because Kaplan explicitly treats it and because he is induced to change his theory. In *Afterthougts* he considers the case, described by Donellan, of someone who refers to someone else present in the context using a wrong description[3] (Kaplan 1989b, 582-584). This case let Kaplan think that the referent is determined by the *directing intention* aimed at the perceived object[4]. He claims that the description plays no semantical role at all, and likewise the demonstration (in the case of *actual* demonstratives) has no semantical role. "In both cases [the demonstration and the description] the referent is properly determined by the perceptual intention. In neither case is anything semantical at stake in the description or the pointing" (Kaplan 1989b, 584.). This leads to a set of questions: how can an intention be a semantical element? Would it not risk a subjectivist concept

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[3] The example he proposes is as follows: suppose that there is a man at a party who is holding a Martini glass; one person asks another "Who is the man who is drinking Martini?". Suppose that the man is not drinking Martini but another, similarly looking beverage. In this case, the description is incorrect, there is no demonstration, but still that man is the correct referent of the expression.

[4] "I am now inclined to regard the directing intention, at least in the case of perceptual demonstratives, as criterial, and to regard the demonstration as a mere externalization of this inner intention" (Kaplan 1989b, 583)

of semantics, undermining therefore the communicability of meaning? Moreover, if the intention is aimed at the perceived object, then the *apprehension* of this object must come first; some qualities of it must be individuated. The "intending thought" has some *content*, which is linked with the description one chooses to use: why, then, must the description be considered as wholly foreign to the semantics of the term? In other words, the intention is directed to an object which appears so-and-so: a description which is linked with this appearance can be considered to express somehow the directing thought and therefore to play a semantical role. To reach this conclusion two conditions must be abided by: first, it must be showed how a false description can be linked to a perceptual appearance; second, the context of communication must be taken into consideration, in order to show how a speaker can use a description to express his intending thought in such a way that a listener can reconstruct the latter starting from the former. Kaplan's theory shows no awareness of this and the reference to the "intending thought" seems an *ad hoc* adjustment to deal with a problem which the general theory has not taken into account. Moreover Kaplan was well aware of certain "unease" in its treatment, which his theory is incapable to reduce or account for:

> The problem, in a nutshell, is that where demonstratives are involved, it doesn't seem possible to avoid equivocation. There is an understood, harmless, systematic equivocation built into the semantics of demonstratives in natural languages (Kaplan 1989b, 590).

3. Peirce's theory: Indexicals as semiotical tools to gain acquaintance

The semiotical theory of indexicals

The second theory which will be presented, based on Peirce's work on indexicals, will show a semantic account of *all* indexical and demonstrative terms that contains a clear-cut space in which this "systematic" uncertainty intervenes, and will also show which processes are required in order to handle this uncertainty. In other words, it will be illustrated how the process of determining the referent goes necessarily through at least one step in which a potential uncertainty can be reduced using further information that is taken from the co-text (the rest of the sentence in which the term appears) and the context.

Peirce's theory is *semiotical*: it does not handle just indexical *terms* but also indexical *signs*. It is wider in scope[5]. An indexical sign is defined as a sign whose connection with the object is represented is based on a causal

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[5] For a general analysis, see Atkin 2005.

and/or a spatio-temporally determined relation (Peirce 1931-1958, Vol. 2, 143). The connection can be due either to *spatiotemporal contiguity* (the pointing of a finger) or to a *causal relation* (the smoke as index of the fire). Linguistic indexical terms are a subset of the class of indexical signs. The utterance of an indexical term, in fact, is a single event which has a determined spatio-temporal relation with a context: the term gets its reference through this relation.

An indexical sign can refer only to an object to which the user can have an independent access (Peirce 1931-1958, Vol. 8, 242). In the case of an indexical relation based on spatio-temporal contiguity, the 'independent access' means that the user knows the position of the object relative to his own; in the case of an index based on a causal relation, the 'independent access' means that a user who knows the causal law at work in the situation can infer the referred object starting from the indexical sign (he can infer the fire from the smoke). Thus, the 'independent access' can also be the *result of a process of inquiry*.

As a consequence, the sign's user must have acquaintance with some information pertaining the object; otherwise he would not be able to use the index correctly. He can be acquainted with the object or with the spatio-temporal context in which the object exists. Or else he can be acquainted with the causal connection existing between a certain kind of phenomenon and a certain object: this kind of acquaintance grounds the use of indices to denote objects which are not directly accessible. An example of the latter can be a weathercock. The first kind of indices are called *designators*, the second kind are called *reagents* (Peirce 1931-1958, Vol. 8, 241).

Different kinds of indices

The field of indexical signs is very general and can be divided into a number of subclasses. All these subclasses are unified by the core condition of indices, namely that they refer to individual entities, existing in a single place and time, through a relation which is determined spatio-temporally.
The most important classification of indexical signs is the following (Peirce 1931-1958, Vol. 2, 189 and 191-192):
1. An *Index*, proper speaking, is a sign which is in real connection (i.e. causal relation or contiguity) with its object. Typical examples are a weathercock, a thermometer, a milestone; they all are individual things.
2. There are signs that are, as such, not individual things but terms; they are indexical if a single *utterance* of them is in real connection with an object. They are called *Sub-Indices*. Every single utterance of them constitutes a different connection and can be therefore considered as a different sign: they refer only when uttered. Indexical terms belong to this class.
3. Finally, there are the *Precepts*. They are signs that have no real connection with their objects but furnish instructions about how to act in

order to gain connection with an object (Peirce 1931-1958, Vol. 2, 189). They are only derivatively indexical: they are usually signs of another nature which *are used as* indices. The real connection lies in the acquaintance with the object that one can get if one follows the instructions (Atkin 2005, 174). An example could be "The brightest object visible from Earth": semantically speaking, it is a description which contains no indexical element; but it functions as a set of instruction to get a *perceptual* acquaintance (that is, a real connection) with an object. Referential definite descriptions belong to this class.

For the author´s purpose the distinction between 'sub-indices' and 'precepts' is relevant. The former include terms whose *semantics* rules the connection between context of utterance and reference; the latter, on the contrary, are terms whose semantics does not need to be explicitly indexical, since their 'indexical function' is due to the *operations* that they prescribe. It shall be reminded that Kaplan was induced to modify his theory of *demonstratives* by the difficulty of applying it to the case of *referential definite descriptions*: Peirce's account can suggest a way in which the two questions can be handled separately. A demonstrative could be considered as a *sub-index* whose 'real connection' is given by the act of indication (as in Kaplan's original theory), while a referential definite description could be considered as a *precept* which suggests the listener a way to obtain acquaintance with the intended object. This happens by interpreting the description not as a set of *necessary and sufficient condition*, but rather as a set of *clues.*

The internal structure of indices: The two-factor theory of indexical signs

At this point, also the internal structure of the index needs to be taken into consideration. An index, in fact, must have a sort of *representative constituent*, that is another semiotic function which Peirce calls 'Icon'[6], which represents *what the referred object must look like*.

> A genuine Index and its Object must be existent individuals (whether things or facts) […]. But since every individual must have characters, it follows that a genuine Index may contain a Firstness, and so an Icon is a constituent part of it (Peirce 1931-1958, Vol. 2, 160).

For example, a term like "now" does not only indicate what kind of relation exists between the context of utterance and the intended 'object', but it also describes what kind of object we are speaking of: a moment of time. In this way, terms like "now", "here" and "I" are all distinguished by their *representative* (or *iconic*) *content*, although they are based on the same

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[6] See Peirce 1931-1958, Vol. 2, 143 and 156-160.

contiguity. The same holds for proper indices: a weathercock shows the direction of the wind, to which it is connected causally, through a perceptual (i.e., iconic) device: it says that the direction of the wind *looks like* the orientation of the weathercock.

We have thus two factors in every index: an *existential component*, a real, spatio-temporally determined connection with the object; and an *informative component*, called "Iconicity".

a. The existential component is based either on an action of the user (a demonstration, an act of utterance etc.) or on a mechanical compulsion from the object (this is how a weathercock or a thermometer work); it is automatic and never fails to indicate, but it is empty of information;

b. The informational component is an amount of information which can also be increased, as it will be showed; very often its introduction is inferential (for example, the fire as 'suggested' by the presence of smoke), and therefore fallible; in many cases it is based on perceptual appearance.

Peirce suggests another distinction related to this two-factors theory: that between a *genuine index*, that is an index which possesses both factor and has therefore an informative value (i.e. "this book") and a *degenerate index*, an index which possesses only the existential component and merely fixes the spatio-temporal location of the phenomenon (i.e. "look here!") (Peirce 1931-1958, Vol. 5, 51). Indexical terms as defined in this paper are all genuine indices, which are supposed to contain enough information to identify the object.

The use of indexicals, according to Peirce's account, is thus strongly related to the processes of gaining information. The very identification of the intended object can be considered as a gain of information (Atkin 2005, 164). This process is not merely semantical but involves a cognitive aspect as well. One needs not only to master semantical rules but also to find a way to get an *acquaintance* with the object, which could be either a *direct perceptual access* or an *indirect access* based on some instructions or informative clues. Briefly, the gaining of an acquaintance with the object is the *aim of the indexical sign* (Peirce, 1931-1958, vol. 8, 42-44) which can be reached essentially by resorting to two modalities:

- *Traceability*: starting from a spatio-temporal position (the context of utterance or *another chosen point of observation*), it allows one to reach another spatio-temporal position:

- *Informational gain*[7]: given a perceptual appearance and an acquaintance with laws of causation, it allows one to identify the inaccessible cause of a phenomenon (it is indexical so far both the perceptual appearance and the

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[7] "Traceability" and "informational gain" are *not* terms used by Peirce, who does not explicitly theorize them. They are a proposal of classification for processes that Peirce describes unsystematically.

identified cause are concrete individuals, whose existence is accessible to the sign's user).

Each Kaplanian character of a pure indexical is a clear example of traceability: it uses the context of utterance as a spatio-temporal starting point to reach an object through its location relative to this starting point. Although it is true that usually a Kaplanian pure indexical contains also an informative content, this is quite fixed in *every* utterance of the term (*every* utterance of "I" refers to a person); so it does not require a process of informational gain, but simply an acquaintance with the meaning of the term.

An example of "informational gain" given by Peirce could be the following:

> I see a man with a rolling gait. This is a probable indication that he is a sailor. I see a bowlegged man in corduroys, gaiters, and a jacket. These are probable indications that he is a jockey or something or the sort (Peirce 1931-1958, Vol.2, 160).

Pure informational gain consists therefore in the use of *clues* to infer the nature of something. It is important to stress that it can work also *backwards*, for example when a *referential definite description* is used in communication. The listener uses the description "drinking Martini", used by the utterer, to infer some perceptual element, for example "holding a Martini glass", that can be observed personally.

A true demonstrative is an example of both modalities: it needs a *demonstration*, which gives the direction in which to look and therefore sets in motion a process of traceability; and it needs a *description*, from which informative clues for the right identification of the object can be inferred. An interesting example is given by Peirce (Peirce 1931-1958, Vol.2, 137-138):

> Two men are standing on the seashore looking out to sea. One of them says to the other, "That vessel there carries no freight at all, but only passengers". Now, if the other, himself, sees no vessel, the first information he derives from the remark has for its Object the part of the sea that he does see, and informs him that a person with sharper eyes than his […] can see a vessel there; and then, that vessel having been introduced to his acquaintance, he is prepared to receive the information about it that is carries passengers exclusively.

Two consequences can be drawn from this example. First, in a communicative context it is not necessary that both persons have the *same* acquaintance with the object: the information that one gets perceptually can

be introduced in the other's cognitive status inferentially or by description; the crucial point is that the listener can trace back the new information to some previous knowledge to which he refers to *indexically*. Second, the reference of an indexical term (at least, a complex one which involves also a descriptive part) can also be *indirect* and mediated by *inferential* steps; moreover, those inferential steps can depend also on some part of the co-text (the sentence in which the term appears). All inferred information is relative to the same point of space-time, and this guarantees the sameness of the *resulting* reference.

4. Peirce's and Kaplan's theory face the four uncertainties.

The solution of the difficulties pertaining the demonstratives

At this point, the cases of uncertainties can be solved.

The inferential character of the 'informational gain' can help us to solve the problem of incorrect descriptions. A demonstrative including an incorrect description, or even a referential definite description, can nevertheless refer to the intended object if:

1. the description can be inferentially introduced starting from the perceptual appearance of the object, even if without certainty;

2. the listener can trace back the perceptual appearance from the description, thus becoming capable to identify the object in the context autonomously.

In Kaplan's example, the incorrect description "the man who drinks Martini", was introduced not only because the perceptual appearance suggested strongly that conclusion, but also because the speaker was well aware (for some shared social competence) that the hearer could understand which perceptual elements must be sought given that description (a man holding a glass with a certain form, containing a colorless liquid etc.). Using Peirce's account, we can conclude that the referential definite description refers to the object neither because it is true of it, nor because it merely expresses the intention of the speaker, but because it is *a valid set of instructions to identify the object perceptually* (with a certain degree of confidence yet not with absolute certainty). It is a valid *Precept*.

The solution of the problems pertaining the pure indexicals: vague boundaries

The solution of the problems linked with the indexicals (the vague boundaries and the application to fictional words) is not so immediate. It requires the comparison of Kaplan's theory with a characterization of the semantics of indexicals *which is not directly given by Peirce* but which can be constructed starting from his account.

Kaplanian indexicals

1.1 In Kaplan's theory a character is a rule to go from a context of utterance to an object;

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1.2 The rule prescribes a fixed relation between the context of utterance and the position of the object;

↓

1.3 There is therefore no semantical space for uncertainty;

↓

1.4 The fixation of the reference occurs before the sentence is evaluated: The co-text has therefore no role in fixing the reference.

Peircean indexicals

2.1 The general meaning of a Sub-Index or a Precept (i.e., a linguistic index) can be seen as a rule to go from a point of observation to the *acquaintance* with an object;

↓

2.2 The reaching of this acquaintance can require some inferential step;

↓

2.3 The inferential steps can have a certain degree of uncertainty; the semantical space for uncertainty lies therefore in the gap between the information given by the term alone and the information required for a successful identification**;**

↓

2.4 Some added information may be required to fix the reference; the co-text can be one of the sources for this information.

The case of the vague boundaries is thus easily resolved. In Kaplan's theory, it must be considered just as a pragmatic question which is not mirrored in the *semantic functioning* of the character. In a Peircean theory, on the contrary, it is a semantic question, in so far a term with a vague boundary like "here" *requires* a certain amount of information to fix the reference but actually *gives* only a part of this information, requiring (as a further *necessary* condition) an implementation from other sources before the *semantic function* of fixing the reference can be considered to be complete.

The solution of the problems pertaining the pure indexicals: the shift of point of observation

Finally, the shift of the point of observation shall be taken into consideration, for example when an index is used in a fictional world.

1.1 As already said, Kaplan seems to deny this possibility: the fixation of the referent for every indexical starts with the context of utterance, which is selected by the indexical operator "it is actually the case that...", which he considers as *presupposed* by the use of every indexical term[8].
↓
1.2 Therefore, the indexicals *presuppose* the centering in the actual world: the handling of fictional works is excluded by the semantic account of those terms.

2.1 In Peirce's theory the actual world is not *presupposed* by the index, it is *selected* by it[9]. Using an index, one performs an act, and this act necessarily takes place in the actual world (Peirce 1982-forthcoming, Vol. 5, 225)[10].
↓
2.2 The actuality of the world is given just by the performance of an act of utterance, and not by a semantical element (as the presupposed indexical operator in Kaplan's account). The *semantics* of the term simply prescribes how to reach an acquaintance of the object within the context of the so selected world.
↓
2.3 Since the selection of the world is performative, in presence of suitable conventions (for example narrative conventions)[11] it is possible to perform an act which *selects* another world ("Once upon a time..."). *Within* this world, the semantics of indexicals works the same way to reach an acquaintance with the object starting from *the point of observation which was so performatively constructed.*

Briefly, in Peirce's account the fixation of the reference occurs, as in Kaplan's theory, through semantical rules (a "character") which prescribe how to get to the object from a starting point. Yet, in Kaplan's theory the starting point is presupposed as centered in the actual world; on the contrary, given the Peircean theory of the performative selection of the world, the starting point is *constructed* by the very act of uttering an indexical term, and it can be the actual world or another world *if an element is previously given which makes the performative act one of "setting the scene"* (Castañeda 1989, 79.).

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[8] As already mentioned, this line of reasoning contains a risk of circularity.

[9] "The universe which is the real subject of discourse can only be pointed out – never described... Such showing or pointing out consists in putting me into a physical connection with the thing signified" (Peirce 1982-, Vol. 5, 111); See also Peirce 1982-, Vol. 5, 223-225.

[10] The actuality of the world is (performatively) implied by the actuality of the act, and so no circularity occurs here.

[11] See for example Castañeda's account of narrative setting (Castañeda 1989, 79).

If the semantic rule according to Kaplan is:

(1)   Context of utterance [+ Character] → (2) Object,

a modified version of it which takes Peirce's account into consideration could be:

(1) Act of utterance [performatively selects] → (2) Point of observation [+ Character] → (3) Object.

The semantical space to handle the second case of uncertainty lies in the step from (1) to (2); a piece of information in the co-text (for example, a narrative device) can let us interpret the performative act not as selecting the actual world, but as selecting a possible one.

5.   Conclusion

While in Kaplan's theory there seems to be no way to understand how the semantics of indexicals can give reason of the four cases of uncertainty, Peirce's account does suggest a way. Indexical terms are directly referential because they are based on a spatio-temporally located act of utterance, but can be underdetermined because they have an informative content which is required to identify the object, and the content explicitly stated by the term alone might not be sufficient to perform this task. The completing information, nevertheless, is inferentially *implied* by the term. An index with vague boundaries calls for a focusing by its very meaning. The character of every indexical traces objects within a context which is selected by the act of performing it, and it is not semantically excluded that this context can exist in a fictional world, provided that a linguistic clue is given to decide that this is the case. An incorrect description is nevertheless 'indexically referential' if it works well as *precept* to identify something, provided that some inference *from* the content *to* its perceptual premise is possible and that the perceptual premise is *indexically traceable*.

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