Secţia
ŞTIINŢE SOCIO-UMANE

S U M A R

Section
SOCIO-HUMANISTIC SCIENCES

CONTENTS

REVERSALS OF TRADITIONAL GENDER ROLES IN *THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST*

BY

NICOLETA-MARIANA IFTIMIE[∗]

"Gheorghe Asachi" Technical University of Iaşi
Department of Teacher Training – Foreign Languages

Abstract. Oscar Wilde's plays include a vast gallery of feminine and masculine characters: Lady Windermere, Lord Windermere and Mrs Erlynne in *Lady Windermere's Fan*; Mrs. Arbuthnot, Lord Illingworth, Mrs. Allonby and Hester in *A Woman of No Importance*; Lord Chiltern, Lady Chiltern and Mrs. Cheveley in *An Ideal Husband*; Lady Bracknell, Jack, Algernon, Gwendolen and Cecily in *The Importance of Being Earnest*. In *Lady Windermere's Fan*, although men hold the power, their roles are defined to a great extent by means of their relationship to women: Lord Windermere is a husband-father figure to Lady Windermere, Lord Darlington is her devoted lover, while Lord Augustus is Mrs. Erlynne's obedient, submissive lover. *A Woman of No Importance* introduces a gallery of possessive women who try to impose their ideas and values on the male characters. *An Ideal Husband* stands quite apart from Wilde's other comedies, for the play's ending is in conformity with the Victorian gender role code, according to which women should be gentle, submissive and should always support their male partners. Moreover, while both *Lady Windermere's Fan* and *A Woman of No Importance* propose a re-examination of the 'fallen woman' stereotype, *An Ideal Husband* accepts the conventional views on such women.

The Importance of Being Earnest displays the clear dominance of women over men. Lady Bracknell, Gwendolen, Cecily and Miss Prism are strong-

---

[∗]*e-mail*: nicoletaiftimie@yahoo.co.uk

headed, pragmatic women who take control over their male partners. This is a topsy-turvy world in which the Victorian patriarchal values are reversed: instead of having women who submit to their male counterparts' authority, we meet men who submit to their female partners' whims.

The paper discusses the relationships between the male and female characters in the four main couples of *The Importance of Being Earnest*: Lady Bracknell and her husband, Gwendolen and Jack, Cecily and Algernon, Miss Prism and Canon Chasuble.

Keywords: gender and family roles; the 'angel in the house'; domestic sphere; public sphere; topsy-turvy world.

1. Introduction

While using the well-known melodrama pattern and motifs of contemporary theatre, Wilde's comedies constantly subvert them. The dramatist expanded the principle of paradox to the whole texture of his plays and refused to offer his audiences (and critics) a single, 'true' meaning.

The elusive character of Wilde's plays can also be seen in his handling of the traditional gender role stereotypes. Although ruled by a female monarch, Victorian England was a patriarchal society, in which men, the breadwinners, were allotted the social world, while women, the 'angels in the house', were confined to the domestic, private world, their main duties having to do with raising the children and keeping the house in order. Women who deviated from domestic duties, who were involved in extramarital love affairs or who left their husbands and children were cast off fashionable society both in real life and in the plays of the time. In contemporary plays, full of remorse for their sin, such women found their peace either in a convent or in death. Oscar Wilde took over the contemporary 'woman with a past' stereotype and gave it multiple, non-conformist meanings: in *Lady Windermere's Fan*, Mrs. Erlynne is both a 'fallen woman' and a sacrificial mother who, instead of repenting for her past deeds and going to a convent, gets in the end money and a well-to-do husband; in another play, *A Woman of No Importance*, Wilde makes Mrs. Arbuthnot, the 'woman with a past', a prototype of the Victorian pious woman and sacrificial mother, who in the end punishes Lord Illingworth, her past seducer, by striking him in the face with his glove.

In *The Importance of Being Earnest*, the gender and family roles commonly accepted by Wilde's contemporaries are turned upside down: women who take over the position of the head of the family, girls who reprimand their mothers, self-possessed young women and yielding, effeminate young men. The rest of the paper will analyze the inverted relationships between the sexes, and also between parents and children, as they appear in Wilde's play.

2. Inverted Relationships

2.1. Lady Bracknell and Her Husband

The relationship between the two is somehow 'immaterial', as Lord Bracknell is just an object of discourse throughout the play. He never appears in flesh and blood and, in Jordan's words, his "nonappearance is indeed fitting, almost symbolic, since he is practically a non-person" (1970, p. 103). Gwendolen describes her father in terms that normally apply to the traditional wife and mother stereotype:

> GWENDOLEN: Outside the family circle, papa, I am glad to say, is entirely unknown. I think this is as it should be. The home seems to me to be the proper sphere for the man. And certainly once a man begins to neglect his domestic duties he becomes painfully effeminate, does he not? (Wilde, 1990, p. 362)

Just like Bunbury, Algernon's famous non-appearing invalid friend, Lady Bracknell's husband seems to have some health problems that might impede him from fulfilling his duties as a father. When Gwendolen tells her mother about Jack's marriage proposal, Lady Bracknell says: "When you do become engaged to some one, I, or your father, should his health permit him, will inform you of the fact" (Ibid., p. 331). This statement is in consonance with the traditional relationships between parents and daughters belonging to the upper classes as far as marriages are concerned: marriages, often a matter of financial business, were arranged by the parents and daughters were forced to obey such mercantile arrangements. In this respect, Lady Bracknell, just like the duchess of Berwick in *Lady Windermere's Fan*, fits the Victorian mother role, whereby mothers were supposed to find eligible men for their daughter. She appears as a typical Victorian 'caring' mother who wants to marry her daughter with a man coming from a well-to-do family, who has good financial prospects and a high position in society. That is why Lady Bracknell feels outraged when she finds out that Jack, Gwendolen's suitor and alleged fiancé is a foundling and advises him "to try and acquire some relations as soon as possible, and to make a definite effort to produce at any rate one parent, of either sex" (Ibid., p. 334). Lady Bracknell extends her motherly duties onto Algernon, her nephew: when she is informed that Cecily is a rich young girl, she immediately agrees to her being married to Algernon, who, in her words, is an eligible young man who "has nothing, but looks everything" (Ibid., p. 375) and considers that "[t]he marriage…had better take place quite soon" (Ibid., p. 374).

If, as a mother, Lady Bracknell obeys the canons of the time, she flouts the patriarchal rules according to which a woman's place is at home. In fact, the

couple Lord and Lady Bracknell displays an inverted relationship: the husband stays at home and takes over all the domestic duties, while the wife is out into the world, making invitations for dinner, questioning her daughter's suitors or following her into the countryside.

2.2. Gwendolen and Jack

Gwendolen is, to a great extent, her mother's younger image. In conformity with Victorian accepted standards, we expect to see a refined, somewhat cultivated, fragile, romantic, dependable young lady; we find instead a stubborn, self-possessed, pragmatic young woman, not very different from the satirized version of the New Woman in the epoch. She mentions metaphysics and German scepticism and attends university extension lectures. She is described by Jack as "a sensible, intellectual girl" (Ibid., p. 339). She completely departs from the submissive daughter role and turns well-established clichés and platitudes into their opposite: "Few parents nowadays pay any regard to what their children say to them. The old-fashioned respect for the young is fast dying out" (Ibid., p. 338). Instead of the submissive daughter we come across a young lady that complains about her parents for not obeying her own decisions and whims. This paradoxical attitude must have produced roars of laughter in Wilde's audiences, while also giving them food for thought.

Gwendolen's relationship with Jack is also inverted. The young woman is a cold-blooded, pragmatic and self-possessed person, who, instead of waiting for Jack to carry out his marriage proposal, takes "the whole proceeding out of his hands" (Jordan, 1970, p. 102) and instructs him what to do. When Lady Bracknell, after hearing Jack's confession about the way in which, as a baby, he was found in a hand-bag at Victoria station, declares that she will not permit her daughter "to marry into a cloak-room and form an alliance with a parcel" (Wilde, 1990, p. 334), Gwendolen decides to follow Jack into the countryside. According to the *Doctrine of the Two Spheres*, an old common law principle, women were confined to the domestic, private sphere and "[any] attempt for a woman to enter the public space unaccompanied by a male represented a disgrace" (Iftimie, 2016, p. 475). As a result, young unmarried women who travelled alone, unaccompanied by a male, were regarded as prostitutes. Disregarding this principle, Gwendolen goes to Jack's property in the countryside. Lady Bracknell, who follows her daughter in a luggage train, reprimands her on account of social conventions: "Come, dear (…) we have already missed five, if not six, trains. To miss any more might expose us to comment on the platform" (Wilde, 1990, p. 377).

Gwendolen is a hard-headed young woman, in love with a name rather than a person. Her stubbornness in refusing to give credit to any name (Jack included) but Ernest on account that it "does not thrill" (Ibid., p. 330) points to the shallowness of her 'ideals' and forces Jack to decide to undertake a

christening ceremony, which in the end will prove unnecessary as Jack's real name is Ernest John.

Jack, on the other hand, is a rather ambiguous figure, not only because of his double identity – Ernest in town and Jack in the country –, but also on account of the two main roles he performs when in these settings – Gwendolen's lover in town and Cecily's guardian in the country. Thus, in the country, Jack is a real father figure, taking care of "little Cecily" (Ibid., p. 324), his benefactor's granddaughter. As Cecily's guardian, he is responsible for her future welfare and tries to make sure she will marry an eligible young man. He is also a hard negotiator and consents to Cecily's marriage with Algernon if and only if Lady Bracknell approves of his marriage to Gwendolen. As Gwendolen's fiancé, however, Jack is far from the protector figure he should have been. Not only is he unable to finish his marriage proposal without Gwendolen's help, but he is also ready to change his name for his sweetheart's sake. If we are to speculate on Jack's profile twenty years after, we might realize he will have many points in common with Lord Bracknell.

2.3. Cecily and Algernon

That in Wilde's *Importance of Being Earnest* control is in the hands of women can be seen even more clearly in the case of the relationship between Cecily and Algernon. Algernon, the dandy figure in the play, has invented a permanent invalid friend, Bunbury, in order to be able to go philandering, usually in the countryside. The fact that Jack, his best friend, has a ward named Cecily, gives Algernon the occasion to go philandering once again, hoping to add another 'conquest' to his panoply. However, all his expectations regarding an easy 'conquest' are baffled, for he is the one manipulated by the young woman he thinks he can manipulate. Everything he says is written by Cecily in her diary. It makes him feel uncomfortable to have all his romantic clichés written down and commented upon in cold blood by the very person they are addressed to. Moreover, when he tries to propose to her – "Cecily! you will marry me, won't you?" (Ibid., p. 358) – Algernon is shocked, for he finds out that his 'double', Jack's fictitious brother had already done that three months before: "You silly boy! Of course. Why, we have been engaged for the last three months" (Ibid., p. 360). Algernon finds himself caught in an alternate life for the past months, a life he cannot control, a life that marked his past and will possibly mark his future. The trapper is now trapped in a web of romantic clichés he uses to catch his 'prey', innocent young girls who believe his flamboyant words to be sincere. As Bose points out, "[w]ith each new discovery about their imaginary relationship, he slips further and further into an abyss of uncertainty" (1999, p. 208).

In this parallel existence described in the diary, Algernon has not only been engaged to Cecily for the past three months, but he is also supposed to

have written beautiful love letters and to have exchanged tokens of love he knows nothing about:

> CECILY: (…) Here in this drawer are all the little presents I have given you from time to time, neatly numbered and labelled. This is the pearl necklace you gave me on my birthday. And this is the box in which I keep all your letters" (Wilde, 1990, p. 359).

To please Cecily, Algernon is determined to undertake a baptizing ceremony, just like Jack. If in Jack's case this is no longer necessary (Jack's real name, as pointed out earlier is Ernest John), Algernon's promise remains unfulfilled – the baptism ceremony is not performed by the time the final curtain is drawn.

2.4. Miss Prism and Dr. Chasuble

Another pair is represented by Miss Prism, Cecily's governess, and Canon Chasuble. As Jordan points out, the inverted relationship is the norm in the play where Chasuble "is completely passive, and Prism the (somewhat bumbling) pursuer" (1970, p. 102). Aware of Miss Prism's soft spot for Dr. Chasuble, Cecily manipulates the two in order to get rid of her German lessons: "Miss Prism has just been complaining of a slight headache. I think it would do her so much good to have a stroll with you in the park, Dr. Chasuble" (Wilde, 1990, p. 341).

Cecily's governess is still another woman in Wilde's play who takes charge and does not want a man to arrange her life for her. She tries to manipulate Dr. Chasuble into giving up his celibacy and getting married to her by making him realize that she is an extremely cultivated woman and thus a good match for him: "You are too much alone, dear Dr. Chasuble. You should get married. A misanthrope I can understand – a womanthrope, never!" (Ibid., p. 345). Her making use of many sententious remarks in the wrong context and her coinage of words such as 'womanthrope' prove, in fact, the contrary. Miss Prism embodies in a satirical vein the conflict between appearance – a cultivated woman – and reality –her cultivated spirit is just a sham. This conflict is shown in the completely opposite descriptions made by the other characters:

> LADY BRACKNELL: (…) Is this Miss Prism a female of repellent aspect, remotely connected with education?

> CHASUBLE (*somewhat indignantly*): She is the most cultivated of ladies, and the very picture of respectability.

> LADY BRACKNELL: She is obviously the same person. (Ibid., pp.377-378).

After a short moment of confusion, in which (to Wilde's delight) she is assimilated by Jack (and by the public) to the stereotype of the 'woman with a

past', at the end of the play, Miss Prism is likely to find her happiness in the arms of Canon Chasuble, for, to quote her own sententious remark, "[the] good ended happily, and the bad unhappily" (Ibid., p. 341).

3. Conclusion

In Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* we witness a clear dominance of women over their male partners. As David Parker points out, in this play the women are "generally stronger and more resourceful than the men" (1974, p. 184). They are calm, cold-headed, poised and adaptable: they do not seem to realize the absurdity of their demands on men and can adapt themselves perfectly to the changing situations in the play. The men in the play, on the other hand, live in a perpetual state of confusion, due to the challenges they need to face as a result of the new situations they face.

REFERENCES

Bose S.P., *Women as Figures of Disorder in the Plays of Oscar Wilde*, Ph.D. Thesis, The University of Birmingham, 1999.

Iftimie N.-M., *Travelling Women: The Reconstruction of Self and Gender Roles in 'The Portrait of a Lady'*, The European Proceedings of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Future Academy, pp. 474-481.

Jordan R.J., *Satire and Fantasy in Wilde's 'The Importance of Being* Earnest', Ariel, 1:3 (July 1970),101-109.

Parker D.J., *Oscar Wilde's Great Farce: The Importance of Being Earnest*, in Modem Language Quarterly 35:2 (June 1974).

Wilde O., *The Importance of Being Earnest*, in The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde, Collins, London & Glasgow, 321-384, 1990.

RĂSTURNĂRI ALE ROLURILOR TRADIȚIONALE ÎN COMEDIA
CE ÎNSEAMNĂ SĂ FII ONEST

(Rezumat)

Piesele lui Oscar Wilde includ o galerie largă de pesonaje feminine şi masculine: Lady Windermere, Lordul Windermere şi Mrs. Erlynne în *Evantaiul doamnei Windermere*; Mrs. Arbuthnot, Lordul Illingworth şi Hester în piesa *O femeie fără importanţă*; Lordul Chiltern, Lady Chiltern şi Mrs. Cheveley în *Soţul ideal;* Lady Bracknell, Jack, Algernon, Gwendolen şi Cecily în *Ce înseamnă să fii Onest*. În *Evantaiul doamnei Windermere*, desi puterea este deţinută de bărbaţi, rolurile acestora sunt definite în bună parte prin relaţiile lor cu femeile: Lordul Windermere este un soţ protector, paternalist pentru Lady Windermere, Lordul Darlington este iubitul ei devotat, iar Lordul Augustus o curtează pe doamna Erlynne cu supunere şi obedienţă. *O femeie fără importanţă* introduce o galerie de femei posesive care încearcă să-şi impună

ideile şi valorile asupra personajelor masculine. *Soţul ideal* se distanţează de celelalte comedii prin faptul că finalul piesei se conformează codului Victorian referitor la rolul fiecărui gen, care stipula faptul că femeile trebuie să fie blânde, supuse şi trebuie să-şi sprijine partenerul. Mai mult, în vreme ce *Evantaiul doamnei Windermere* şi *O femeie fără importanţă* propun o reexaminare a stereotipului 'femeii decăzute', *Soţul ideal* pare să accepte vederile convenţionale asupra acestui tip de femei.

Piesa *Ce înseamnă să fii Onest* prezintă dominaţia clară a femeilor asupra bărbaţilor. Lady Bracknell, Gwendolen, Cecily şi Miss Prism sunt femei pragmatice, foarte încăpăţânate, care preiau controlul asupra partenerilor. Ni se înfăţişează o lume în care valorile patriarhale victoriene sunt răsturnate: în locul femeilor care se supun autorităţii bărbaţilor, vedem bărbaţi care se supun capriciilor partenerelor.

Lucrarea discută relaţia dintre personajele masculine şi feminine în cele patru cupluri din *Ce înseamnă să fii Onest*: Lady Bracknell şi soţul său, Gwendolen şi Jack, Cecily şi Algernon, Miss Prism şi Reverendul Chasuble.

A PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION OF LEARNER READING STRATEGIES WHEN RESPONDING TO MULTIPLE CHOICE ITEMS

BY

CHIEN HONG HO and PAUL BLEWCHAMP*

Shih Chien University, Kaohsiung Campus, Taiwan

Abstract. This paper reports on a preliminary study examining the reading strategies adopted by undergraduate English majors when responding to multiple choice questions (MC) on a simulated test. The participants, five learners from a university in Taiwan, were asked to comment on their strategy use while responding to MC items and upon completion of the sample texts were asked to give detailed explanations of their strategy selection. The results support previous findings that when answering MC items, test-takers use strategies that are quite different from those they employ in non-testing situations. Additionally, the study shows that in the case of a high-stakes English language proficiency test (TOEIC), reading strategies are almost exclusively driven by the test (MC) format. Learners begin each text by responding to the MC test items sequentially, paying little or no regard to text type and employing limited reading strategies. Due to the small sample size, further research is necessary to confirm the findings suggested by this study.

Keywords: reading theory; test-taking strategies; multiple choice items; think-aloud.

1. Introduction

This paper presents the findings of a pilot study investigating the strategies used by test-takers of the TOEIC Test (Test of English for

---

*Corresponding author: *e-mail*: paul@g2.usc.edu.tw

International Communication) a large-scale language test offered by ETS (Education Testing Service) based in Princeton. The focus of this study is on the final section of the TOEIC Reading Test (Part 7), which presents test takers with multiple choice test items. In non-testing situations, readers may have a variety of reasons to read a text. However, answering a series of multiple-choice questions is specific to language testing. In this study five learners are asked to perform a think-aloud process while responding to test items and are subsequently interviewed about the strategies they use. In addition to gaining preliminary insights into the strategies learners use when answering MC questions, this study is designed to explore the feasibility of carrying out a large-scale investigation of TOEIC test-taking reading strategies using a think-aloud process.

2. The Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC)

The TOEIC Test is divided into two tests: Listening and Reading and Speaking and Writing. This study focuses on the last section of the Reading and Listening Test: Part 7 and refers to the pre-2018 revised version of the test. The final section (Part 7) of the Reading Test presents test-takers with reading passages and contains MC items that test global and local understanding. The final section consists of four pairs of reading passages with five questions per pair (ETS Examinee handbook 2018). This study uses items based on the pre-2018 revisions to the test (see ETS Examinee Handbook 2018).

The Listening and Reading test is taken by around seven million test-takers world-wide (TOEIC workshop Kaohsiung, July 2018). Test performance for the reading section by geographic region shows that Asia Region has the lowest mean score for the reading section (2017 Report on Test Takers Worldwide, ETS, p. 4). Test-takers in Taiwan have a mean Reading Test score of 244, and a mean listening score of 300, indicating that the reading section is more difficult (2017 Report on Test Takers Worldwide, ETS, p.5). This trend is reflected in the institution in Taiwan where the authors teach. Observation of learners taking simulation tests and informal reporting reveals that towards the end of the test, learners are tired and do not always complete the reading test or do so without paying full attention to the questions.

3. Reading Models

Following several decades of research into both the L1 and L2 reading process, reading is now seen as a complex interactive process combining lexical and syntactic knowledge, referred to as "bottom-up" processing (Nunan, 1991), "top down" or cognitive processing which includes the application of prior knowledge, forming and testing hypotheses (Goodman,1967), and schema theory (Rumelhart,1977). Cognitive processing has been expanded to include metacognition (Block,1992). Metacognition refers to a range of strategies used by the reader to process text. These include previewing text, using contextual

cues, making inferences to make sense of a text and to monitor ongoing understanding.

Theoretical models of the reading process (Kintsch, 1998; Stanovich, 1984; Perfetti, 1997) integrate efficient lexical and syntactical processing, interaction between the reader and text (prior knowledge and schemata) to form a coherent mental picture of a text. The strategies that are used by readers to process text have received increased attention in recent years.

4. Reading Strategies

Researchers have noted that there is overlap between a skill and a strategy (Alderson, 2000), but point out that strategies differ from skills in that skills refer to automatic information processing techniques that are applied unconsciously to a text, whereas strategies are techniques that are applied consciously to achieve a particular goal (Carrell, 1989; Alderson, 2000).

In recent years, research into the use of metacognitive strategies has received increased attention (Mokhtari & Sheorey, 2002; Anderson, 2002; Chen *et al*., 2009; Yuksel & Yuksel, 2011). Research has linked awareness of metacognitive strategies to L2 reading success. Mokhtari & Sheorey (2002) report that compared to less skilled readers, effective L2 readers are able to utilize, reflect on, and monitor cognitive processes while reading. Proficient L2 readers employ a range of global metacognitive strategies (*e.g*., monitoring, commenting, querying about the text, and inferring), while less-proficient students utilize more local strategies (*e.g*., word solving and rephrasing) and are rather limited in their knowledge of metacognitive reading strategies.

5. Reading and Testing

As Alderson stated (2000), reading is a purposeful activity, and the purpose for reading shapes the way a reader engages with a text. In non-testing situations readers may read for a variety of reasons, whereas in English language learning, reading is (usually) undertaken to respond to a set of post-reading questions. Responding to comprehension questions is likely to influence the reading process. Rupp *et al* (2006) state that:

> "The action of assessing a certain level of textual comprehension with MC questions changes (the reading) process itself and induces supplementary processes that are, in their intensity, unique for the testing context" (p.442).

The study by Rupp *et al*. (2006) showed that when learners respond to reading passages with multiple-choice questions, the item type influences the reading process of test-takers. They point out that learners responding to MC items view reading as a problem-solving task rather than a comprehension task, select strategies that they apply to all MC items but may vary depending on the

nature of the text and the type of item. They conclude that by addressing the MC items, learners process the text in segments and this is unlikely to lead to the formation of a coherent mental representation of the text.

6. Research Purpose

The research presented in this paper forms a preliminary study for a larger investigation of test-taking strategies in the reading section (Part 7) of the TOEIC Test with the objective of improving test scores by analyzing strategies that test-takers adopt. As noted above, the TOEIC test is a high-stakes test for students in Taiwan and test performance on the reading section is particularly challenging; thus Part 7, coming at the end of the two-hour test impacts the final test score. Informal observation of simulations tests shows learners suffer from test fatigue and many learners do not finish this section.

This study has two goals. The first is to determine the extent to which the target population are able to perform a think-aloud and to reflect on their strategy use in preparation for a larger study. While the ability to perform a think aloud can be a challenge for some participants (Alderson, Lecture notes Lancaster University, 1992), they are a valuable source of qualitative data (Cresswell, 1998) and provide an insight into mental processes during am otherwise hidden process of reading and test taking.

The second goal is to gain initial insights into test-taker strategy use on the TOIEC reading test items.

7. Participants

Five participants (all undergraduate students with an English Language major) were chosen for the study. All English majors (at the university where the researchers teach) are required to obtain a TOIEC score of 700 to graduate (or an equivalent sore on a recognized proficiency test). Two of the participants have not taken the TOIEC Test, but had taken simulation tests (Trew, 2013, Tactics for TOIEC). Scores for Part 7 of the test are not reported separately; therefore, the table below shows the scores of the participants for the reading section as a whole. Based on these scores, Participants A, B and C are considered low-proficiency readers and D and E high-proficiency readers.

Table 1
Participants Score on the Reading Section of the TOEIC TEST

Participants	TOEIC simulation	TOEIC score
Participant A	50	–
Participant B	100	–
Participant C	–	200
Participant D	–	350
Participant E	–	380

8. Instrument

For this investigative study, two reading passages from Part 7 of the pre-2018 format of the TOIEC test were selected from a TOIEC simulation test published by Oxford University Press (purchased by the university at which the researchers teach).

9. Method

The participants were presented with two reading passages which consisted of a newspaper "style" passage and an advertisement for conference facilities in the form of two paragraphs. Each student was asked to report on their actions while responding to the test items using either English or their native language Mandarin or a mixture - one of the researchers is a native speaker of Mandarin. At the completion of each reading passage the participants were asked to explain how they had responded to the items and after completing both texts they were asked about test strategies they had been taught. The researchers would make independent notes of observable action (or non-action) as participants responded to the test items.

10. Results and Discussion

The most interesting finding of this study is that the reading process was almost entirely driven by the test method – MC questions. All the participants immediately looked at the MC items and four of the five participants proceeded to answer the test items sequentially. This strategy was the result of experience (Participant A, B, and E) or a realization of the time constraint of the TOEIC test (Participant E) or advice from teachers (Participant C), and is true for both proficient and less proficient readers.

Only Participant D did not respond sequentially to the items. She read all of the questions, but not the options and then began a careful reading of the text before returning to the MC items.

This result is somewhat in contrast to the findings of Rupp *et al*. (2006) where the nature of the text, perception of difficulty and length interacted with perceived MC item difficulty in strategy selection. Post-response interviews with the participants of this study revealed that they were, to varying degrees, aware of text-based strategies (*e.g.* scanning for main idea, topic, text-type) but believed that given the time constraint, a more effective strategy is to immediately respond to the MC items:

I know some ways to read from my reading class. I can get the .. you know .. it is an advertisement, letter…and or topic..main idea like that….but I can save time by just reading the questions..sometimes they are easy. (Participant E).

The less proficient students, A, B and C felt that by immediately answering the questions was "a way into" the text and could compensate for lack of linguistic knowledge. These participants were aware of their linguistic limitations which only served to reinforce the strategy of immediately answering the MC items. Participant B:

I know my English is not so good, especially vocabulary so I do not have time to finish all the questions… so I must hurry. (Translation).

Having chosen the strategy of ignoring the text and immediately reading the MC items, all but one of the participants then proceeded to answer the questions sequentially. This strategy was noted by Rupp *et al* (2006), but was contingent upon the test-takers perceiving the questions to be easy, whereas for the participants in this study it was an "automatic" strategy.

Participant D (with a relatively high reading test score) differed from the other participants in that she read all the questions first (but not the options) and then proceeded to read the whole text. In the post-response interview, she later confirmed that this was her strategy for all texts, but admitted that she did not finish the final part of the test and guessed at some items. Her purpose in reading the questions was to form an idea of the text and to try to remember the key words.

"I want to get an idea of the content and try to remember the words as I read. Then when I look for the answers I can find them in the text." (Translation)

The reading process of this participant appears to be more in line with models of the reading process in which the reader builds up a coherent mental structure of the text. Observation of her performance on the sample texts revealed that after reading the text, she was able to locate the answer to a "main idea" question, but still referred to the options before selecting her answer. For items requiring local cues, she checked options with sections of the text, a process characterized by a considerable back and forth between the text and the options. The approach of this participant suggests a "risk aversion" strategy, and despite reading the whole text, adopted a careful elimination process when seeking the answer. In the post-response interview, D reported that she guessed one item in the two passages in this study, and when she took the TOEIC Test she did not finish Part 7.

In contrast, Participant E was a skilled proponent of the strategy of focusing on the items to shape her reading of the text. She would process the questions one at a time and in order. Having found what she believed to be the answer, she did not read the remaining options. She used scanning to answer items requiring the identification of numbers and names again disregarding

remaining options when she believed she had found the answer. E's attitude to the test was revealed when confronted with an item: "Which of the following is NOT true about…." Participant E said (in Chinese), "I hate this kind of item", her reason being she may have to read the text more carefully. Yet, when she had found what she believed to be the answer, she disregarded the remaining options.

The one exception to immediately reading the MC questions occurred with a text that had a font size that was much larger than the text of the passage. Participant E said that it attracted her attention and gave her an "idea of the topic". The first text, (newspaper article) also had a title, but with a much smaller font size. The notes of both researchers revealed that the participants (including Participant E) did not look at the headline of this text before looking at the MC questions. Participant E was specifically asked if she had looked at the title of the first passage and reported that she had not done so. This would indicate that text layout, in particular contrasts in font size, may contribute to text processing.

Further research into the preferred strategies of proficient readers may determine the effectiveness of D's strategy, characterized by a careful reading of the text, compared to the strategy adopted by Participant E.

11. Item Type

While this preliminary study did not specifically focus on the effect of item type, some observations can be made. In fact, how Participant E responded to the question "Which of the following is NOT true about …" revealed insights into the relationship of the options and models of the reading process. The first option contained a number which she scanned for and spent some time finding as it was in the last sentence of the text. The second option (the correct response) was identified correctly as it referred to "Japan" which the participant recalled she had seen when answering Item 1 (main idea) and remembered thinking why is "Japan" here as it is about a tunnel in Europe. Having identified the second option as the correct response, she moved on to the next item, disregarding the last two options. This example is the only illustration of where linking of key words and logical thinking induced at least a partial mental representation of the text. Further research into item type on the TOEIC test may reveal the relationship between the MC item and reading comprehension.

We will now briefly discuss the strategies used by the less proficient learners. All three participants (A, B, and C) followed the general strategy of immediately looking at the MC items.

Participant A's main strategy is to first read the questions and answer them sequentially scanning for vocabulary in the options. The post-response interview revealed that this participant had received little training in reading strategies and resorted to guessing often choosing the longest answer or word.

He pointed out that he did not understand the vocabulary in the options and text. Lack of lexical knowledge prevented "A" from employing other strategies and he reported skipping unknown words and guessing, based on the strategy of selecting the longest sentence or longest word.

Participants B and C looked at the MC items first and followed the strategy of immediately reading the questions and answering them sequentially. They responded to the item type, scanning the text for lexis, names and numbers that corresponded to those in the options. C differed from B, perhaps reflecting her higher proficiency in that she would stop looking at the options if she thought she had the answer. B, less confident, would look at all the options and would go back and forth between the options and the text, searching for a connection, usually via similarities in lexis. The results for these participants serve to highlight the importance of lexis, and "bottom up" processing for low proficiency learners.

12. Underlining and Highlighting

The TOEIC Test regulations do not allow underlining or highlighting key words or phrases, a key strategy employed by the participants in the study conducted by Rupp *et al*. (2006). It was noticed that as a possible compensatory strategy, participants in this study used the reverse end of their pencil or their finger to trace key words, especially when moving back and forth between an option and the text. They paused over a "key" word in the text and traced the option in the MC item with their finger in an attempt to match lexis. All participants stated that they would like to be able to mark in the test book:

"It would help me to remember key words." (Participant C).

Research allowing learners the option of highlighting key words may reveal the effect this limitation has on text processing and the speed at which the items are answered.

13. Think-Aloud

As noted above, not all participants are able to perform well in the think-aloud technique, and such was the case in this study, leading the researchers to consider training students before conducting the larger study.

14. Conclusion

This study supports the findings of previous studies that show that MC items influence the selection of response strategies that do not conform to the theoretical models of reading in non-test-taking contexts (Rupp *et al*., 2006). Moreover, the choice of strategy in Part 7 of the TOEIC test appears to be

almost exclusively driven by the MC items interacting with perceived time constraints and in the case of low-proficiency readers lack of linguistic knowledge. In addition, results indicate that attention to text type plays little or no role in determining reading test strategy for MC items.

Further research with a larger population sample and a larger range of texts and item types is needed to investigate factors that emerge from this study. These include the extent to which learners (especially high-proficiency learners) are aware of reading strategies, yet choose to disregard them when taking the TOEIC reading Test (Part 7), and the effectiveness of sequentially answering test items compared to processing the whole text before answering test items and compensatory strategies adopted by low proficiency learners.

REFERENCES

Alderson, J. C., *Assessing Reading*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Anderson N. J., *The Role of Metacognition in Second/Foreign Language Teaching and Learning*, ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics, 2002.

Block E.L., *See How They Read: Comprehension Monitoring of L1 and L2 Readers*, TESOL Quarterly, *26*, 2 (1992).

Carrell P.L., *Metacognitive Awareness and Second Language Reading*, Modern Language Journal, **73**, 121-134 (1989).

Chen M.H., Gualberto P.J., Tameta C.L., *The Development of Metacognitive Analysis*, TESOL Journal, **1**, 43-57 (2009).

Creswell J.W., *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*, Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage 1998.

Goodman K.S., Reading: *A Psycholinguistic Guessing Game*, 1967, https://www. csie.ntu.edu.tw/~r99922026/tmp_zero/Reading_A_Psycholinguistic_Guessing _Game.pdf .

Kintsch W., *Comprehension: A Paradigm for Cognition*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Mokhtari K., Sheory R., *MeasuringESL Students' Awareness of Reading Strategies*, Journal of Developmental Education, **25**, *3*, 2-10 (2002).

Nunan D.M., *Language Teaching Methodology*, Herfordshire, Prentice Hall International, 1991.

Perfetti C.A., *Sentences, Individual Differences, and Multiple Texts: Three Issues in Text Comprehension*, Discourse Processes, **23**, 337-355 (1997).

Rumelhart D.E., *Toward an Interactive Model of Reading*, in S. Dornic (Ed.), *Attention and Performance IV*, New York, NY, American Press, 1977.

Rupp A.A., Ferne T., Choi, H., *How Assessing Reading Comprehension with Multiple-Choice Questions Shapes the Construct: A Cognitive Processing Perspective*, Language Testing, **23**, *4*, 441-474 (2006).

Stanovich K.E., *The Interactive-Compensatory Model of Reading: A Confluence of Developmental, Experimental and Educational Psychology*, Research Article, 1984, https://doi.org/10.1177/074193258400500306.

Trew G., *Tactics for the TOEIC Test, Listening and Reading Test*, Oxford, Oxford
    University Press, 2017.
Yüksel I., Yüksel I., *Metacognitive Awareness of Academic Reading Strategies*,
    Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences 31 894-898, (2012).
* * * ETS, 2017 Report on Test Takers Worldwide, ETS, https://www.ets.org/s/toeic/
    pdf/2017-report-on-test-takers-worldwide.pdf.
* * * ETS Examinee Handbook, 2018, https://www.ets.org/s/toeic/pdf/examinee-
    handbook-for-toeic-listening-reading-test-updated.pdf.

O INVESTIGAȚIE PRELIMINARĂ ASUPRA STRATEGIILOR DE CITIRE ÎN RĂSPUNSURILE LA TESTE GRILĂ

(Rezumat)

Această lucrare se prezintă ca un studiu preliminar ce examinează strategiile de citire utilizate de studenții facultății de limba engleză atunci când rezolvă un test grilă simulat. Participanților, cinci studenți la o universitate din Taiwan, li s-a cerut să comenteze asupra strategiilor utilizate în timp ce răspundeau itemilor din testul grilă, iar după citirea textelor li s-a cerut să furnizeze explicații ample referitoare la strategiile selectate. Rezultatele susțin constatările anterioare referitoare la testele grilă conform cărora în timpul testelor se utilizează strategii care nu sunt utilizate în alte situații. Pe lângă aceasta, studiul indică și faptul că în cazul unor teste importante (TOEIC), strategiile de citire sunt determinate aproape exclusiv de formatul testului. Cursanții încep prin a răspunde itemilor de manieră secvențială, fără a acorda atenție sau acordând puțină atenție tipului de text și utilizând strategii de citire limitate. Dat fiind numărul mic de participanți, se impun cercetări ulterioare pentru a confirma constatările sugerate de prezentul studiu.

THEMATIC METAPHORS IN IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS ILLUSTRATED WITH EXAMPLES FROM ENGLISH, GERMAN, SPANISH, PORTUGUESE AND ROMANIAN

BY

BIANCA-IULIANA MISINCIUC[∗]

"Gheorghe Asachi" Technical University of Iaşi
Department of Teacher Training – Foreign Languages

Abstract. Language is shaped by life experiences and we see how occupations, leisure activities and common practices are reflected in language, due to their significance in the evolution of mankind and in the forming of communities. Idiomatic expressions contain aspects of reality which are transformed into metaphors that make figurative references, adding depth and enriching the discourse, and they stand as testimonies and mirrors of the past. Idioms tell stories of history and culture, encompassing aspects that are specific or relatable to people in general and notions that define the human being. References to various activities become imprinted onto language in the form of metaphors that can be classified into different themes, based on the realities that they stem from: hunting, sailing, fighting practices, spirituality in its many forms, arts, magic, religiousness, trades and handicrafts, sports, games and even technology. These themes or conceptual domains around which metaphors and idioms are centered are universal and can be found in many different languages; this is proven through examples from two Germanic languages – English and German, and three Romance languages – Spanish, Portuguese and Romanian. Along with many similarities, contrast can be found as well, and observing the different ways in which certain concepts are illustrated in different languages gives us a taste of linguistic and cultural uniqueness.

Keywords: thematic metaphors; idiomatic expressions; primordial activities, occupations and practices; spirituality; games and sports; comparative view.

[∗]Corresponding author: *e-mail*: iuliana_misinciuc@yahoo.com

1. Introduction

A great number of idiomatic expressions are based on metaphors and symbols that are generated by different human activities, ranging from the oldest to the most recent ones and including hunting, sailing, magic, art, trades and crafts, military service, card games and sports. Metaphor-generating situations in a particular activity are repetitive or typical situations with the potential of becoming ingrained in the mind and implicitly in language and thus situations that are likely to be adopted, generalized and used as analogies. Such metaphors can be referred to as *thematic metaphors*. Just like conceptual metaphors, which underlie perception and communication (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), thematic metaphors show the tight connection between practical, physical realities and mental representations. In the attempt to capture aspects of contrast and universality, the idiomatic expressions that will be used for the illustration of thematic metaphors have been chosen from five languages – English, German, Spanish, Portuguese and Romanian, and they have been selected from monolingual or bilingual dictionaries and collections of phrases, which also offer details about their origin and meaning: J. Siefring, *The Oxford Dictionary of Idioms*; R. Köster, *Duden-Redensarten: Herkunft und Bedeutung*; A.B. Jiménez, *Diccionario de dichos y frases hechas*; J. J. Almeida, *Dicionário aberto de calão e expressões idiomáticas*; G. Bărbulescu, *Mic dicţionar frazeologic portughez-român şi român-portughez*; S. Dumistrăcel, *Expresii româneşti. Biografii – motivaţii*.

2. Thematic Metaphors

Hunting is one of the oldest activities undertaken by men for both necessity and pleasure, and this makes it a prolific fountain of metaphorical idiomatic expressions. The English phrase **to beat about the bush** (or **to beat around the bush**) has the meaning of being evasive or attempting to find something out without asking someone directly about it. The expression originates in the hunter's method of discovering hidden animals. There is a full lexical equivalent in German – **auf den Busch klopfen** and partial equivalents or correspondents in the other languages: Spanish – **andarse por las ramas** (to be walking around the branches), Portuguese – **andar com rodeios** (to be taking detours), Romanian – **a o da pe după piersic/vişin** (to be walking around the peach tree/cherry tree). These expressions contain conceptual metaphors that rely on a beautiful allegory, where the act of communication becomes a conceptual domain and is spatially represented in language: conversation is metaphorically translated as a path, the act of speaking becomes an act of walking or wandering, the intention and the objective are the departure and destination points, understanding is arriving, arguments are steps, indirectness is

walking in circles and the interlocutors are travelers crossing the same road (Rădulescu, 2006).

Other idioms contain metaphors that allude to hunting practices and actual ways to catch the prey: English *a red herring*, with the German full equivalent *ein roter Hering*, referring to a maneuver that is meant to distract, to mislead, to divert attention and deriving from the practice of teaching hounds to follow trails by using the scent of a smoked herring; the German phrase *jemandem auf den Leim gehen* (literally: to go on someone's glue, adapted: to be trapped on someone's glue) refers to being deceived, mislead or fooled by someone and the expression alludes to the birdlime used by bird catchers; this expression does not have a full lexical equivalent in the other chosen languages, but there are semantically corresponding expressions that have the same meaning. However, there is full lexical equivalence between the following phrases: English *to fall into someone's trap*, German *jemandem in die Falle gehen*, Spanish *caer en la trampa* and Romanian *a cădea in capcana cuiva*; the same idea can be illustrated through a similar set of equivalent expressions with only one slight change: German *jemandem ins Netz gehen* and Romanian *a-i cădea cuiva in plasă* (to fall into someone's net). Fishing is referenced in idioms such as: Romanian *a muşca/inghiți momeala* (to bite/swallow the bait), Spanish *morder el anzuelo* (to bite the hook), Portuguese *morder a isca/o anzol* (to bite the bait/the fishhook).

In the context of hunting, the senses are very important, both from the perspective of the hunter, and from that of the pray; this leads to metaphorical associations between animal and human behaviour, based particularly on the sense of smell. Stemming from hunting jargon, the German expressions *Wind von etwas bekommen* (to receive wind of something) and *Witterung von etwas bekommen* (to receive scent of something) and the English equivalent *to get scent of something*, all metaphorically describe the ability to notice or to detect something, based on the association with wild animals' sharp and accurate sense of smell. The same conceptual connections can be observed in the Romance languages: Spanish *darle algo a alguien en la nariz* (something comes to one's nose), Romanian *a nu mirosi (a) bine* (to not smell good), illustrating the sense of smell as the sense of intuition, a way to perceive that something is wrong or dangerous, and Portuguese *andar de nariz no ar* (to be walking with one's nose in the air), meaning to be cautious and distrustful.

Sailing is another primordial activity that is defining for mankind and represents the origin of many fixed phrases and the context in which they can be understood; the influence of sailing on language is visible in the numerous idiomatic expressions that use nautical metaphors. This is valid especially for the English language, given Great Britain's geographic location and the country's history as a maritime empire; many thematic metaphors are centered around sailing as a conceptual domain and this is visible in British English and American English expressions, such as: *to be in deep waters*, meaning in

difficulty; *between wind and water*, referring to a vulnerable position; *between the devil and the blue sea*, expressing a dilemmatic situation in the form of being caught between two equally dangerous alternatives; *the tip of the iceberg*, describing the small perceptible part of a much larger situation; *when one's ship comes in/home*, meaning when their fortune is made, again showing the importance of sailing and the place it used to occupy in the life of the society; *shipshape and Bristol fashion*, meaning in very good order, where both parts of the expression are related to sailing – on the one hand the word "shipshape", and on the other the allusion to Bristol, an English port renowned for its commercial prosperity and well-organized shipping. In this case, the toponym gives the expression even more specific cultural relevance.

But references to sailing are made in all languages, generally with the same or very similar connotations, as it is illustrated through the following fixed phrases: German *die Segel streichen*, with the English equivalent *to strike sail* and the Romanian correspondent *a închina steagul* (to surrender one's flag), meaning to acknowledge inferiority or defeat; Romanian *a i se îneca corăbiile cuiva* (someone's ships are sinking), referring to a very bad mood and low spirits; Spanish *llegar a buen puerto* (to arrive to a good port), Romanian *a ajunge la liman* (to arrive to the shore) and the semantically similar Spanish expression *salir a flote*, with the Romanian equivalent *a reveni pe linia de plutire* (to be floating again), all referring to coming out from a difficult or dangerous situation; Portuguese *levantar âncora*, meaning to set out on a journey or simply to start something; Romanian *a se lăsa dus de val* (to let oneself get carried away by the wave) and the Portuguese correspondent *deixar o barco correr* (to let the boat float away), describing someone who leaves things to chance; Spanish *ir algo a toda vela* (to be going in full sail) or *ir algo viento en popa* (to be going with the wind on the stern), with the Portuguese equivalent *ir de vento em popa*, all make reference to something that is going very well and favorably. The same idea can also be expressed by means of allusion to ground transportation: Spanish *ir algo sobre ruedas*, Portuguese *correr sobre rodas*, Romanian *a merge ca pe roate* (something is going as if it were on wheels).

Many idiomatic expressions stem from *trades* and *handicrafts* that have existed since the oldest times. The specific and specialized language of a group of workers becomes a collective entity that can be adopted into standard language, giving rise to metaphorical fixed phrases. The following examples originate in the language of blacksmiths, millers and woodmen: the German expression *zwischen Hammer und Amboss sein* (to be between the hammer and the anvil) has a full equivalent in Romanian – *a fi între ciocan şi nicovală*, but not in English, where the closest correspondent is *to be between the devil and the deep sea*, inspired from a sailing scenario, proving that some idioms have lexical equivalents in unrelated languages, but not in kindred languages; these phrases refer to a very risky situation where someone is caught between

two equally dangerous alternatives, or to someone's incapacity to make a decision; the same idea can also be expressed differently – Spanish *estar entre la espada y la pared* (to be between the sword and the wall) and the Portuguese full equivalent *entre a espada e a parede*, illustrating a situation from a different thematic field, in this case a fighting scene; the humorous version in Spanish is represented by the expression *entre la cruz y el agua bendita (el diablo se agita)* (between the cross and the holy water the devil becomes restless), putting things in a different light and illustrating the devil's perspective on trouble; on the other hand, the German idiom *den Nagel auf den Kopf treffen* has a full equivalent in English – *to hit the nail right on the head*, but not in Romanian, where the correspondent is *a pune punctul pe "i"* (to put the dot on the "i"), meaning to capture the essential point or the key aspect of something, with the Portuguese equivalent *pôr os pingos nos is*; here we see an example of convergence between languages that belong to the same family; the German expression *Wasser auf jemandes Mühlen sein* (to be water for somebody's mill), referring to something that is useful or necessary, is found in English with a slight lexical change – *to be grist for somebody's mill*; the Romanian similar expression *a-i da apă la moară cuiva* (to give water to somebody's mill) means to encourage, to stimulate or to create a favorable situation for someone and on the same note, the Portuguese phrase *levar a água ao seu moinho* (to bring the water to one's own mill) refers to serving one's own interests and doing actions that are only beneficial for oneself; lastly, the German idiom *in die gleiche Kerbe hauen* (to chop into the same notch) has the figurative meaning of holding the same view or opinion as someone else and standing by their side, making reference to woodmen or lumberjacks and to the activity of woodcutting.

However, appearances can be deceiving when it comes to the origin and meaning of idiomatic expressions. The English phrase *to come under the hammer* (or *to go under the hammer*) and the German equivalent *unter den Hammer kommen*, do not make reference to the craft of smithery, but to the practice of auctioning, where a small wooden hammer called "gavel" can be used by the auctioneer to signal a sale; thus the meaning of the two expressions is that of being sold at an auction.

Spirituality in its many forms represents a crucial aspect of people's lives, a nucleus that exerts influence on the mindset and the language. The English expression *to pull a rabbit out of the hat*, with the German equivalent *ein Kaninchen aus dem Hut zaubern*, means to do something surprising or unexpected and refers to an iconic and representative magic trick. Superstition also belongs to spirituality and represents an aspect of culture and tradition, as it illustrates common mentalities and groupthink. Superstitious beliefs can be elements of cultural uniqueness or convergence; for instance, the belief in predicting the future based on cards, stars or palm lines is depicted in fully or partially equivalent expressions: Romanian *a ghici în cărți* (to guess [the future]

from the cards), Spanish *echar las cartas* (to throw the cards), Romanian *a citi în stele*, Spanish *leer el futuro en las estrellas* (to read the future in the stars), Romanian *a citi în palmă*, Spanish *leer la mano* (to read the palm).

Art is also a source of metaphorical idiomatic expressions; for example, numerous phrases are connected to the world of theatre, a very complex form of art, whose history and evolution are tightly connected to those of humanity: English *to play a part/no part in something*, German *eine/keine Rolle spielen*, Romanian *a juca un rol important* (to play an important part); English *behind the scenes*, German *hinter der Szene*, Romanian *în culise*; Spanish *entrar en escena*, Portuguese *entrar em cena*, Romanian *a intra în scenă* (to enter the scene); Spanish *dejar la escena*, Portuguese *sair da cena*, Romanian *a părăsi scena* (to leave the scene). Theatre also inspires the English phrases *to appear on the scene* and *to bring someone to the scene*, whose approximate correspondents in German are based on the theme of military combat: *auf den Plan treten* (to appear on the battle field) and *jemanden auf den Plan rufen* (to call someone to the battle field).

Moreover, puppetry, which is a form of theatre and implicitly, an ancient form of art, represents the origin of the English fixed phrases *to pull the strings*, with the German equivalent *die Strippen ziehen* and *to pull (a few) strings*, with the German correspondent *seine Beziehungen spielen lassen* (to let one's relations play their part); although the two English expressions are very similar and both allude to the image of a puppeteer manipulating a marionette, one word makes the difference in meaning, in this case the definite article "the"; respectively, the first phrase means to be secretly in control of events or people's actions, and the second one refers to making use of one's influence and connections to unjustly gain an advantage; the exact same distinction is also noticeable in Romanian between *a trage sforile* and *a trage (nişte) sfori*, where the enclitic definite article "le" makes the difference in semantic nuance. These examples highlight the semantic significance of small lexical differences.

Religion is an extensive branch and expression of spirituality and it has the power to organize ideas and conceptions around it. A Christian convention is reflected in the English expression *a red-letter day*, referring to a saint's day in Church calendars, which has acquired the figurative meaning of a happy day.

Fighting is an instinct and sometimes a necessity, both in the animal world and in the world of people; although peace and harmony represent the better choice, fighting has been in the human nature since the beginning of times, whether it was for defense purposes, for honor, justice, or for entertainment. The thematic field of fighting is illustrated in the following partially equivalent expressions: English *to throw down the gauntlet* (or *to throw down the glove*), German *jemandem den Fehdehandschuh hinwerfen* (to throw the feud glove at someone), Spanish *tirarle el guante a alguien*, Portuguese *atirar a luva*, Romanian *a arunca mănuşa*; and respectively

English *to take up the gauntlet* (or *the glove*), German *den Fehdehandschuh aufnehmen* (to pick up the feud glove), Spanish *recoger el guante*, Portuguese *levantar a luva*, Romanian *a ridica mănuşa*; these expressions represent elevated and sophisticated ways of referring to someone stirring or accepting a challenge and they illustrate fighting practices in medieval times, when knights would instigate each other to fight for honor and other purposes. In the Germanic languages, the English phrase is opaque to someone who is not familiar with the original context and the historic explanation, as it uses the word "gauntlet", which depicts the metal glove that was worn by knights as part of their armor, while the German phrase uses a compound word that makes the expression more literal, more transparent and easier to decipher.

A swordsmen's trick that was also used during fights in the arena to deceive one's adversary, gave rise to the following lexically equivalent expressions: English *to throw sand/dust into somebody's eyes*, German *jemandem Sand in die Augen streuen*, Spanish *echar arena en los ojos de alguien*, Portuguese *jogar areia/poeira nos olhos de alguém*, Romanian *a arunca praf în ochii cuiva*.

The expressions *to march to a different drum* (or *to march to a different drummer*), particularly used in American English and *to march to a different tune*, mainly used in British English, refer to someone who is unconventional or behaves differently from the others; the meaning derives from the military march, a regular and ordered walking of military formations, where all soldiers follow a synchronized step, guided by the sound of musical instruments, usually drums; the following English expressions that are similar to the ones mentioned above illustrate the same idea based on the same image: *to break ranks* and *to step out of line*, with lexical equivalents in Romanian – *a ieşi din rând* and Portuguese – *sair da linha*, and a semantic correspondent in German – *aus der Reihe tanzen* (to dance out of the line). Contrastively, the Portuguese phrase *andar na linha* (to walk in line) refers to behaving in a controlled, civilized manner, according to established rules. The military scene also represents the source of the following partially equivalent expressions: English *to be in the line of fire* or *to come into the firing line*, German *in der Schusslinie stehen* or *in die Schusslinie geraten*, Romanian *a fi în bătaia puştii*, referring to someone who is fiercely criticized; and the equivalent expressions: English *to lay down one's arms*, German *die Waffen strecken*, Spanish *deponer las armas*, Romanian *a depune armele*, meaning to surrender and concede victory to somebody else.

Metaphorical idiomatic expressions can also originate from *customs, common practices, leisure activities, games, sports:* by metonymy, the English expression **to cut the ribbon** stands for performing an opening ceremony; idiomatic expressions that are connected to sports stem from the principles or the rules involved: English *to blow the whistle on someone*, illustrating a football regulation and referring to the action of publicly revealing the fact that

someone is doing something bad or illicit; *to keep one's eye on the ball*, meaning to be focused and concentrated; *to take a rain check on something*, used in North American English to express the action of momentarily refusing an offer, intending to accept it later, based on type of ticket called rain check, allowing spectators at US sporting events to get their money back or attend on a different occasion in case the event is cancelled because of rain; *to drop the ball*, with the Portuguese correspondent *dar bola fora* (to kick the ball outside [of the football field]), meaning to make a mistake; Portuguese *passar a bola* (to pass the ball), meaning to pass one's responsibility to somebody else. In the case of the English expression *back to square one*, there are three hypotheses: the idiom can be connected to sports, board games, or hopscotch.

Some sports have emerged in the context of fighting for the sake of entertainment or as a way of consuming one's energy. Boxing is a sport that has been depicted or documented in history since the third millennium BC, which explains its present status as an international game and Olympic sport and the numerous idiomatic expressions that are related to it: English *to lower one's guard*, meaning to reduce one's level of vigilance, and *to raise one's guard*, referring to adopting a defensive posture; the Romanian language only has an equivalent of the former expression: *a lăsa garda jos* (to let one's guard down); English *a hit below the belt*, with full or partial equivalents in the other languages – German *ein Schlag unter die Gürtellinie*, Spanish *un golpe bajo* (a low blow), Romanian *lovitură sub centură*, all referring to a strike below the waist in boxing; the expressions extendedly describe an action that is unlawful, insulting or not done according to the rules; *to take it to the chin* has the meaning of enduring misfortune courageously, but the lexically identical Romanian phrase *a o lua în barbă* merely refers to being beaten, defeated or having a deception, which makes it a *partially* false friend; *to throw in the towel* (German *das Handtuch werfen*, Spanish *tirar la toalla*, Portuguese *jogar a toalha*, Romanian *a arunca prosopul*), or the less common variant *to throw in the sponge*, means to surrender, to abandon a fight and to admit defeat; being *on the ropes* alludes to the situation of a losing boxer and describes a desperate position; *to be saved by the bell* makes reference to the bell that signals the end of a round in boxing matches and illustrates a last-minute saving intervention or a sudden end to a difficult situation; the expression is also used in connection to the much awaited sound of the school bell.

Card games are culturally marked, social activities that leave a mark on language as well, particularly on idiomatic expressions: the English phrase *to pass the buck* refers to shifting the responsibility to someone else, by alluding to an object used in a game of poker; the German correspondent *den Schwarzen Peter weitergeben* (to pass the Black Peter) expresses the same idea by referencing another card game; *the joker in the pack* describes a person who can unexpectedly change a situation, based on the special use of the joker in most card games; *to keep one's cards close to one's vest/chest* refers to being

withdrawn and secretive; the expression *a house of cards* bases its meaning on the literal implication of the words and on the mental image they create; the expression refers to a weak and insecure scheme that can be easily destroyed, especially in the form of *to collapse like a house of cards* (German *wie ein Kartenhaus zusammenstürzen*); *to throw one's hand in* means to give up and refers to the moment when someone retires from a card game, especially poker, by throwing the cards on the table; Spanish *mostrar sus cartas* (to show one's cards), Portuguese *pôr as cartas na mesa* (to put one's cards on the table), meaning to reveal one's plans or intentions; Spanish *jugar con las cartas boca arriba*, Romanian *a juca cu cărţile pe faţă* (to play with one's cards turned upwards), referring to openness and sincerity; Spanish *jugar con dos barajas* (to play with two deck of cards) and *jugar con las cartas marcadas* (to play with marked cards), making reference to dishonesty; Portuguese *dar as cartas*, Romanian *a face cărţile* (to deal the cards), meaning to have power and control over a situation or people, from the person who distributes the playing cards during the game.

Metaphorical idiomatic expressions may even stem from *exact sciences* and *technology*, although such fields are generally not characterized by semantic productivity and expressiveness. For example, the following set of equivalent expressions is inspired from mathematics: English *to bring something down to a common denominator*, German *etwas auf einen gemeinsamen Nenner bringen*, Romanian *a aduce la un numitor comun*, all referring to a compromise solution to reconcile different opinions, tendencies and conceptions. Also, an example of how technology influences language is represented by the English expressions *to step on the gas* (particularly used in American English) and its German correspondent *Gas geben* (to give gasoline), both referring to the action of accelerating a car by stepping on the gas pedal and both having the potential to be used figuratively to express rush and hastiness in contexts that are not related to the literal interpretation of the expressions.

3. Conclusions

Metaphors organized around universal themes and motives emphasize the many points of convergence between languages and people, showing that there are more similarities than differences to be considered, and that language perfectly reflects the realities of life that are ubiquitously valid.

REFERENCES

Almeida J.J., *Dicionário aberto de calão e expressões idiomáticas*, July 26, 2017. Retrieved from: http://natura.di.uminho.pt/~jj/pln/calao/dicionario.pdf.
Bărbulescu G., *Mic dicţionar frazeologic portughez-român şi român-portughez*, Editura For You, 2007.

Dumistrăcel S., *Expresii româneşti. Biografii – motivaţii*, Institutul European Iaşi, 1997.

Jiménez A.B., *Diccionario de dichos y frases hechas*, Grupo Planeta Spain, 2012.

Köster R., *Duden-Redensarten: Herkunft und Bedeutung*, Dudenverl., 1999.

Lakoff G., Johnson M., *Metaphors We Live by*, University of Chicago press, 1980. Retrieved from: books.google.com.

Rădulescu R.A., *Estudio contrastivo de expresiones idiomáticas en español, inglés y rumano*, Estructuras Léxicas y Estructura del Léxico, Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main, 111-128, 2006. Retrieved from: www.uam.es.

Siefring J. (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Idioms*, OUP Oxford, 2005.

METAFORE TEMATICE ÎN EXPRESII IDIOMATICE ILUSTRATE
PRIN EXEMPLE DIN LIMBILE ENGLEZĂ, GERMANĂ, SPANIOLĂ,
PORTUGHEZĂ ŞI ROMÂNĂ

(Rezumat)

Limba este sculptată de experienţele vieţii, iar ocupaţiile, activităţile recreative şi obiceiurile se reflectă în limbă, datorită semnificaţiei lor în evoluţia omenirii şi în formarea comunităţilor umane. Expresiile idiomatice sunt bazate pe aspecte ale realităţii, care sunt transformate în metafore ce fac referinţe figurative, îmbogăţind discursul şi adăugându-i substanţă, şi de asemenea reprezintă mărturii şi oglinzi ale trecutului. Expresiile idiomatice spun poveşti de istorie şi cultură, cuprinzând aspecte specifice sau generale şi noţiuni ce definesc fiinţa umană. Referinţele la diverse activităţi umane sunt imprimate asupra limbii sub forma metaforelor ce pot fi încadrate în diferite teme, în funţie de realităţile din care descind: vânătoare, navigaţie, practici de luptă, spiritualitate sub multiplele ei forme, artă, magie, religiozitate, meserii şi meşteşuguri, sporturi, jocuri şi chiar tehnologie. Aceste teme sau domenii conceptuale în jurul cărora metaforele sunt centrate sunt în mare măsură universale şi pot fi întâlnite în diferite limbi, ceea ce este demonstrat prin exemple din două limbi germanice – engleză şi germană, şi trei limbi romanice – spaniolă, portugheză şi română. Pe lângă numeroasele asemănări, se găsesc şi contraste, iar observarea diferitelor feluri în care anumite concepte sunt ilustrate în limbi diferite oferă o perspectivă asupra unicităţii culturale şi lingvistice.

TEXTUAL APPROACHES TO THE TRANSLATION OF THE ACADEMIC PROGRAMME AND COURSE DESCRIPTIONS ON THE ROMANIAN UNIVERSITY WEBSITES

BY

IOANA-CARMEN PĂŞTINARU[∗]

"Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iaşi

Abstract. This paper focuses on the analysis of the translation of academic programme and course descriptions on university websites, from Romanian into English, in order to identify the most appropriate translation strategies to be used by professional translators, as well as the connection between them and the analysed text-type. The current research has considered the application of textual approaches to the translation of the mentioned texts, which should be controlled, in turn, by the seven standards of textuality. For the description of these theoretical notions text samples extracted from programme and course descriptions available on the Romanian university websites and their English versions have been used. The findings of the research show that translations of programme and course descriptions may achieve their communicative function provided that all the textual standards are met.

Keywords: academic programme descriptions; academic course descriptions; university websites; textual standards.

1. Introduction

This paper focuses on the analysis of the translation of the academic course descriptions (ACDs, Gesuato, 2011) and academic programme descriptions (APDs) on university websites (UWs, Caiazzo, 2011) from Romanian into English, in order to identify the most appropriate translation strategies to be used by professional translators, as well as the connection

---

[∗]Corresponding author: *e-mail*: ioanapastinaru@yahoo.com

between them and the analysed text-type. Starting from Hatim and Mason's suggestion that "different text types seem to place different demands on the translator, with certain types and forms being more demanding than others" (1997, p. 163), under the current research we will consider the application of textual approaches to the translation of the ACDs and APDs as texts belonging to the institutional academic language.

The shift of focus in translation studies "from a more narrow semantic to a wider communicative or semiotic perspective" (Neubert, 1996, p. 90) has represented the movement from the linguistic approaches to the more comprehensive textual approaches in the theory and practice of translations. As Neubert and other translation scholars in the mid-60s started to claim, the textual approaches to translations have been mostly influenced by pragmatics, which refers to "the various uses of language by speakers and writers in particular communicative situations" (Neubert and Shreve, 1992, p. 23). The text is thus a communicative occurrence, in which the different textual usages are to be sought during the translation process, as opposed to the contrasts between languages, as the foregoing linguists have done. Significant works belonging to prominent translation scholars like Reiss (1976), Snell-Hornby (1986), Hatim and Mason (1990), as well as Neubert (1992, 1996) focused on the translation as text where "the context determines the meaning" (Reiss 1971/2000: 51).

Neubert's textual approach to the translation of texts is twofold (Neubert, 1996). On the one hand, his *holistic* perspective suggests that the linguistic utterances "are always part of larger communicative events, i.e. they are integrated into texts" (the approach "translations of «texts as wholes»"), placing a heavy emphasis on the global function of the target text (henceforth TT) in relation to the source text (ST) (Neubert, 1996, p. 91). The translator's *top-down* perspective is extremely relevant to the translation of the ACDs and APDs, in which all the seven textuality factors may be recognized. The relevance of the seven features defining textuality will be treated in regard to the translation of the mentioned academic texts from Romanian into English. On the other hand, Neubert's *generic* perspective claims that translation problems are to be sought in "similar texts", namely in texts belonging to the same text-type or genre (the approach "translation of texts as «tokens of a type»") (*Ibid.*). From the *generic* perspective, we shall examine what Neubert calls *parallel texts*, *i.e.* similar texts belonging to the institutional academic language, and try out their usefulness in the English translation of the ACDs and APDs, which have to meet international students and visitors' textual, linguistic and cultural expectations.

2. The Holistic Perspective and the Textual Factors Involved in Translation

According to Neubert, the holistic perspective sees the process of translation and its result "on the basis of an assessment of the *global text function*" of the ST, which is "the unifying frame that keeps the various

elements or features of a text together" (Neubert, 1996, p. 92). The mentioned textual elements or features (the seven standards of textuality, cf. Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981) make up "an intricate network" in the internal structure of translations, and render the "*new* global text function" of the TT (Neubert, 1996, p. 92).

The textual factors, which are equally significant to the textual approach to the translation of the ACDs and APDs from Romanian into English on the UWs, include: *intentionality* (the translator's concern for rendering, in the TL, the author's communicative intention in the SL); *acceptability* (of the translation from the TT receivers' textual, linguistic and cultural viewpoints); ST *situationality* versus TT often "*displaced situationality*" (the different contexts for the production of the original and of the translations that the translator needs to take into account); *informativity* (the impact of the information included in the ACDs and APDs on the TT readers); *cohesion*, which refers to the surface level of the ACDs and APDs, given that the format proposed by the European Commission comprises mostly elliptical sentences; *coherence*, which exists at the deeper level, "indicative of the ordering or at least sequencing of ideas" (Neubert, 1996, p. 92); and *intertextuality*, which bears a heavy weight in the exploration of the analysed translations both from a holistic perspective (if we refer to the global function of the ST related to that of the TT), as well as a generic one (the implicit and explicit relations of our texts to prior, contemporary or potential future texts which can raise similar translations problems) (cf. Bazerman, 2004, p. 86, cited in Afros & Schryer, 2009, p. 225). For the explanation and illustration of the "seven broad characteristics of texts which combine to produce the complex property of textuality" (Neubert & Shreve, 1992, p. 70), text samples extracted from ACDs and APDs available in Romanian and English on the UWs will be used.

2.1. Intentionality

Table 1 below includes the source language (henceforth SL) version and target language (TL) outcome representing an ACD fragment which visibly possesses *intentionality*, the first of the seven features of textuality analysed by Neubert and Shreve (1992). The text sample [A]-ST points out the intention of the given course, but also of the course holder. The producer of this text, who coincides with the course holder, knows the subject and the audience of the course. It is by means of this communicative event that the producer expresses his or her intentions through the construction of a specific text structure (the building of two complex sentences, and the use of a parenthetical explanation). Furthermore, the division of the text into several sections clearly reflects the author's planned sub-goals: 1) to present the theme of the course, *i.e.* linguistics, 2) to inform on the languages of instruction, *i.e.* English and Romanian, and 3) to announce the type of course he or she will engage students in, *i.e.* an interactive type of course.

Table 1
Textuality Features - Intentionality

Text sample [A]-ST	Text sample [A]-TT
„**Obiectivul cursului:** Cursul, ţinut în limba engleză, are în vedere transmiterea noţiunilor şi termino-logiei de bază (în engleză, dar şi în română) specifice domeniului ling-vistic. Titularul intenţionează o abordare interactivă, studenţii având posibilitatea să intervină, cu întrebări, completări şi comentarii în timpul orelor de curs."	"**Course objective**: The course, held in English (with explanations in Romanian, whenever necessary), is meant to familiarize first-year students with basic notions and terminology specific to the domain of linguistics. The lecturer intends to observe an interactive methodology, which allows students to ask questions and to turn to account their own knowledge during lectures."

(ACD of *Introduction to Linguistics*, source: www.uaic.ro)

Neubert and Shreve claim that "intentionality is connected with *relevance*, a measure of the importance [the reader] attaches to the information", and that "intentionality and *relevance* are a sender-receiver (translator-receiver) pairing" (1992, p. 72). Consequently, the examination of the text sample [A]-TT reveals a number of strategies used by the translator in his or her concern for rendering a most relevant TT to the audience. The omission of the repetition in the TT (*Cursul, ţinut în limba engleză, [...] (în engleză, [...]*) → The course, held in English), the use of the intratextual gloss (*with explanations* in Romanian), the use of the explicitation (*whenever necessary; first-year* students), the strategy of universalisation (*titularul* → lecturer), the use of the transposition by replacing two nouns with a verbal idiom (*completări şi comentarii* → to turn to account their own knowledge) are strategies decided by the translator in the interest of the TT relevance to the readers. Thus, intentionality turns out to equal "the translator's decisions on the text and their subsequent impact on the receptive intentions of the reader" (Ibid.).

2.2. Acceptability

According to Neubert and Shreve, a text "must possess particular textual features, including standard grammatical and lexical patterning" (1992, p. 73) in order to be acceptable to the audience. The SL version and TL outcome in Table 2 below illustrate different degrees of acceptability for this particular category of text.

Since the standards of textual acceptability differ from one language to another (Ibid.), the translator has resorted to various strategies to render an *acceptable* text to its audience and produce a satisfactory and pragmatically adequate translation. These translation strategies include the omission of

information which the translator has found inappropriate for this specific column (the sequences *Studenţii primesc bibliografia şi temele cursului cu un an înainte, pentru a avea timp să exploreze romanele din perspectiva tematicii propuse*, as well as *Prelegerile se vor desfăşura după modelul cursului-seminar* have been omitted since they do not relate to the course objective), the use of the transposition by replacing nouns with verbs (*lectura* → reading; *formarea* → train), or adjectives with nouns (*romane dostoievskiene* → Dostoievski's novels); omission of irrelevant qualifiers (*lectura avizată* → reading). However, in his or her endeavours to make the TT as acceptable as possible, the translator has failed to use either of the acceptable English spellings of the Russian writer's surname (Dostoevsky or Dostoyevsky, cf. Wikipedia.com), preserving the SL one to the detriment of the TL outcome.

Table 2
Textuality Features – Acceptability (1)

Text sample [B]-ST	Text sample [B]-TT
„**Obiectivul cursului:** Lectura avizată a marilor romane dostoievskiene şi formarea deprinderilor de analiză literară complexă. Studenţii primesc bibliografia şi temele cursului cu un an înainte, pentru a avea timp să exploreze romanele din perspectiva tematicii propuse. Prelegerile se vor desfăşura după modelul cursului-seminar, respectiv ca nişte dezbateri interdisciplinare antrenând cunoştinţe de teorie literară, sociologie, etică, psihologie, filozofie, istorie, teologie ş.a.m.d.."	"**Course objective:** Train students' literary analysis skills subsequent to reading Dostoievski's greatest novels. Interdisciplinary debates requiring previous knowledge of literary theory, sociology, ethics, psychology, philosophy, history, theology and others."

(ACD of *World Literature,* source: www.uaic.ro)

Similarly, the example included in Table 3 below shows how the translator has replaced the typical grammatical and lexical usage of the 1st person plural acceptable in the Romanian text with the infinitive in the English text, which is typically used to define an objective (*Ne propunem să le oferim studenţilor* → Familiarize students).

Table 3
Textuality Features – Acceptability (2)

Text sample [C]-ST	Text sample [C]-TT
„**Obiectivul cursului:** Ne propunem să le oferim studenţilor noţiuni teoretice de poetică, stilistică, semantică şi gramatica textului."	"**Course objective:** Familiarize students with the basic notions regarding the science of the text."

(ACD of *The Theory of Language / Text,* source: www.uaic.ro)

2.3. Situationality

If intentionality and acceptability "presume that the translator or text producer has imagined a social and pragmatic context for the text-to-be", then situationality represents "the location of a text in a discrete sociocultural context in a real time and place" (Neubert & Shreve, 1992, p. 85). The two scholars highlight the importance of this textual factor, which they consider one of the translator's most important responsibilities. Information about the audience's communicative and behavioural condition, the audience's need for the information in the text-to-be and intentions on how to use it, or the audience's social, political, and economic situation, stands as significant knowledge to the translator in order to produce a text in an existing receptive situation. From this perspective, situationality may be defined by the need, motivation, or purpose of the translation (Ibid.).

The fact that the ACDs and APDs are "situation types" or standardized texts (Ibid.) as text types regularly found on the UWs, largely reduces the difficulty of the translator's task. The translator is (or should be) fully aware of their limited and specialized audience, the audience's needs, their familiarity with the purpose of these texts, and consequently of the type of information to be conveyed. Furthermore, the translator relies on the existence of translations of similar texts in the same environment. As a result of the international standardisation of these texts, certain Romanian universities have chosen to provide only the English version of the ACDs and APDs on their website (the case of the ACDs provided by Transilvania University of Brasov, source: https://www.unitbv.ro/, or the APD of *British Cultural Studies* offered by Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, source: http://lett.ubbcluj.ro/, etc.), assuming the audience's lack of need to consult the original Romanian version.

In spite of the mentioned standardisation and the existence of parallel situations of the TL texts, the translator still needs "to adjust the text to its new situation", which usually involves a series of translation procedures (Ibid.: 87). The translator of the text sample [D]-ST included in Table 4 below has been challenged with several situational adaptations required in the English version.

Table 4
Textuality Features – Situationality

Text sample [D]-ST	Text sample [D]-TT
„**Obiectivul cursului:** Cursul este menit să dea studenţilor din anii mari o idee, fie ea şi schematică, asupra literaturii americane în contextul culturii şi civilizaţiei respective."	"**Course contents:** The course is meant to offer students a broader perspective on the American literature in the context of the American culture and civilisation."

(ACD of *American Literature,* source: www.uaic.ro)

The modifications during the translation process made to turn the information in the TT more accessible to its audience are as follows:

– the use of the repetition to improve explicitness for the TT audience: *asupra literaturii* <u>*americane*</u> *în contextul culturii şi civilizaţiei* <u>*respective*</u> → on the <u>American</u> literature in the context of the <u>American</u> culture and civilisation;

– the change in style, according to the given text-type and text environment (from colloquial to literary/academic): *să dea o idee* → to offer a perspective;

– the shift of meaning to increase the attractivity of the course: *schematică* → broader;

– the change in word order to improve readability in the TL: *o idee, fie ea şi schematică, [...]* → a broader perspective;

– the reduction of information included in the ST which does not apply or is not relevant to the TL audience: *studenţilor* <u>*din anii mari*</u> → students.

2.4. Informativity

According to Neubert and Shreve, *informativity* in the translation process is "a measure of the information a translation provides to an L2 reader about L1 events, states, processes, objects, individuals, places and institutions" (1992, p. 89). In other words, the translation of the ACDs and APDs from Romanian into English as a *lingua franca* opens an "information channel" (Ibid.) between the Romanian universities as senders and international students/guests as receivers, which makes possible the cooperation between the two.

The two scholars see a close relationship between the textual factors of situationality and informativity: "L1 and L2 texts that possess similar situationality will often be similarly informative", transmitting the same types of knowledge to their respective audiences (Ibid.). The similarity in both situationality and informativity guides us to the so-called *parallel texts*, which "spring from similar cultural needs to serve congruent interests in comparable situations" (Ibid.). The scholars clearly specify the native nature of *parallel texts*, which represent the translator's most important tools. Optimal examples of parallel texts, in our case, would be the APDs of *Translation Studies* (or similarly entitled) provided by universities in English-speaking counties, such as the MA in *Translation Studies* offered by the University of Birmingham (www.birmingham.ac.uk), the MA in *Translation Studies* offered by the Aston University (www.aston.ac.uk), the MA in *Translation Studies* offered by the Durham University (https://www.dur.ac.uk), the *Interpreting and Translating*, MSc, offered by the Heriot-Watt University (https://www.hw.ac.uk), the *Translating and Interpreting*, MA, offered by Newcastle University (https://www.ncl.ac.uk), and others.

The process of translation also impacts the orders of informativity when the information is transferred from the ST to the TT, which refer to "the

significance of the information units in a text" (cf. Beaugrande and Dressier, 1981, pp. 141-146, cited in Neubert and Shreve, 1992, p. 90). *Table 5* below shows different measures of significance attributed to the various information items in the Romanian version of the APD of *American Studies* (text sample [E]-ST) and in its translation into English (text sample [E]-TT).

Table 5
Textuality Features – Informativity

Text sample [E]-ST	Text sample [E]-TT
„Din 2004, Catedra de Engleză oferă absolvenților de liceu și posibilitatea de a se înscrie la specializarea Studii americane, cu predare tot în limba engleză și o ofertă academică variată din zona studiilor culturale, mai precis cultura și civilizația Statelor Unite. Programele fiecărui an includ cursuri de tipul Studii culturale americane, Engleza americană și Literatura americană, cursuri de bază cărora li se adaugă: Istoria S.U.A., Introducere în lingvistică, Literatura comparată, Teoria și practica limbii/ textului la anul I, Instituții politice, Societate și comunicare, cursuri practice și cursuri speciale în anii II și III."	"Since 2004, besides the traditional approaches to the study of the English language and literature, the Department of English has offered a programme of American Studies. The programme focuses on American Cultural Studies, American English, American Literature, American History for first year students, offering the same core courses for second and third year students. Apart from these core courses, subjects include Introduction to Linguistics, Introduction to the Study of Literature, Comparative Literature, Theory Practice and Language/Text for the first year students, Political Institutions, Society and Communication, a Practical Course and a Special Course for the second and third year students."

(APD of *American Studies,* source: www.uaic.ro)

The translator has intervened at different levels, modifying the initial order of informativity, most of the times in the interest of the TT explicitness, through: the provision of explanatory paraphrases (*Programele fiecărui an* → for first year students, offering the same core courses for second and third year students); the addition of extra information (*și* → besides the traditional approaches to the study of the English language and literature); the deletion of unnecessary information (*absolvenților de liceu; posibilitatea de a se înscrie; cu predare tot în limba engleză*); the deletion of redundant information (*specializarea Studii americane, […] o ofertă academică variată din zona studiilor culturale, mai precis cultura și civilizația Statelor Unite* → a programme of American Studies); the change in the order of certain information items (*Istoria S.U.A., Introducere în lingvistică, Literatura comparată, Teoria și practica limbii/ textului la anul I* → American History for first year students […] Introduction to Linguistics […]; *Din 2004, Catedra de Engleză oferă* →

Since 2004, besides the traditional approaches to the study of the English language and literature, the Department of English has offered); the split of long sentences (*[…], cursuri de bază cărora li se adaugă: [...]* → […]. Apart from these core courses, subjects include […]).

The translator's skilful intervention in the ST information turns out to be invisible in the TT (either through addition and deletion procedures, change of word order and re-arrangement of the ST information), which makes the TT read as an original.

2.5 Coherence

In translation, *coherence* may entail changes in the semantic structure of the text. First, the translator understands the coherence structure of the ST and then operates modifications at the surface level in the TT. Translation as text "attempts to re-establish in the target text a coherence functionally parallel to that of the source text" (Ibid., p. 93). In spite of the international students' most probable unfamiliarity with the titles of the Romanian literary magazines and Romanian writers' names mentioned in the Table 6 below, as well as the significance attached to them in the Romanian literature, the coherence structure of the TT helps them overcome their ignorance regarding these unknown facts and perceive the underlying message of the TT.

Table 6
Textuality Features – Coherence (1)

Text sample [F]-ST	Text sample [F]-TT
„**Conţinutul cursului:** descrierea contextului ideologic care determină apariţia unor doctrine literar-estetice şi a unor reviste cu profil specific, de la „Convorbiri literare" şi „Contemporanul" la „Tribuna" ş.a.; analiza operelor reprezentative ale scriitorilor noştri clasici: T. Maiorescu, M. Eminescu, I. Creangă."	"**Course contents:** describe the ideological context which brings about literary-aesthetical doctrines and specialized magazines, e.g. *Convorbiri literare, Contemporanul, Tribuna* etc.; analyse the representative works of our classical writers: Titu Maiorescu, Mihai Eminescu, Ion Creangă."

(ACD of *Romanian Literature: Great Classics,* source: www.uaic.ro)

The coherence structure of the text sample [F]-TT relies on the organisation of its information: the text is made up of two similarly disposed sections. The coherence chain begins with the indication of the action, that the course "describes", and it is resumed in the next section when the audience is informed that the course "analyses". The two sections are built on a similar thematic and coherent structure: the mentioned verbs are followed by the direct objects, which make the reference to the theme of the course, and then, the objects are supported by concrete examples–parenthetical elements which may be removed without changing the essential meaning of the sentence. Although

the translator has chosen to write the authors' complete first names and preserve the original Romanian titles of the literary magazines in order to reduce the potential ambiguity in the TT, the international students would most likely ignore the Romanian names (the mentioned parenthetical elements) and comprehend the rest of the information due to the text coherence.

Coherence is "the connection of individual information elements to create larger, more global structures of meaning" (Ibid., p. 96). The translator's first task is to understand the connection between the text elements in the ST before he or she may choose the lexical items, the linguistic constructions and decide on their arrangement in the TT. Let us consider a fragment of the text sample [E]-ST (Table 5 above) and see the consequences of a translation version that skips the translator's crucial stage of understanding the global meaning of the text and resorts directly to choosing the linguistic resources (as illustrated in Table 7 below).

Table 7
Textuality Features – Coherence (2)

Text sample [E]-ST - fragment	Text sample [E]-TT1
„Din 2004, Catedra de Engleză oferă [...] specializarea Studii americane, [...] și o ofertă academică variată din zona studiilor culturale, mai precis cultura și civilizația Statelor Unite."	"Since 2004, the Department of English has offered the programme of American Studies, and a varied academic offer in cultural studies, more precisely the Culture and Civilization of the United States."

According to Baker, coherence is not a property of a text, but rather "the judgement made by a reader on a text" (1992/2011, p. 222). In Table 7 above, the translator has decided to use the original framework of coherence and apply it to the TT1. The TT1 readers expect that "a varied academic offer in cultural studies" will make reference to at least one more programme in cultural studies, an idea which is also induced by the conjunction "and". However, the last linguistic construction, i.e. "the Culture and Civilization of the United States", does not bring any new information and takes the readers back to the initial "programme of American Studies". Even though the three sections of the sequence ("the programme of American Studies", "a varied academic offer in cultural studies", and "the Culture and Civilization of the United States") are all related to the theme of the course, they are disconnected from each other. The deficiency in the ST coherence has been transferred to the TT1 through the maintenance of the redundant information and the linguistic items as such. In such cases, it is the translator's responsibility to make sure the TT coheres

properly by establishing his or her own coherence criteria. According to Hatim and Mason, "the translator has to reassess coherence strategies in order to maximize the retrievability of intended meaning from a more concise target language version" (1997, p. 65). Thus, a coherence shift has taken place in the official translation of the text sample [E]-ST (see text sample [E]-TT in Table 5 above), which has eliminated the redundancies and inconsistencies in the ST coherence.

At the same time, coherence is one of the main concepts in pragmatics, being closely related to the notions of presupposition and implicature. As Baker claims, a text coherence "depends on the hearer's or receiver's expectations and experience of the world" (1992/2011: 219). Since this experience differs from the ST readers to the TT readers, translators often adopt the strategy of explicitation, as in the example shown in Table 8 below.

Table 8
Textuality Features – Coherence (3)

Text sample [G]-ST	Text sample [G]-TT
„În cadrul **practicii profesionale** studenţii vor fi pregătiţi pentru abordarea şi înţelegerea interdisciplinară a unui fapt socio-cultural."	"In the framework of **internships organized in collaboration with different institutions (NGO-s and public institutions as well)** students will be prepared for an interdisciplinary approach and understanding of different socio-cultural phenomena."

(APD of *Cultural Studies,* source: www.ubbcluj.ro)

The translator has chosen to explain to the international students interested in this study programme what the notion of internship involves in the Romanian context, and what kind of institutions may receive them for this purpose, by replacing the adjective *profesională* with the intratextual gloss *organized in collaboration with different institutions (NGO-s and public institutions as well).*

Duff (1981) discusses the cultural differences between the SL and the TL, which the gifted translator should be able to perceive, otherwise the coherence of discourse may be lost. Such examples of unpragmatic language use in translation are provided in Table 9 below, in which the translator simply transfers the pattern in the ST (first column) to the TT (second column) and the TT coherence becomes distorted, to say the least. A suggested solution has been included in the third column of Table 9.

Table 9
Textuality Features – Coherence (4)

ST	TT	Suggested solution
„*În cadrul* practicii profesionale"	"*In the framework of* internships"	*Through* internships
„practica profesională, în cadrul căreia studenţii *efectuează* cercetare de teren şi *practica în muzee*"	"the practical side of education that offers the students the possibility to carry out […] fieldwork […] and *to work in museum with internships*"	the practical side of education that offers students the possibility to carry out […] fieldwork […] and *internships in museums*
„Specializarea Studii culturale pregăteşte studenţii pentru *cariere variate, cu spectru larg,* [...]"	"This program prepares students for various *professional careers with a broad range,* […]"	This program prepares students for *a broad range of professional careers*
„Masteratul oferă posibilitatea *acumulării de experienţă de cercetare individuală, prin sarcina de a crea un proiect de cercetare propriu şi prin stagiile de practică.*"	"Our MA program, […], creates the possibility of *accumulation of individual research experience through the task of planning and carrying out an own research project and through internships.*"	Our MA program, […], *offers students* the possibility of *experiencing individual research by developing their own research projects and carrying out internships.*

(APDs of *Ethnology* and *Cultural Studies,* source: www.ubbcluj.ro)

2.6. Cohesion

Cohesion is "the most palpably linguistic" factor of textuality (Neubert and Shreve, 1992, p. 102), while "[t]he cohesive text is, as a result, the end product of translation" (Ibid.). The authors claim that cohesion and coherence cannot be considered separately, and that cohesion should "refer only to the expression of *conceptual* structure through *linguistic* means" (Ibid., my emphasis). The translator's complex task implies, thus, the understanding of the cohesion devices which operate in the SL (the ST conceptual structure), as well as his or her knowledge and skills in creating cohesion in the TT by means of the TL resources (in other words, in rendering the TL conceptual structure). Or, to put it differently, "items selected from the lexico-grammatical resources of the TL will have to reflect the overall rhetorical purpose and discoursal values" of the ST (Hatim &Mason, 1990, p. 231).

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), cohesive devices in English have been classified into five main categories, *i.e.* reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. Table 10 below provides examples

of how each category has functioned in the translation of some ACDs identified on a Romanian UW.

Table 10
Textuality Features – Cohesion

Cohesion devices	ST	TT
Reference	(a) „**Studenţii** se vor familiariza cu [...]. **Studenţii** vor citi studii critice.”	(a) "**The students** will have knowledge of […]. **They** will practice in critical reading."
	(b) „**Cursul** va ajuta studenţii să-şi dovedească [...]. **Cursul** va înlesni, în primul rând, [...]."	(b) "**The course** will help students prove [...]. **This** will first enable […]."
Substitution	(c) „[...] să sensibilizeze studenţii faţă de **dimensiunea** de intersubiectivitate a limbajului, **dimensiune** care singură face posibilă comunicarea lingvistică."	(c) "[…] raise students' interest in the **issue** of language intersubjectivity, **the one** which makes the linguistic communication possible."
Ellipsis	(d) „Obiectivul cursului: Receptarea **de către studenţi** a fenomenului romantic nu doar ca o mişcare estetică, ci ca o paradigmă culturală, [...]."	(d) "Understand the romantic phenomenon not just like an aesthetic movement, but as a cultural paradigm, […]."
Conjunction	(e) „[...] personalităţile de seamă care au marcat cultura şi istoria americană, **şi** chiar cea internaţională, [...].	(e) "[…] major personalities who marked American politics and culture **and** even the international field, […]."
Lexical cohesion	(f) „Domeniu, obiective şi funcţii ale **terminologiei** faţă de lexicologie, lexicografie şi limbaje specializate; normalizare şi armonizare **terminologică**; **terminologie** şi traducere specializată; **terminologie** şi politici lingvistice; difuzarea **terminologiilor** [...]"	(f) "Field, objectives and functions of **terminology**, as compared with lexicology, lexicography and specialized languages; **terminological** normalization and harmonization; **terminology** and specialized translations; **terminology** and linguistic politics; **terminology** distribution [...]"
	(g) „evoluţia societăţii umane **a complicat** sau **a simplificat** componentele acestui imaginar”	(g) "the evolution of the human society **complicated** or **simplified** the components of this imagination"

(ACDs provided by the Faculty of Letters, source: www.uaic.ro)

The cohesion of the TTs included in *Table 10* above has been established through:

(a) the use of the personal pronoun *They*, which is a reference to the noun *The students*; (b) the use of the demonstrative pronoun *This*, which refers to *The course*; (c) the use of *the one*, which plays as a substitute for the noun *issue*; (d) the omission of the term *de către studenți*, due to reasons of linguistic economy (the omission of unnecessary information saves time during communication); (e) the use of the additive *and*, which links two parts of the sentence, two pieces of information equally significant to the text; (f) five reiterations of the item *terminologiei – terminologica - terminologie - terminologie – terminologiilor* in this short stretch of text, similarly expressed through translation (*terminology – terminological* in the TT), which does not bother the audience, but only stresses the importance of the subject being discusses in this section; (g) the use of the opposites *a complicat – a simplificat* in the ST (*complicated – simplified* in the TT), which acts as a collocation and contributes to the binding of the text together.

As with coherence, the cohesion pattern in the SL may not be the same as the one in the TL, in which case the translator's skilfulness in identifying the appropriate cohesion mechanisms active in the TL is exerted. Since the networks of lexical cohesion are not identical across languages (Baker 1992/2011: 206), some of the patterns of cohesion in the ST have been maintained in the TT, such as in the examples (e), (f), and (g) above. Other cohesive devices do not occur in the ST, but only in the TT, such as in the examples (a), (b), (c), and (d) above, in which cases we deal with *shifts of cohesion*. Similarly, the use of pronouns (*They, This, the one*) has been preferred in the English translation in the ACDs included in Table 10 above, over the lexical repetition.

2.7. Intertextuality

The seventh factor of textuality analysed by Neubert and Shreve, *intertextuality*, relates both to the *holistic* perspective in the sense that it is "a global pattern which the reader compares to pre-existing cognitive templates abstracted from experience" (1992, p. 117), as well as to the *generic* perspective (which will be discussed in the next chapter), concerning the connections of the TT with other "similar" texts belonging to the same genre or type.

Intertextuality is probably "the most important aspect of textuality for the translator" (Ibid.). Hatim and Mason clearly state what *intertextuality* is not: "we may safely discard the notion that intertextuality is some static property of texts, which in translating amounts to mere item-by-item replacement of a reference in the source text by one in the target text" (1990, p. 123). They see intertextuality as both *active* and *passive*. An illustration of these features of intertextuality will be provided with the support of the text sample [H]-ST and TT in Table 11 below.

Table 11

Textuality features – Intertextuality

Text sample [H]-ST	Text sample [H]-TT
„Conţinutul cursului: *Modulul I.* Geneza romanului (picaresc spaniol); [...] Tradiţia picarescă în: Germania, Anglia, Franţa. *Picaro*-ul în „Tărâmul Făgăduinţei". Coordonate mitice – „mitul *picaro*-ului" şi arhetipul *Trickster*-ului."	**"Course contents**: *Module I.* Genesis of the (Spanish picaresque) novel; […] The picaresque tradition in Germany, England and France. The *Picaro* in "The Promised Land". Mythical coordinates – "the myth of the *picaro*" and the *Trickster* archetype."

(fragment of ACD of *World Literature,* source: www.uaic.ro)

Although the course holder refers to the world literature (Spanish, German, English and French), students would not know, at this stage, what novels will be presented or relating to which period. The *active intertextuality* is achieved by the mentioning of significant concepts in the literature, i.e. the *picaresque,* the *Picaro* and the *Trickster*, through which the text producer attempts to specify the content of the course. Thus, the readers' knowledge of previous texts is appealed to in order to reach the author's goal. The intertextual connection is clear-cut in the sense that it requires knowledge in the field beyond the text itself. There is also a *passive* form of *intertextuality* present in the text sample [H]-ST achieved through the short sequence *mitul şi arhetipul*, which helps to create continuity of sense and supports the text coherence. The translator has been aware of this sequence, which he or she has also reflected in the TT *(the myth and the archetype)*.

3. Conclusions

As we have exemplified and described above, "translations may differ with regard to the *standards of textuality* enumerated above" (Neubert, 1996, p. 93, original emphasis). This has been explained by the fact that "texture – the selection and arrangement of items appearing in the texts – finds its motivation in higher-order considerations of *context* and *structure*" (Hatim and Mason, 1990, p. 233, my italics). In other words, it is the *context* in the target culture and *structure* of the TL which typically set the tone and balance the features of textuality in translations where the intended function needs to be conveyed for the target audience. From this perspective, the professional translator should always be concerned with the expression of all textual characteristics so that the *new* text may communicate its proposed function. In this context, the translator's choice of the translation strategies should be governed by the textual elements in the TT, which needs to be relevant to the target audience, acceptable to its readers, accessible and easily identifiable within the new situation, properly informative, carrying the desired amount of knowledge, entirely coherent and cohesive in the TL, and last but not least parallel to similar

texts belonging to the same text-type. The analysis of the translations of APDs and ACDs on UWs reveals that these texts belonging to the institutional academic language may achieve their communicative function as long as all the textual standards are met.

REFERENCES

Afros E., Schryer C.F., *The Genre of Syllabus in Higher Education*, Journal of English for Academic Purposes, **8**, *3*, 224-233 (2009).
Baker M., *In Other Words. A Coursebook on Translation*, Routledge, London/New York, 1992/2011.
Beaugrande R. De, Dressler W.U., *Introduction to Text Linguistics*, Longman, New York, 1981.
Caiazzo L., *Hybridization in Institutional Language: Exploring we in the 'About us' Page of University Websites*, Genre(s) on the Move. Hybridization and Discourse Change in Specialized Communication, eds. Srikant Sarangi, Vanda Polese, Giuditta Caliendo, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, Napoli, 243-260, 2011.
Duff A., *The Third Language: Recurrent Problems of Translation into English*, Pergamon Press, Oxford, 1981.
Gesuato S., *Course Descriptions: Communicative Practices of an Institutional Genre*, Genre(s) on the Move. Hybridization and Discourse Change in Specialized Communication, eds. Srikant Sarangi, Vanda Polese, Giuditta Caliendo, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, Napoli, 221-241, 2011.
Halliday M.A.K., Hasan R., *Cohesion in English*, Longman, London, 1976.
Hatim B., Mason I., *Discourse and the Translator*, Longman, London/New York, 1990.
Hatim B., Mason I., *The Translator as Communicator*, Routledge, London and New York, 1997.
Neubert A., Shreve G.M., *Translation as Text*, University of Kent Ohio Press, Kent, Ohio, 1992.
Neubert A., *Textlinguistics of Translation: The Textual Approach to Translation* in Translation Horizons Beyond the Boundaries of Translation Spectrum – Translation Perspectives IX, ed. Marilyn Gaddis Rose, State University of New York at Binghamton, 1996.
Reiss K., *Translation Criticism: Potential and Limitations*, translated by Rhodes E.F., St Jerome and American Bible Society, Manchester, 1971/2000.

ABORDĂRI TEXTUALE ALE TRADUCERII DESCRIERILOR DE CURSURI ŞI PROGRAME DE STUDII ACADEMICE PE PAGINILE WEB ALE UNIVERSITĂŢILOR DIN ROMÂNIA

(Rezumat)

Prezentul articol îşi propune să analizeze traducerile descrierilor de cursuri şi programe de studii academice pe paginile web ale universităţilor din România, din

limba română în limba engleză, cu scopul de a identifica cele mai adecvate strategii de traducere care să fie folosite de către traducătorii profesionişti, cât şi legătura dintre acestea şi tipul de texte analizat. Cercetarea desfăşurată în această direcţie a pus în practică abordările textuale ale traducerii textelor aparţinând limbajului academic instituţional, traducere care trebuie să fie controlată, pe rând, de cei şapte factori ai textualităţii. Pentru expunerea acestor noţiuni teoretice s-au folosit texte extrase din descrierile programelor de studii şi cursurilor disponibile pe paginile web ale universităţilor româneşti şi versiunile lor în limba engleză. Rezultatele cercetării arată că traducerile descrierilor programelor de studii şi cursurilor îşi pot îndeplini funcţia comunicativă cu condiţia ca toţi factorii textualităţii să fie întruniţi.

RIRE ET POÉSIE

PAR

EVAGRINA DÎRŢU[∗]

"Gheorghe Asachi" Technical University of Iaşi
Department of Teacher Training – Foreign Languages

Abstract. Our purpose in the present analysis is to approach two cultural gestures pertaining to two different fields of study: poetry and laughter in its largest sense, without focusing on its different, so various forms. We are therefore staying at a crossroads of literature, on the one hand, and cultural anthropology and philosophy, on the other, borrowing mainly from Vladimir Jankélévitch our threads of argument for the latter segment. Our approach is meant to briefly expose some similarities between these two deeply human cultural attitudes, through the prism of one dimension they share, i.e. freedom and divergence in relation to a behavioural code that one could label as neutral.

Keywords: poetry; laughter; norm; divergence; play.

1. Introduction

Il est aussi difficile de parler de l'origine de ces deux notions – rire et poésie – que de parler de leurs raisons d'être. Aussi n'en ferons-nous pas ici un exposé historique, mais nous essayerons juste de délimiter ce que ces deux formes d'expression pourraient avoir en commun.

Vladimir Jankélévitch dans son essai sur l'ironie (l'une des hypostases du rire les plus proches de la poésie, peut-être) s'arrête à un moment donné sur la poésie, en analysant:

« l'alliance immémoriale de la poésie et de la philosophie : si la pensée s'enferme sans utilité apparente dans le rythme du vers, ce n'est pas pour se

---

[∗]*e-mail*: evagrinad@yahoo.com

faire mieux comprendre, mais pour être mécomprise ; au lieu de dire tout uniment ce qu'elle veut dire, elle se fait bizarre, lointaine et compliquée » (Jankélévitch, 1964, p. 48).

Si le langage rhétorique impose certaines contraintes afin d'atteindre à la clarté, le langage poétique symbolise la liberté. La poésie et la poétique modernes ont théorisé ce point de vue par des voix comme celle d'Arthur Rimbaud, qui disait déjà dans la deuxième moitié du XIXe siècle, au sujet d'*Une saison en enfer* : « J'ai voulu dire ce que ça dit, littéralement et dans tous les sens » (Rimbaud, 1946, p. xxvi). Des théories de l'autotélisme de la poésie, pourtant, ont existé avant aussi, ne serait-ce que dans la vision romantique sur ce langage particulier, comme Jean-Marie Schaeffer le souligne à juste raison :

> « La thèse d'après laquelle la poésie se réaliserait dans un langage spécifique, dont les signes seraient motivés, et qui s'opposerait ainsi au langage arbitraire de la communication courante, est sans contestation une des thèses romantiques les mieux ancrées dans nos évidences poétologiques actuelles » (Schaeffer, 1992, p. 111).

Le caractère autotélique du rire ne saurait se justifier au niveau du langage (faute de quelque chose que l'on puisse appeler le langage du rire), mais, à divers degrés, au niveau de sa finalité. Il y a des formes et des nuances du rire qui se justifient par elles-mêmes, sans aucun doute, tout en acceptant que certaines d'entre elles plus que d'autres. On pourrait faire avec Jankélévitch, par exemple, une différence entre conscience ludique et conscience ironique, dont la plus autotélique serait la première puisque

> « 'le jeu' tout court n'est au service de rien : ayant sa finalité en lui-même, il n'est pas orienté vers quelque chose d'autre ; il n'a pas d'intention, il n'est pas aimanté par une fin transcendante […] Le jeu est pour rire et pour le plaisir » (Jankélévitch, 1964, p. 68).

Mais l'ironie elle aussi peut exister indépendamment de sa finalité, dans la mesure où, « comme toute activité ludique, l'ironie détache la conscience de l'intérêt utilitaire auquel elle adhérait » (Jankélévitch, 1964, p.56).

La poésie, elle, est parvenue à être considérée comme un langage non-référentiel, ou selon le schéma jakobsonien un langage auto-référentiel, au moment où l'on a posé le problème des réévaluations du réel. La poésie devient le langage de la reconstruction d'un monde désenchanté. Certes, on se retrouve souvent dans la poésie dans le monde commun des objets ou de la praxis, mais ce n'est que pour en extraire l'essence et la vivifier par le travail langagier et par l'intermédiaire des apparences. On pourrait parler alors, comme Anne-Marie Pelletier, d'une « référence métaphorique » (Pelletier, 1977, p. 52), propre à la poésie seule et capable de renvoyer au monde singulier du non-référentiel. La poésie devient par cela une forme de liberté ; libérée et libératrice, elle apporte dans le langage

« un monde préobjectif où nous nous trouvons déjà de naissance, mais aussi dans lequel nous projetons nos possibilités les plus propres. Il fait donc ébranler le règne de l'objet, pour laisser être et laisser se dire notre appartenance primordiale à un monde que nous habitons, c'est-à-dire qui tout a la fois précède et reçoit l'empreinte de nos œuvres » (Ricoeur, 1975, p. 387).

C'est dans ce même sens que venait convaincre le cratylisme, ou même les théories reprochant poésie et religion. Le poète, sacerdote et devin de l'Antiquité, retrouvera son statut plus tard avec le Romantisme.

« La disposition pour la poésie – notait Novalis – a beaucoup en commun avec la disposition pour le mysticisme. Il s'agit d'une disposition pour ce qui est particulier, personnel, inconnu, mystérieux, pour ce qui est à révéler, pour le contingent nécessaire. Elle présente l'imprésentable. Elle voit l'invisible, sent le non-sensible. Le poète est insensé au vrai sens du terme – c'est la raison pour laquelle tout se rencontre en lui » (Novalis apud Schaeffer, 1992, p.108).

Par une coïncidence de termes plus ou moins fortuite, Jankélévitch nous fait voir, d'autre part, que l'ironie « respectueuse des nuances, sait attendre l'occasion unique, exprimer l'ineffable, toucher l'intangible, atteindre l'inattingible » (Jankélévitch, 1964, p. 168). Le rire donc, et l'ironie en particulier, est question de nuance et, tout comme la poésie, il est non-référentiel, en séparant, dans ses hypostases les plus subtiles, entre modalité et finalité. On peut parler de toute une théorie de la duplicité de la conscience ironique, pour laquelle « la ligne droite n'est pas si courte que cela et le temps perdu est quelquefois le mieux employé » (Jankélévitch, 1964, p. 76). Ligne sinueuse qui se justifie paradoxalement d'après les règles les plus simples du bon sens, car « pourquoi en dire peu, quand on en sait long ? […] Ce *Minus* est un défi à la raison » (Jankélévitch, 1964, p. 82). Autant l'ironie, que la poésie, pourrions-nous conclure, vont apparemment dans le contre-sens de toute démarche pratique. Et cependant, derrière leur jeu, il n'y a que le désir de mieux toucher à l'essence, d'offrir le plus de voies possibles pour dépasser la frontière entre ces deux mondes de références différenciés. Autant le rire que la poésie s'adressent à des intellects interprétatifs, qui savent maîtriser les voies obliques. Par là même, ils sont tous les deux intéressés par la connaissance, mais à la différence de la philosophie, par exemple, ils se servent d'un langage pseudologique, mensonger, afin d'« exprimer pour voiler, mais aussi voiler pour mieux suggérer ; écrire pour être mécompris, mais finalement se faire mécomprendre pour convertir plus efficacement son prochain à ce qu'on croit être la vérité » (Jankélévitch, 1964, p. 62).

Si l'on peut parler donc d'un rapprochement de la poésie et du rire sous le signe de la liberté, dans la perspective linguistique de l'autotélisme et du non-référentiel, c'est qu'il faudrait analyser aussi quelle reste leur relation respective avec la rigueur par rapport à laquelle ils ont pris cette liberté ; en d'autres termes, on pourrait essayer de les comparer aussi, rire et poésie, en tant

qu'écarts par rapport à une norme. Voir et analyser le langage poétique comme un écart par rapport à un langage-norme (d'ailleurs assez difficile à circonscrire) est une pratique commune ; quant au rire, on peut le considérer lui-aussi comme un écart par rapport à un état-norme, que nous appellerons, à la suite de Jankélévitch, le *sérieux*.

L'écart par rapport au système normatif en poésie peut se faire à plusieurs niveaux – lexical, syntaxique, orthographique – permettant, comme toute rupture, une innovation. Cet écart donne l'identité du texte poétique. Si, pour ce qui est du rire, l'écart ne porte pas nécessairement une marque novatrice, il est tout de même foncièrement personnel, puisque son contraire, le sérieux, est la marque même de l'impersonnel. Dans son cas, « aucune outrance, aucune contorsion, aucune difformation ne lui conviennent ; aucune *stylisation*. Rien de ce qui est mise en scène, mise en page, mise en ondes, rien de ce qui est exemplaire et trop unilatéralement caractérisé n'est 'sérieux' » (Jankélévitch, 1963, p. 181 ; c'est nous qui soulignons). C'est pourquoi le sérieux n'intéresse pas trop l'artiste.

Nous pouvons à partir de là tenter une identification entre toute norme et le sérieux. La poésie deviendra donc un écart par rapport au sérieux, et en conséquence une hypostase plus subtile du rire qui devient, en ces termes, le « non-sérieux » par excellence. Jean Starobinski expliquait l'intérêt manifeste des artistes (surtout à partir du XIXe siècle) pour l'image du clown et la vie foraine comme une réaction à « la monotonie des tâches de la vie sérieuse », et surtout comme une réaction d'ordre psychologique,

> « qui fait éprouver à l'artiste moderne je ne sais quel sentiment de connivence nostalgique avec le microcosme de la parade et de la féerie élémentaire. Il faut aller, dans la plupart des cas, jusqu'à parler d'une forme singulière d'*identification*. L'on s'aperçoit en effet que le choix de l'image du clown n'est pas seulement l'élection d'un motif pictural ou poétique, mais une façon détournée et parodique de poser la question de l'art. » (Starobinski, 1970, p. 7)

L'art en tant que refus du sérieux serait dans cette perspective un retour (comme toute impulsion nostalgique) tout d'abord à l'état primitif et innocent du rire, à sa dimension ludique. Placer la poésie *sub specie ludi* ne serait d'ailleurs point une démarche inédite ou surprenante, à ne considérer que les contributions de Johan Huizinga censées discerner l'élément ludique de la culture. Le jeu, apprécie le penseur néerlandais, est par-dessus tout l'expression de la liberté, de l'action libre, tandis que la poésie est dès ses débuts l'expression du jeu :

> « La poésie, dans sa fonction originaire de facteur de la culture ancienne, est née pendant le jeu et en tant que jeu. C'est un jeu sacré, mais dans sa sacralité ce jeu se place pourtant, sans interruption, aux frontières de la joie, de la plaisanterie et du divertissement » (Huizinga, 1977, p.390) – c'est nous qui traduisons en français d'après l'édition roumaine.

On parle aussi d'autres caractéristiques que poésie et jeu partagent, comme l'enjeu de l'imaginaire ou bien la présence (facultative) et les fonctions des règles. Les règles poétiques, telles que la prosodie, la métrique, jouent un rôle essentiel dans la dimension autotélique du discours poétique, alors que les règles du jeu individualisent et structurent ce dernier sans pour autant toucher à son indéterminisme. Jeu et poésie se rencontrent ainsi à mi-chemin entre forme et contenu.

Par voie de conséquence, poésie, liberté, rire et jeu dans leurs sens larges ne pourraient être séparés dans leur nature originelle la plus intime. Les deux attitudes que l'être humain peut choisir d'adopter envers la réalité, envers le monde entourant, l'attitude poétique et l'attitude ludique – positionnements qui sont à même de devenir productives aussi, dans une seconde étape, donnant naissance au poète ou à l'humoriste – se ressemblent essentiellement par la dose de liberté qu'elles s'arrogent et, qui plus est, dont elles ont tiré et continuent de tirer profit tout au long de l'histoire culturelle de l'humanité.

REFERENCES

Huizinga J., *Homo ludens*, Ed. Univers, Bucureşti, 1977.

Jankélévitch V., *L'Aventure. L'Ennui. Le Sérieux*, Ed. Montaigne, Paris, 1963.

Jankélévitch V., *L'Ironie*, Flammarion, Paris, 1964.

Pelletier A.-M., *Fonctions poétiques,* Ed. Klincksieck, Paris, 1977.

Ricoeur P., *La Métaphore vive*, Ed. du Seul, Paris, 1975.

Rimbaud A., *Oeuvres completes,* "Paroles attribuées à Rimbaud", Ed. Roland de Renéville et Jules Mouquet, Bibliothèques de la Pléiade, Paris, 1946.

Schaeffer J.-M., *L'Art de l'âge moderne*, Gallimard, Paris, 1992.

Starobinski J., *Portrait de l'artiste en saltimbanque*, Flammarion, Paris, 1970.

POEZIE ŞI RÂS

(Rezumat)

Ne propunem în analiza de faţă să abordăm două gesturi culturale care ţin de două sfere de studiu diferite: poezia şi râsul în accepţiunea lui cea mai largă, fără a ne opri asupra diferitelor sale ipostaze, atât de variate. Ne situăm aşadar la intersecţia dintre literatură, pe de o parte, şi antropologie culturală şi filosofie, pe de alta, împrumutând pentru cea din urmă mai ales direcţii de analiză trasate de Vladimir Jankélévitch. Ne propunem prin acest demers să subliniem câteva asemănări între cele două atitudini culturale profund umane, prin prisma dimensiunii lor comune, una eminamente liberatoare şi divergentă în raport cu un cod comportamental pe care l-am putea cataloga drept neutru.

THE INFLUENCE OF ATTACHMENT ON YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND COUPLE RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION AND COPING IN YOUNG PEOPLE

PAR

ELENA TIRON[*]

"Gheorghe Asachi" Technical University of Iaşi
Department of Teacher Training

Abstract. The article describes the attachment theory, its stages and the attachment types seen by Bowlby (1969) and Ainsworth (1970) as starting points in the socio-emotional evolution of young people. The attachment types highlighted in the literature by the test "The Strange Situation" (Ainsworth) were correlated with the responses to the "Adult Attachment Interview" and the link between the two categories of data was found. The influence of the type of attachment of the child to the parent/reference person tends to influence automatically the maturation degree of the young individual. But, in the process of development, other mechanisms such as coping and education have the role of regulating the individual-environment/problem relations to increase adaptability and satisfaction in life.

The article values proactive coping and develops a strategy through which education can limit and overcome the negative predispositions of reactive attachment and coping.

Keywords: attachment; youth development; coaching; education.

1. Introduction

The development of young people especially on the socio-emotional level starts from a certain base given by their relationship with their parents or with the reference people from the environment in which the young people

---

[*]*e-mail*: elenadimitriutiron@gmail.com

lived. The degree of consistency of this relationship, the warmth or the coldness of this relationship, its balance, the protective nature is fundamental to the development of the affectivity of young people in a certain direction. The scientific explanation of the development of young people cannot ignore the attachment theory, the type of attachment the young individual presents, the manner in which the primary attachment relates to other development mechanisms, such as coping, and to more specific instruments of education.

All developmental theories consider, one way or another, the role of the parent-child relationship in the socio-emotional evolution of the child (Freud, Jung, Erikson), also morally (Kolberg) and even intellectually (Piaget).

We consider the attachment theory not only fundamental but also crucial in explaining the developmental tendencies of the person, in the appearance of certain socio-affective and behavioral dysfunctions.

2. The Attachment Theory

Attachment is a set of behaviors with biological roots that stretch in primates and humans, having an initial role of survival and adaptability, by looking for the safety and protection of offsprings in a mother or a reference adult**.**

The attachment theory was written by John Bowlby (1969, 1973, 1979, 1983, 2011, 2016) and developed by Mary Ainsworth (1970), who claim that any emotional interhuman relationship is based on the early mother-child or child-reference person connection. The reference person the child attaches to is the adult with whom the child has the most intense contact during the first months of life. The attachment theory exploits the knowledge of ethology, developmental psychology, psychoanalysis, and systems theory, critically referring to them.

Having this genetic predisposition to look for the state of safety, physical and psychological comfort, and protection, the child organizes his/her behavior and thinking according to the relationship with the reference person, trying to permanently reap the benefit obtained this way. The inability of parents or reference persons to meet the needs of safety and protection of their children can lead to *emotional and cognitive personal dysfunctions,* during his/her evolution, relationships with significant others, couple or his/her own family (Slade, 1999).

Bowlby (1969) differentiated among the four phases of attachment, which manifest differently over time:

1. *the precursory phase:* up to about 6 weeks;
2. *the phase of differentiation from the reference person:* week 6 to month 6-7;
3. *the proper attachment:* from months 7-8 to 24;
4. *the oriented partnership:* after 2-3 years.

The child adapts to the behavior of the reference person, in the first six months a genuine phenomenon of imprinting taking place. The crystallization of attachment has a certain plasticity and changes according to lived experiences, throughout childhood and youth. At maturity, attachment is considered relatively constant and repeatable in all the close relationships that take place. Early mother-child interaction tends to become generalized. Research has shown that the type of attachment is transmitted from one generation to another through attachment model copied by children from parents.

Mary Ainsworth (1970) has developed "The Strange Situation" test for children between the ages of 11 and 18 who have shown experimentally behaviors specific to Bowlby's theory.

3. Types of Attachment

During "The Strange Situation", and also during other tests, four types of attachment were discovered and defined.

Secure attachment

Secure attachment, type B, is where children have great *confidence* in the availability of the reference person. This trust is based on the sensitivity of the reference person, of the mother to the child's signals (look, cry, smile, scream, fear, joy), on their correct interpretation and on the right reaction to these signals, a reaction that does not cause frustration to the child (Bowlby, 1983).

During the test called "The Unknown Situation," these children cry when mothers leave and cheer when they return, trusting the *sense of security* that they offer.

Insecure-avoidant attachment (A)

Children with attachment type A apparently react indifferently, play, do not seem upset when the close person leaves the room or happy when he/ she returns. But research has shown that when the mother leaves the room, the secretion of cortisol in saliva and the heart rate increase as a result of stress children go through (Bowlby, 1983).

Insecurely attached children are not *sure* of the availability of the reference person and expect their desires for affection and support to be refused. This type of insecure attachment is also observed in children who have been repeatedly rejected. The solution they find to escape this stressful and threatening situation for them is to avoid the relationship itself (Bowlby, 1983).

Insecure-ambivalent attachment

This form of attachment is otherwise referred to as *anxious-resistant, ambivalent or type C.* The children in this group are fearful, restless, stressed when their mother leaves the room. But they also show uneasiness when she comes back, rejecting her. They cannot focus on the environment and the unknown person in the room. Their need for affection, but also their rejection of it because they do not trust the reference person, lead to ambivalent behavior (Bowlby,1983).

Table 1
Types of Attachment

Attachment type	Symbol	Description	Behavior in the test
Secure	Type-B	These children can adjust the proximity and distance from the reference person appropriately.	They are a little irritated and sometimes cry if the reference person leaves the room. However, they allow being consoled by a stranger and calm down quickly; they also play in the presence of the unknown person; when the reference person returns they run to meet him/her and gladly welcomes him/her.
Insecure-avoidant	Type-A	Children show pseudo-dependence on the reference person. They stand out by avoiding contact, and, in order to compensate for the stress caused, they focus on playing with objects at hand.	Reacting indifferently to separation from the mother; they very often play alone; do not react to the reference person's return or refuse him/her by ignorance.
Insecure-ambivalent	Type-C	These children behave ambivalently at the meeting with the reference person.	When separated from their mother, they are disoriented, run to the door and strike it, and the unknown person fails to calm them. On the return of the mother, they exhibit an ambivalent behavior of both search for contact and aggressive refusal.
Disorganized	Type-D	Children show a clearly disoriented behavior, appearing to have no relationship with the reference person.	The main characteristic of the behavior of these children is bizarre manifestations such as fixed look, circling, swinging and other stereotypical movements; sometimes other types of attachment behavior are mixed, such as simultaneity of contact search and refusal to do so.

https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teoria_ata%C8%99amentului

Disorganized/disoriented attachment

This type of attachment was discovered later than the other types. It is often called *Type D attachment or disorganized*. This classification was

introduced by Mary Main who also conducted adult attachment research *AAI (Adult Attachment Interview)*. Children in this category have unexpected manifestations that are difficult to categorize, such as various stereotypes or incomplete, interrupted movements, unsafe, avoiding, antagonistic behaviors, circling, throwing themselves to the floor, raised shoulders, paralysis of all movements (Bowlby, 1983).

4. Adult Attachment and its Effects on the Quality of Children's Attachment

Certain categories of attachment depictions and schemes found in the *Adult Attachment Interview* could be related to the types of attachment of their children studied by the "unknown situation" test:

The autonomous attachment attitude

This attitude develops in individuals who have had autonomous and balanced parents and who have contributed this way to the autonomous attachment attitude, which is characterized by *self-esteem, tolerance to frustrating situations, respect, and empathy*. In their status as parents, they react predictably and adaptively according to the situation to the attachment behavior of their children (Mercer, 2006).

The dismissive-avoidant attitude

Adults with this type of attachment either refute childhood memories or talk about their parents' lack of support and rejection. *But at the same time, they claim they did not need this support and have a high degree of independence wanting to solve life challenges*. The children of these people can rely on parenting support, but these parents have great expectations from their children. Adults with a distant and avoidant attitude ignore their children if they need consolation or support (Mercer, 2006).

The anxious-preoccupied attitude

People with this attitude are massively overwhelmed by their childhood *memories*, in a permanent *dependence* on their reference person, have mothers who have not offered protection or consolation in situations perceived as threatening by the child. These individuals spoil their children and foster feelings of guilt that prevent them from externalizing their emotions or expressions of freedom, which will make it difficult for these children to develop their own identity (Mercer, 2006).

The disorganized-unresolved attachment

It is encountered in individuals who suffer because of unprocessed tragic events, or because of sexual or physical abuse that has not been processed. As a result, they cannot provide protection to their children, they

have obsessive fears, and often have children showing the type of disorganized attachment. Mothers with this attachment attitude transfer the leadership of the parent-child relationship to the child, the latter doing as he/she pleases. This leads to the violation of intergenerational tasks, and children often feel it is their duty to take care of the material and psychological wellness of their parents (Mercer, 2006).

The unclassified attachment attitude

Throughout the Adult Attachment Interview, people in this category oscillate between the preoccupied type and the dismissive one without revealing a clear strategy. People describe serious traumatic experiences. They have a profoundly negative attitude towards attachment in general. They have contradictory strategies of thinking and processing (Mercer J., 2006).

5. The Influence of the Attachment on Youth Development and the Relationships of Couple

In the literature discussing the two types of results *(Adult Attachment Interview* and *The Strange Situation)*, clear statistical correlations were identified between attitudes of adult attachment and types of child attachment as follows:

- parents classified as autonomous having children often classified as secure;
- the relationship avoidant (distant) parents having insecure-avoidant children;
- the parents in the *preoccupied* category have ambivalent children;
- parents suffering from unresolved trauma often have children with disorganized attachment.

In the socio-affective evolution of the child the parent-child relationship, the attachment between the two, the type of attachment is a determining factor. The secure attachment provides *a safety basis* for the child's normal psychosocial development, in its social relations, based on primordial mother-child trust, in building a couple and a harmonious and balanced family. *The insecure-avoidant attachment* between the child and the reference person could have as a consequence: the young person avoiding establishing friendships; the lack of trust in the couple relationship; divorcing after the first misunderstandings. The *insecure-ambivalent* attachment can be prolonged also during youth, manifesting itself through concomitantly depending on the partner and rejecting him/her. *The disorganized type of attachment* can introduce into the social, couple or family relationship elements of inconsistency, prolonged physical or mental stereotypes from childhood that can unbalance the relationship.

When children with attachment problems become parents themselves, it is advisable to be aware of the antecedents of their relationship with their own

parents and to correct their tendencies of copying parental manifestations and applying them to their own children.

But the type of attachment is not a given fact to which the child automatically responds but a phenomenon that can be modeled, provided it is understood by both partners or by the members of the social group in which the young person is trying to integrate. When uncertainty, distrust, repeated social rejection occur and the young individual fails to make friends, set up or maintain a family he may choose to see a psychologist or counselor.

Both attachment types and parenting styles influence the psycho-emotional development of young people in their family or couple relationships. Baumrind D (1991) identifies the following types of parenting styles:

Permissive models

The permissive parent does not impose rules of behavior and responsibility on the child, identifies with the emotional states of the child, has a low level of control over him, does not punish or gratify the child.

Authoritarian models

The authoritarian parent has an intense control over the child, but excessive control is not doubled by support. The authoritarian parents consider children to be weak beings who must be protected and led by them. Thus, these parents with an authoritarian style develop low levels of self-esteem, are depression prone and have minimum lower life satisfaction. The authoritarian parent imposes principles, traditions, strict regulations, and children understand that their will does not matter, and the responsibility lies with the adult (Stamate, https://ibn.idsi.md/.../63_74_Influenta%20modelului%20 parental %).

In the **authoritative models,** parents formulate rules, explain them, negotiate them with their children and finally verify compliance. Children understand that there are consequences to their actions, which leads them to form the ability to formulate goals, make decisions, and respond to their own behaviors. Also, the authoritative parental style enjoyed by an individual, associated with the locus of his/her internal control, is positively correlated with psychosocial success.

It has been found experimentally that permissive parental models have the effect of infatuating children in 63% of the cases, authoritarian models lead to low self-esteem in 54% of the cases and authoritative models have optimal effects in 77% of the cases.

Research has shown that certain temperamental traits such as *excessive emotionality, impulsiveness* detected early can be considered warning signs regarding the vulnerability of young people to poor parenting and to negative life events. Rothbart & Bates (1998) argue that identifying these characteristics can prevent disharmonious personality structuring or the use of non-adaptive coping mechanisms. Shaver and Hazan (1987) studied the possibility of a link between the attachment formed in the child-parent relationship and attachment

in the couple relations. This study revealed that there is such a link, and 56% of the subjects are secure, 24% avoidant and 20% anxious-ambivalent within the couple relationships. Brennan, Clark, and Shaver (1998) found two optimal dimensions that could measure individual differences that allowed to be evaluated: anxiety and avoidance. Thus, *the secure* (possessing a low level of anxiety and avoidance) feels comfortable in relationships, seeks the closeness of others, and is not concerned with the thought that he might be left out; *the preoccupied* (showing an increased level of anxiety while the avoidance is low) wants to be close to others but fears that he will be rejected; *the dismissing* (possessing a high level of avoidance and low anxiety) is not afraid of being rejected and unwilling to be close to others; *the fearful* (holding a high level of anxiety and avoidance) is characterized by a combination of the other two types of insecure attachment ("the one who dismisses" and "the preoccupied"): he does not feel comfortable in proximity to others, and he fears once again the closeness will not last.

The insecure attachment will be reflected by visible disturbances at the level of the two systems: either exploratory, the child not requiring the parent to meet his or her needs, or at the level of proximity, the child not engaging in exploration.

Therefore, attachment plays a very important role in the development of psychopathological manifestations of the child or adult and its understanding contributes to the identification of the necessary intervention strategies on the disorders.

6. Coping and Education in Young People

Coping is the set of cognitive and behavioral mechanisms by which the person prevents and adapts to stress by anticipating, reducing, mastering, or tolerating stress. The notion of coping was introduced by Lazarus in 1966, which was supported through a prodigious research of stress.

The coping mechanisms were compared with defensive ones (Băban, 1998), distinguishing themselves as follows:

Coping mechanisms are:

- (sub)conscious processes; products in contact with reality; they allow confrontation with reality; they imply purpose and perspective (are oriented to the present and/or future);

Such mechanisms

- have (require) flexibility; allow affective expression; precede or follow the stress reaction; are directed inwards or outwards; have situational efficiency.

Defensive mechanisms are unconscious processes produced at the ego-id interface.

They
- distort reality (more than coping ones); are predominantly oriented towards the past; involve automatisms; are rigid; block affective expression
- are post-affective processes; are oriented towards blocking internal instinctual impulses
- have a hierarchical organization: mature vs. immature.

Defensive mechanisms at the border with the self have the role of blocking or adjusting the internal instinctual impulses, so as not to flood the ego, and the coping mechanisms at the border with reality have the role of facilitating the adaptation to this reality. Both have a balancing function of the self either at the pressure of the self or of reality.

Behavioral coping groups all behaviors that have the function of preventing or reducing the stress response. *Cognitive coping* aims at informational mediation, modalities of processing information in order to cope with stress.

Coping has a certain *processuality* which is reflected in:
- the anticipation of the situation (evaluation of the cost of confrontation);
- the actual confrontation and the redefinition of the situation through the confrontation;
- personal significance analysis of the post-confrontation situation (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985).

Lazarus & Folkman (1986) distinguish between two types of coping: *problem-focused coping*, in which the individual acts in a way that can lead directly to the removal or resolution of the problem (for example, analysis, minimizing the stressful source), and *coping focused towards emotional regulation*, in which the individual tries to regulate emotions as a result of the stressful event (for example, through monologues, reinterpretations, various methods of relaxation). This category also includes palliative strategies such as alcohol, sedatives, and drugs.

According to problem-focused coping, Taylor (1991) distinguishes the following coping strategies:
- *Confrontation* - is characterized by efforts with aggressive connotations to change the situation: "I mobilized all my efforts to reach my goal";
- *Searching for social support* - is characterized by an effort to gain emotional support and information from others: "I talked to someone to find out more about this situation";
- *Problem-solving planning* - is characterized by deliberate efforts to solve the problem and by analyzing the problem: "I made an action plan and followed it".

Using problem-solving methods, this type of coping is active, dynamic and efficient through all its processes: analysis, management, direct combat with the problem.

According to emotional regulation focused coping, Taylor (1991) distinguishes the following coping strategies:

- *Distancing* - is characterized by our efforts to self-detach from the stressful situation: "I refused to think about it";
- *Self-control* – it is characterized by the effort made to adjust our own emotions: "I did not tell anyone what I felt";
- *Acceptance of responsibility* - is characterized by the awareness of one's own role in the problem simultaneously with the attempt to solve it: "I criticized and rebuked myself";
- *Escape/avoidance* - is characterized by the effort to avoid, to get out of that stressful situation by eating, drinking, smoking, consuming medication and/or immersing us in a world of illusions and desires: "Everything I wanted was to disappear the problem".

This type of coping is more subjective, it focuses on the negative emotions of the person, on their regulation, on the awareness of the problem, or on the adoption of illusory solutions.

Schwarzer adds to the initial dimensions of coping, taking into account the time axis and varying degrees of certainty about the stressful event.
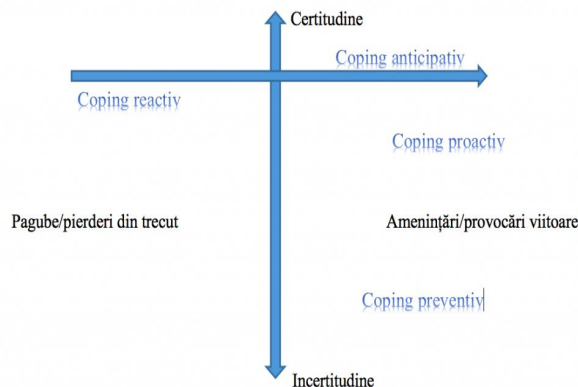

Fig.1 – Types of coping according to Schwarzer.

As we can see in the diagram above, Schwarzer (2004) distinguishes among four types of coping:

- *Reactive coping* is characterized by the effort to deal with an event that has just happened, for example, a loss (divorce, accident, unemployment, death, etc.);
- *Anticipatory coping* is characterized by the effort to deal with an imminent threat that will take place with a very high probability (the critical event has not yet taken place), for example, a doctor consultation, an exam, an interview, etc.

- *Preventive coping* is characterized by the unknown risks of the distant future and the uncertainty of the critical event, for example, job loss, a serious illness, a catastrophe, etc.;
- *Proactive coping* is characterized by the optimization of the living conditions, the tendency to improve one′s own performance, the fixing of high goals, all of which present a great degree of uncertainty.

Analyzing these four types of coping we can see the *role of education* in moving from reactive coping to proactive.

In reactive coping the individual is confronted with the accomplished fact, has not anticipated or prevented the negative event, but has to cope with it, and soon develop a coping strategy. This strategy is effective if the individual has sufficient physical and psychological resources to counteract the negative effects of stress.

Anticipatory coping gives the individual time to prepare a cognitive and behavioral strategy to cope with the negative event.

Preventive coping involves the intellectual, motivational resources of the individual from the very beginning in order to develop effective strategies in possible situations: illness, job loss.

Proactive coping is an advanced form of coping in which education has the role of optimizing living conditions, improving one's own performance just to successfully deal with negative events and reduce the negative effects of stress.

The coping mechanisms are not innate, they are shaped by the experiences lived by the person, and the role of educating these mechanisms is essential. If the person has intellectual resources, the power of self, strong motivation, social help, coping information can anticipate, prevent and develop proactive coping strategies. If the person's intellectual resources are limited and he has not learned certain successful coping techniques from previous negative experiences, he can consult a psychologist, a counselor, or a doctor.

A number of questions are essential in developing proactive coping strategies by the person himself, by a social group, an institution, including school or informal institutions.

When, at what age can a person develop such strategies, under what conditions? Of course, when the awareness process begins to contain more and more facts, including life difficulties, and to balance its own forces with these difficulties. Also, life models, parents, friends, teachers, or other people important to that person can practice such strategies and can be living examples that are worthwhile to follow.

In school optional courses on coping, on stress management, on conflict resolution, debates on such topics, talks with a psychologist, workshops can be opportunities to learn coping, personal development mechanisms in order to solve problems successfully.

In the current society of knowledge, many informal institutions (associations, foundations, societies) have been set up to support different

categories of people to overcome life, health, couple, career, etc. difficulties. Formal or informal institutions organize various activities that fall under the sign of de-stressing and coping.

Educating young people to deal with stress includes principles, methods, and techniques, forms of coping, stress overcoming. We can identify the following principles of coping:

- act *immediately,* as soon as a problem arises so that it does not get worse;
- *compare* the degree of difficulty of the problem with your own forces;
- identify your own *limits* to solve the problem;
- *correct* and exceed these limits;
- develop activities that will provide you with *confidence in your own forces*;
- earn the *people* you appreciate and appreciate you;
- organize your *time* judiciously;
- combine activity with fun and relaxation
- take care of your own health;
- sleep as much as you need in order to feel rested;
- eat healthily and in a balanced manner;
- be honest and open to others;
- be interested in the problems of others as well;
- be receptive to changing your own behavior to become more efficient and happier;
- ask for the help and collaboration of those around you.

In conclusion, we can support a predetermination relationship between the type of attachment of the child and its socio-affective relationship development that can be corrected and balanced by other mechanisms and development tools of the person such as coping and especially education.

REFERENCES

Ainsworth M.D.S., Bell S.M., *Attachment, Exploration, and Separation: Illustrated by the Behavior of One-Year-Olds in a Strange Situation*, Child Development, *41*, 49-67 (1970).

Băban A., *Stress şi personalitate*, Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj, 1998.

Baumrind D., *Parenting Styles and Adolescent Development*, In: J. Books-Gunn, R. Lener & A.C. Peterson (eds.), The Encyclopedia of Adolescence, Garland, New York, 1991, pp. 746- 758.

Bowlby J, *Attachement and Loss.* Vol. I, *Attachement*, Basic Books, New York, 1969/1982.

Bowlby J., *Attachement and Loss.* Vol.2, *Separation. Anxiety and Anger*, Basic Books, New York, 1973.

Bowlby J., *Attachment*, Second Edition, Basic Books, New York, 1983.

Bowlby J., *Crearea şi ruperea legăturilor afective*, Bucureşti, Editura Trei, 2016.

Bowlby J., *O bază de siguranţă. Aplicaţii clinice ale teoriei ataşamentului*, Bucureşti, Editura Trei, 2011.

Bowlby J., *The Making and Breaking of Affectional Bonds*, Tavistock, London, 1979.

Brennan K.A., Clark C.L., Shaver P.R., *Self-Report Measurement of Adult Romantic Attachment: An integrative overview,* In J.A. Simpson & W.S. Rholes (eds.), Attachment Theory and Close Relationships, Guilford Press, New York, pp. 46-76, 1998.

Folkman S., Lazarus R.S., Duckel-Schetter C., DeLongis A., Gruen R.J., *Dynamics of a Stressful Encounter: Cognitive Appraisal, Coping, and Encounter Outcomes*, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, **50**, *5*, 992-1003, 1986.

Folkman S., Lazarus R.S., *If It Changes, It Must Be a Process; Study of Emotion and Coping, during Three Stage of College Examination*, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 48, pp. 150-170, 1985.

Hazan C., Shaver P., *Romantic Love Conceptualized as an Attachment Process*, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, **52**, *3* (1987).

Lazarus R.S., *Coping Theory and Research: Past, Present and Future*, Psychosomatic Medicine, *55*, 234-247 (1993).

Mercer J., *Understanding Attachment: Parenting, Child Care, and Emotional Development,* Praeger Publishers, Westport, CT, 2006.
no. 47, pp. 91-109, 1991.

Rothbart & Bates, *Temperament, Self-Regulation and Education*, School Psychology Review, **27**, *4*, 479-491 (1998).

Slade A., *Attachment Theory and Research: Implications for the Theory and Practice of Individual Psychotherapy with Adults*, In J. Cassidy & P.R. Shaver (eds.), Handbook of Attachment: Theory, Research and Clinical Applications, Guilford Press, New York, 575-594, 1999.

Stamate D., *Influenţa modelului parental asupra strategiilor de coping, stimei de sine şi locus control la adolescenţii care reprezintă tulburări de comportament*, https://ibn.idsi.md/.../63_74_Influenta%20modelului%20parental %.

Taylor S.E., Helgeson V.S., Reed G.M., Skokan L.A., *Self-Generated Feeling of Control and Adjustment to Physical Illness*, Journal of Social Issues, *47*, pp. 91-109, 1991.

* * * https://willing.ro/ce-este-copingul/

*   *   * http://www.scrigroup.com/educatie/psihologie-psihiatrie/MECANISME-DE-COPING61845.php.

INFLUENŢA ATAŞAMENTULUI ASUPRA DEZVOLTĂRII
TINERILOR ŞI A RELAŢIILOR DE CUPLU
Educaţie şi coping la tineri

(Rezumat)

Articolul descrie teoria ataşamentului, etapele acestuia şi tipurile de ataşament în viziunea lui Bowlby (1969) şi Ainsworth (1970) ca puncte de plecare în evoluţia

socio-afectivă a tinerilor. Tipurile de ataşament puse in evidenţă în literatura de specialitate prin testul "Situaţia necunoscută" (Ainsworth) au fost corelate cu răspunsurile obţinute la "Interviul ataşamentului adult" şi s-a constatat legătura dintre cele doua categorii de date. Influenţa tipului de ataşament al copilului faţă de părinte/persoana de referinţă are tendinţa de a se prelungi automat asupra gradului de maturizare al tânărului. Dar în jocul dezvoltării intră şi alte mecanisme, cum ar fi coping-ul şi educaţia, care au rolul de a regla raporturile persoană-mediu/problemă pentru creşterea adaptabilităţii şi a satisfacţiei în viaţă.

Articolul valorizează coping-ul proactiv şi elaborează o strategie prin care educaţia poate limita şi depăşi predispoziţiile negative ale ataşamentului şi coping-ului reactiv.