



DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND THE LITERARY WORK

Abstract: *In this paper we elaborate on Jakobson's allusion to the unsustainability of the mutual disregard between linguists and literary scholars which he labelled a 'flagrant anachronism' at the Indiana Style Conference in 1958. It was only with the development of discourse that the two fields converged in their attitudes and found a common ground, whereas stylistics proliferated into many disciplines. The hierarchy and animosity between these two scientific fields have gradually subsided, while the incommensurability of their scientific apparatus has slowly reduced or been mitigated and they have begun to benefit from each other. At the same time we have witnessed the enrichment of their categorical paradigms and somewhat synchronised development in both areas, where the locus of potential and actual encounter is discourse.*

This paper looks at the creation of an association between the study of language and literature through discourse, whether in considering the possibility of extending the range of the individual disciplines of language and literature simply to discourse (Carter, 2003) or in understanding literature as social discourse (Fowler, 1981). Examples to illustrate the development of discourse analysis are taken from the world literature and from a personal corpus. Recently, the most fruitful, it seems, has been cognitive stylistics, which will be exemplified by the analysis of Joyce's words concerning 'the perfect word order'.

Keywords: *discourse, discourse analysis, linguistics, stylistics, literary linguistics, literary study, Jakobson, cognitive linguistics*

Introduction

The 1958 Indiana Style Conference gathered together linguists, psychologists and literary critics with the intention of investigating the possibilities for finding common ground and establishing the likelihood of a consensus regarding the discussion on style and language in literature. Roman Jakobson said these famous and unforgettable words at that conference:

"If there are some critics who still doubt the competence of linguistics to embrace the field of poetics, I privately believe that the poetic incompetence of some bigoted linguists has been mistaken for an inadequacy of the linguistic science itself. All of us here, however, definitely realize that a linguist deaf to the poetic function of language and a literary scholar indifferent to

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linguistic problems and unconversant with linguistic methods are equally *flagrant anachronisms*" (Jakobson, 1987: 377).

According to Gordon Messing the conference was a total failure. In his mordant review he expressed strong doubt in a possible positive interpretation and the conceivable reconciliation of linguistics and the poetic function of language (Messing, 1961). Yet, in the field of linguistics and stylistics it was Jacobson's words that echoed, not his.

This paper will try to answer the following question: in which sense was the expression 'flagrant anachronisms', a diagnosis of the relationship between linguistics and literary criticism and in which was it a reprimand to those who flagrantly lagged behind linguistic science and literary study. Also, it will try to indicate to what extent it was an individual view and to what degree a widely held opinion of the relationship between the fields of research, and whether the anachronism has gradually diminished as the two fields of study have converged (as a historic response provided by scholars of both provenances).

When Jakobson uttered the phrase 'flagrant anachronism' he was only a few years away from the dissemination of his stylistic analysis of "Baudelaire's 'Cats'" in 1962 (Jakobson, 1987). Rifaterre's "Criteria for Style Analysis" and Warburg's "Some Aspects of Style" also appeared the same year. All of these papers deal with stylistic analysis of text in an attempt to establish the direct liaison between language as a system and the literary work that epitomises that system.

According to Simpson 'stylistics is essentially a bridge discipline between linguistics and literature – the design of the bridge, its purpose, the nature of the materials and about the side it should be built from' (qtd. in Short, 1989: 161). Our conceptualisation of stylistics is of the kind that presupposes greater homogenisation of the discipline and a more compact blend of the component parts because it is the meeting point of linguistics and literature; those two disciplines can be metaphorised as the confluence of two disciplines and the headwaters of one. However, the relationship between linguistics and literature is often presented as a mutual mistrust, sometimes of contempt (van Peer, 1991: 2) or, perhaps more diplomatically put, 'a misunderstanding' (Jakobson, 1987: 55). In actual fact we are closer to the metaphor of Zeno's paradoxes regarding these dichotomies, where achieving real harmony between the two

fields of research resembles the mathematical paradox of walking a path where there always remains one half, no matter how small, that one field of investigation cannot fully traverse. That field is linguistics. The conclusion seems to be that first-class literature is beyond the grasp of linguistic analysis discouraging all those who are committed to linguistic stylistics.

2. Theoretical point counterpoint

'Flagrant anachronism' as a diagnosis is generated (and affirmed) by the insistence on the part of the road which linguistics will never travel, not the shortcomings of its contribution – because its role is beyond doubt. Linguistics has been marginalised because it constituted only part of what was needed for interpretation, given that in Jakobson's time hermeneutics of the literary work was its canonically superior discipline. There was an insistence on dualism, which meant the separation of form and meaning, allowing the isolation of the formal element, on the one hand, and the organic connection between form and meaning, which further allowed the interpretation of the phenomena of style, on the other hand (Kompanjon, 2002: 230). But it was not so unambiguous. Firstly, many theorists have tried to find a unified theory that would be valid for language and literature; secondly, they have sought to separate the notion of literary language from the language of literature and, thirdly, they have tried to establish the method and convention of analysis, which comprises all levels of the language structure, along with function, meaning and use. Lastly, they have operated within the framework of a given culture. So, they have looked at language as a system and its use for certain purposes – and the purposes have varied, literature is just one of them.

The problem of stylistics was its hermeticity: for the interpretation to be detailed, the description needs to be comprehensive, and all this leads to the model of analysis demonstrated by the example of "Baudelaire's 'Cats'" that Jakobson did in collaboration with Claude Levi-Strauss (1987). Although we would be reluctant to exaggerate and favour exclusivity when it comes to the contribution of linguistics in the interpretation of a literary work, we have to agree with those observations that this grammar of poetry is indeed a poetry of grammar. Rarely do we meet such an arsenal of linguistic,

grammatical and semantic tools, not to mention the analysis of metrics and rhyme so thoroughly polished to attain the poetics of an inspired work (Appendix).

Jakobson's definition of literary quality and literature (*literariness* in his terms), as a projection of the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection to the axis of combination (1960) resembles Chomsky's ideal model of perfect syntax in a homogenised environment. Both scholars had aspirations for their theories to be validated in the field of language and literature, but they either wished it a little too early or they developed their respective theories insufficiently. The range of their principles was limited, and the apparatus deficient. At the end of the section in which Jakobson exhausts the grammatical and linguistic categories which demonstrates the poetic reach in "Baudelaire's 'Cats'", we find a passage that reads: 'Now that we have put together the parts of our analysis, we will try to show how these different parts merge, to complement each other, or how they combine to donate the poem the value of *absolute object*' (Jakobson, 1987: 193) (emphasis added).

The existence of the idea and objective of the analysis embodied in the 'absolute object' shows the proportion of importance of such linguistic analysis for literary purposes. The essence of the issues mentioned in the analysis was the mediation between language and literature: is the linguistic description *ipso facto* a literary one? To this question Jakobson and Levi-Strauss did not give a satisfactory response in "Baudelaire's 'Cats'". Neither did the others mentioned: Spitzer (1948) and Riffaterre (1959) through scientific stylistics; Warburg (1959) by adequate choice or F.R. Levis stressing the moral dimension of fiction (1962). The weakness was attributed to the scientific method, not the science, and the inadequacy of the analysis was attributed to the insufficiency of insight, not the shortcomings of the theory.

What is missing from Jakobson and Levi-Strauss's analysis of "Baudelaire's 'Cats'"? We will try to give an answer by way of an example which benefits from the time lapsed and from the comfort of the theory that we have embraced. We shall start with an example from Shakespeare's tragedy, *Julius Caesar*, focusing upon the reaction to the famous speech Mark Antony delivers at Caesar's grave, where he confuses anyone who was prone to confusion. Here is the reaction of the First Citizen:

1. FIRST CITIZEN: *Methinks* there is much reason in his sayings.
(Act III, scene II, p. 99)

The translation into Serbian goes like this:

2. PRVI PLEBEJAC: *Čini mi se* da je mnogo istine u tome što kaže.
(Act III, scene II, p. 617)
(Serbian translation: Živojin Simić and Sima Pandurović)

The linguistic apparatus that Jakobson used in his analysis of “Baudelaire’s ‘Cats’” included morphology, syntax and semantics. It looked at the metric and stylistic pattern, but it did not study discourse categories like power and hierarchy, i.e. allusion to the unmarked governing elite contrasted with the markedness of lower social classes usually referred to as mob by Shakespeare. The analysis could not depict and reflect the categories of social strata or caste affiliation, and it could not embrace and portray the relationship between such opposites. All this: the hierarchy, class, social stratum, level of education, the degree of gullibility, the possibility of manipulation, Shakespeare achieved by using a single substandard form: *methinks*. What is it that is so linguistically pregnant, and of such literary importance? Why is this particular word form so linguistically and literary viable, that is, poetically relevant for the reader? In the case of *methinks* almost all linguistic levels are present therein: syntax, morphology, semantics and, above all, one layer of analysis that is of crucial importance here, and that is discourse.

Methinks (*me thinks, I thinkes* even *meethinkes* in the version of *Hamlet* from 1623) in the language of Shakespeare’s age usually means *seem* like in the verse where Hamlet thinks he sees his father's ghost: *O my father, my father, me thinks I see my father* (*Hamlet*, Act I, scene 2). That expression is somewhere between verbs of perception – *have the visual / auditory experience of something* and *think* as a verb of cognition, although morphologically and structurally one of its constituent parts is the verb *to think*. In the play *Julius Caesar*, *methinks* occurs only once, in the utterance of the First Plebeian. In contrast, the predicative structure *I think*, that has a very similar, if not the same semantics as *methinks*, occurs six times: three times

pronounced by Cassius and three times by Brutus. Viewed from the discourse perspective the use of the structure *methinks* contrasted to the predicative sequence *I think* embodies a striking patrician-plebeian opposition, along with everything that such opposition in the given context means. A brief elaboration follows.

As a multiply irregular form (although accepted as a written and spoken phrase of that time) *methinks* in this drama is a non-standard, vernacular and somewhat distorted variant of the given correct syntactic structure of predication *I think*, and at the same time quite becoming the one (plebeian) who is uttering it. The idiosyncrasy of this structure or expression, because it is not a lexeme, is found at several levels. Firstly, the stem of it is the verb *to think* which is blended to its subject and its flexive extensions. Secondly, it is the use of *me* instead of *I*; thirdly, the verb and pronoun are written jointly; fourthly, the inflectional ending *-s* is added to the first person singular of the verb, which is twice the rule violation and double language creativity. Fifthly, despite all these irregularities the semantics of the utterance is unquestionable. It should be noted that in the above speech of Mark Anthony the proper syntax of the first person singular pronoun and first person singular Present Tense / Past Tense indicative verb exist in cases with other verbs: *I come, I presented, I speak, I do know, I must pause*. The subtle encoding of class, hierarchy, disparagement of the opinion and attitude of the inferior and, above all, the mass manipulation – because it is impossible to be at the same level as the learned Mark Antony – is masterfully achieved with this single form. The official translation of this expression into Serbian has not recorded that. *Methinks* in the interpretation and translation along the lines of regular syntax: *it seems to me*, loses a large proportion of its semantic property, thus minimising the semantics of a cognitive verb of reflection (*to think*) on the account of the verb of perception (*to seem*). Furthermore, the translation did not ‘descend’ from the syntactic level of a structure, which is syntax, to the morphological or lexical one to reflect the internal structure of the Shakespeare’s original.

If Živko Nikolić (Montenegrin film director) were alive and if he had been given the assignment of translation and interpretation of this linguistic chunk, we believe that within his broad intersemiotic approach to translation (see: Eco, 2004) he

would have come up with something similar to the solution he employed in his famous series “Đekna has not died yet, but when she will we do not know”. Using the local language of Kolašin, a masterful *meščini* is a possible articulation of it. In contrastive analysis it is a semantic equivalent to *methinks*, and at the level of formal structural characteristics they are almost correspondents. *Methinks* as a separate morphosyntactic, therefore, a distinct stylistic trait, is both a departure from the norm and its *ostranienie* or in Voloshinov’s terminology, defamiliarisation, and embodies a highly creative outcome. It encrypts and encodes a meaning that would take pages of explanation – of how the assassin of a tyrant remains an assassin, and how might constitutes a universal category which first comes from authority and then power, any power. Age, history, ideology, mentality, culture, tradition are all comprised, therefore – everything that discourse analysis alone takes as its field of scrutiny: the social, political and psychological components of meanings and interpretations. In Jakobson’s time that was not present, nor could it have been.

3. The road to a unified theory

In this paper language and literature are understood as *discourse* in accordance with Carter’s idea that the modern notion of discourse and theory of culture has the potential to enrich some typical procedures of interpretation (Carter, 2003: 111). Also, the assumption that discourse has the ability to bridge the narrow notion of literature and establish a connection with language can be seen in Fowler’s definition of literature simply as a *social discourse* (Fowler, 1989). He insists on defining language as a system suitable for a variety of purposes, literature being just one of them.

Let us take an example from Italian, overheard in the street. A woman was addressed by a *pancabestia* (*ital.* a (young) homeless with a dog):

3. Signora bella, che ore sono, gentilmente? (Fair lady, what is the time, please?)

The utterance came in the everyday street context, with one person trying to catch the attention of another, yet it was a communicative misfire. No contact was established, the

addressed lady went on in pursuit of her own affairs. Nevertheless, it could serve as the building block for a literary text where the *pancabestia* is the protagonist (or the lady, for that reason), who is unsuccessful in establishing contact with other people under the given circumstances despite her wholehearted efforts. These 'efforts' can be linguistically analysed firstly as a stylistic trait, for she uses the marked form of a noun and the adjective. In Italian it is possible both to prepose and postpose the adjective *bella* (fair, beautiful) in relation to the noun. If it is placed before the noun (*bella signora*) it is not marked, it is regular and standard. But if the position in relation to the noun is inverted (*signora bella*) it is stylistically marked and as such more informative and richer in expression in the literary sense. Secondly, from the discourse point of view, an extra piece of information is added: a person with such everyday rhetoric is quite likely to be from the south of Italy and thus we obtain a geographical coordinate for our protagonist. Thirdly, pragmatically speaking, this utterance is basically attention-catching with the speech act of starting a dialogue or a preparatory speech act for a request. Money, maybe. Maybe this pragmatic aspect would be the most visible in the literary text because the protagonist does not succeed in either of her possible intentions. The broader context of a novel or a short story would clarify the importance of this particular phrasing and the pragmatic execution. Lastly, this utterance under (3) violates Grice's Maxim of Relation. She speaks, no response follows – what she says is not relevant. It is futile.

With the above analysis we see how any piece of spoken or written text can acquire literary prerogatives and can become 'literary language', though only if contextualised in a fictional i.e. literary manner, where there is a story, plot, characters, a particular style of writing and a particular idea behind all these which makes the storytelling convincing as such. Discourse analysis always takes into account all of this interpersonal dynamism; it researches the presuppositions and inferences and reveals some hidden meanings that are not noticed on first sight. Who is *signora bella*? The girl's mother? Is the girl being ironic? Is she anticipating something in the story or disclosing something from their past?

In its purely linguistic sense discourse has gained so much prominence due to several of its features: first, because of the

above the sentence level of analysis, which has, in turn, allowed the emergence of new individual theories of language and literature, but also for the attempted unification of these theories in a macro-theory, although we risk the imminence of what is today sceptically called “the theory of everything” (Spivak, 2003). Furthermore, discourse as a phenomenon is easily combined with other fields of knowledge which results in its proliferating into numerous interdisciplinary fields in order to expand and develop its own domain of investigation. Its latest immersion into cognitive science has enriched it tremendously and brought the reader into the focus of interest, examining their reception from the cognitive point of view.

This paper is based on several assumptions that are the legacy of the theories both from linguistics and literature. Firstly, as we have emphasised, there is no literary language, there is only language for literary purposes; secondly, the analysis is performed on the unit called text; thirdly, we truly believe that “the world is linguistically constituted”; fourthly, context and contexts are crucial for arriving at the meaning. Last but not least, the analysis comprises social, psychological, interpersonal, cultural and other elements.

In the early nineteen-fifties, two major attempts to clarify the rival concepts of what is new and what is general (Quigley, 2004) were undertaken individually by Noam Chomsky and Michael Halliday and their associates. Radical revisions occurred during the nineteen-sixties and seventies and the constantly improving theories offered upgraded variants, yet did not quite eliminate the problems. It is obvious that Jakobson’s “system of systems” (Jakobson, 1987: 79-81) deteriorated in the face of the versatility and richness of sign and richness of the occurrences in life, but a new ‘system of systems’ was hard to build because new parameters continually came into play.

The knowledge that not everything can be segmented and classified under categories and structures led to the assumption that there was a higher form of order, and this gradually led to the awareness of a higher level of linguistic analysis contained at the linguistic level of the sentence. But not everything was as perfect as that. Context was virtually lost in the categories of the idealised and the homogenised, which were abolishing or suppressing the social dimension of language as well as the interpersonal aspect of linguistic usage. Chomsky’s

transformational generative theory, since this is what we are talking about, insisted on the perfect speaker who speaks an equally perfect language. Semantics was not included, the insistence was upon syntax, mostly upon the sentence, and the levels below that syntactic unit. Creativity was not embraced either – Quigley calls it ‘exclusion in theory’ and he nicely illustrated it by the example of e. e. Cummings’ poem ‘he danced his did’ (Quigley, 2004: 86) where every imaginable violation of syntactic rules takes place, yet a verse of magnificent beauty and style is created. The transformational generative theory of that time could not account for such flights of creativity.

Over time, the terminology both of linguistic and literary studies is beginning to change. Thus, the expressions ‘semiological’ or ‘semiotic’ are slowly being replaced by the terms ‘linguistic’ and ‘language’, ‘the system of signs’ in the theory is gradually becoming the ‘language system’. The desire for an increasingly general theory is becoming stronger. The pluralistic tendency in the study of literature to reconcile the competing demands of monists and relativists is directly analogous with the desire of linguists from the nineteen-sixties to resolve the structuralist objectification of Saussurian linguistics with the different reactions of other linguists and their great need for semiotic order (Quigley, 2004: 76). The key to literary theory and, consequently, interpretation, was sought in the linguistic theory. Semiotic order meant that each sign in literature could be interpreted unequivocally. It goes without saying that such a theory could not be sustained because, as will presently be seen, semiotic order of that type excluded context, dialogue, society and culture. It was these elements that created ‘disorder in the order of the theories of mostly structuralist provenance and which discourse ‘tamed’ somewhat by extending the limits of its theory. However, despite the benefit of the proliferation of the fields of research within discourse the lack of clear boundaries between disciplines is obvious.

4. Discourse and discourses

Quigley’s “disorder” (2004), Spitzer’s “deviation from the norm” (1948), Volosinov’s ‘defamiliarization’ (*ostranenie*) (1973 [1930]) are all linguistic phenomena which are at the same time the building blocks of literature, for which a more comprehensive

theory needed to be conceived. This was discourse analysis. Discourse is chaotic, it overflows the moulds of theories and rules, it is maverick and nonconformist in its attempt to evade the rules that the science from Saussure onwards tried to articulate. Discourse in fact epitomises Jakobson's effort to create a 'system of systems' (1987: 79-81), this time with greater prospects of success. Discourse analysis is an approach in linguistic analysis which focuses on the linguistic patterns in text as well as on the social and cultural contexts in which the text appears. The meaning that *discourse* has in its everyday use in terms of verbal exchanges, in particular kinds of speech, interview, language, discussions, dialogue or conversation (Johansen, 2002; Vuković, 2013; Perović, 2014) should be separated from the meaning pertinent to linguists and philosophers such as Foucault or Habermas. For a moment we will stop at Foucault as the insights into discourse at which he arrived were paramount for linguistics and literary criticism.

Foucault's main thesis is that in every society the production of discourse simultaneously selects, controls, distributes and organises certain processes, the role of which it is to harness the power and danger of discourse, to master its unpredictability and to avoid its difficult and dangerous materiality (Fuko, 2007). Foucault perceives discourse as a collection of different historical circumstances (1972). Our knowledge and beliefs, in this view, are the product of discourse, that is, they are not universal and immutable but are historically and culturally conditioned and shaped. As regards the interpretation of texts, Foucault's position is that language does not process reality in some simple, common-sense and clear way, rather it is the means by which ideologies are fabricated. It cannot be a neutral medium (see: Fowler, 1991; Simpson, 1993; Fairclough, 1992; Griffiths, 1992; Carter, 2003).

From Foucault's learning it is perhaps more discernible than elsewhere that each theory builds on the previous one, and that each and every one is dogmatised. Discourse recognised the ideology in theory, which was reflected in linguistics and literary theory. With this in mind, Lentricchia said: 'Tell me your theory and I'll tell you in advance what you'll say about any work of literature, especially those you haven't read' (Lentricchia, 1996: 64). Just like the genie escaping the lantern. In linguistics it reverberated in the great theoretical legacy of critical discourse

analysis and research that was left by Fairclough (*Discourse and Social Change; Critical Discourse Analysis*), but also by other theorists of discourse attribution (Wodak, 1996; Stubbs, 1983, 1996; Scollon, 1998; Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999). In literary theory, structuralism has acquired post-structuralism and the *post* in literary theory has become multifaceted. As ideology is immanent to discourse some literary theories appeared with a smaller or larger range of impacts, such as Marxist, Freudian or Lacanian, depending on which aspect of discourse is brought into focus: policy, ideology, gender, philosophical or religious beliefs, etc. So, depending on the theoretical stand it was possible to assess one single literary work as good, or not so good. The theory was not a straightjacket any more, it was only losing its name.

5. There is no literary language

The idea that literature and language can be considered a discourse meant a rapprochement of these two areas, but it did not erase all the obstacles which Jakobson had angrily reacted to in the late nineteen-sixties. The advantage today is a much greater appreciation of linguistic and literary-linguistic formalism in truly contextualised literary studies which see literature as embedded in social and cultural formation. These new insights in the theory of literature, caused by the emergence of discourse and supplemented by the reader as an important component part, have not completely annihilated intensive formalism, yet they weakened the danger of the same interpretation of texts because completely universal, eternal meaning for texts that people read, as we know, is impossible. Having reached this conclusion Carter notes (2003: 81-82) that language is not neutral and reading cannot be unbiased and disinterested. This assumption was previously reached by others, Willy van Peer, for example, in his 1991 introductory study to *The Taming of the Text* stating that there are as many interpretations as there are readers. Furthermore, the study of language as a variation of functional styles or genres led to the perception that there is a continuum between literature with a small 'l' and literature with a capital 'L', which means that literacy in its many forms can be understood as a wide range of texts. Such literacy is theoretically sustainable for various functional styles (from jokes

to the warnings on cigarette packets, so everything can be analysed alongside Shakespeare's sonnets and the introductory paragraphs of the novel by Jane Austen. Here the term "text" serves as an appropriate inclusive category (McRae, 1991). 'Deviations and playing with the norms is not exclusively limited to what a particular community considers to be literary text' (Carter, 2003: 82). It follows that the theory of reading and writing literary texts should go hand-in-hand with the development of discourse literacy. Carter points out that for this purpose a more socially based, functional linguistics, has potential in a context where linguistic and literary discourse studies are more comprehensively integrated. Such a linguistic paradigm emphasises the "forms, choices and meaning, not only the form" (Carter, 2003: 82). As far as literature itself is concerned, as our concluding words we quote Johansen who connects the categories of literary texts, linguistic expression and context in the following manner:

(...) Its [literature's] diversity stems from the fact that literary texts are *linguistic expressions* which the author sends to his readership at a given time under certain social and cultural conditions and within, or in connection with, the literary institution (Johansen, 2002: xii-xiii) (emphasis added).

6. The world is linguistically constituted

In the linguistic and discursive approaches to the analysis and interpretation of text the aim is to diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of various approaches – and here two main procedures stand out. One is the deliberate construction of meaning from the language of a text, the other is a less intentional act of interpretation, for example, of the subtext. These subtexts inform our decisions in linguistic analysis, telling us how these meanings are granted and how they can be explained (Carter, 2003: 111-118). It is known that a propositional meaning may be expressed in linguistically different structures and the writer, according to the decisions taken on what they want to convey symbolically to their text, chooses the one that is best suited to their style. This is the essence of their competence as a writer and creativity as an author, and is their pragmatic goal – that which will result in the text of a novel, short story, poem, etc.). Depending on the analytical framework of the interpretation or

exploration of a literary work, the researcher will 'break the code' of the piece through one or the other or, preferably, both procedures to the greatest extent possible. Our belief that linguistics is the (hyperbolised) principle that moves the world is supported by Diedre Barton from her study dedicated to the work of Sylvia Plath called *The Bell Jar*:

Finally, I would like to join Shapiro (1956), Whorf (1956) and Voloshinov (1973 [1930]) and, along with them say that the world is linguistically constructed (...). Stylistic analysis is not simply a matter of discussion of 'effects' in language and text but it is a powerful method for understanding the ways in which all kinds of 'realities' are constructed through language (qtd. in Simpson, 1993: 187-188).

In this study Plath's poetry served as the basis for analysis in the feminist linguistic key, where three types of text emerged, constructing three images of women: one of women in literature written by men, the second of women created by feminist critics, and the third is a construct of women created by women writers themselves through their work. Sylvia Plath belonged to the third type. Diedre Barton says that it can easily be seen how Sylvia Plath readily used the metaphor of *disabling*, the lexicon of *disenabling*, prevention from actual living, *disempowering* of all kinds. In English, the key word is *disabling*, which can be comprehended in three ways: *disabling*, *frustration*, *inability*. She writes about *dilemmas*, *contradictions* and *pressure*, which might have led directly to her horrible death (Burton in Simpson, 2004: 187-188). To conclude, the world is to a large extent linguistically constituted: Plath's world was a world of *foiling* and *limitations*. Had it not been, she might not have run up against its boundaries so terribly. What follows in this text is further elaboration and fine-tuning of the same idea.

In the modern stylistic analysis of language a substantial proportion of investigation is dedicated to discourse analysis and the narrative organisation of literary texts. Thus, for example, dramatic text is not treated exclusively as poetic – social and interpersonal factors are also included. The following example from Shakespeare's Hamlet is based on the theory of the speech act.

4. POLONIUS: What do you read, my lord?

HAMLET: Words, words, words. (Act II, scene ii, 190-1)

At first glance, Hamlet states the obvious. However, contextual consideration leads us to an alternative interpretation, and that means discerning the text as a series of communicative acts, not only the configuration of phonetic, lexical or syntactic forms. The answer to Polonius is provided in such a light, as such an act. Hamlet wants to get rid of him, he is on the verge of rudeness, perhaps feigning madness, but respects the cooperative principle of conversation. When somebody has discourse literacy (and we all do) it is easy to interpret this as 'leave me alone'. The performative art has made a huge challenge of this. There is the well-known interpretation of an actor who with each pronunciation of the word 'word' adopts a different hand position. Each of the bodily postures further enhances the speech act of emptiness and intensifies the message of the need for solitude where the prince will be absorbed in 'words' in his own way.

A similar example is analysed as an illustration of Grice's cooperative principles in conversation, which we find in *Romeo and Juliet*:

5. BENVOLIO: Tell me in sadness, who is it that you love?

[...]

ROMEO: In sadness cousin, I do love a woman. (Act I, scene i, 203, 207)

The answer is given, and nothing has been said. Kindness is respected – that is good manners – and the secret is preserved.

The stance of New Criticism that texts are verbal objects could not be completely maintained. In order to understand the meaning of words in a poem, you need to know its normal, usual meaning, the significance of its special place in the syntactic structure etc. In other words, the text can only be understood as an object inserted into a set of linguistic and other conventions, for example, sociological, cultural, literary etc. (Carter and Simpson, 1989: 142-143).

7. Joyce and a “perfect word order”

To illustrate the idea of this paper that discourse with all its advanced theories is a way to reduce the gap between language and literature and provide a more reliable means of interpretation of the text, we will borrow the words of James Joyce:

Once, after two days of work yielded only two finished sentences, Joyce was asked if he had been seeking the right words. “No,” he replied, “I have the words already. What I am seeking is the perfect order of words in the sentences I have” (Currey, 2013: 87).

This formulation of Joyce’s resembles the title of Hawking’s book, *The Universe in a Nutshell* (2001), which is almost a brief linguistic and literary theory – in a nutshell. At the same time, it is a guide to the perfect literary form. His own, anyway.

If we look at just a few elements of this statement, we will see its polysemic quality. *Firstly*, the lexeme *order*, especially in the context of the *perfect order of words*, could be understood as *syntax*, which is the study of the principles and processes by which sentences in a given language are constructed. *Secondly*, it can mean Jacobson’s axis of combinations, i.e. a certain way in which the writer arranges the words obeying the syntax of the English language to obtain an *arrangement* that epitomises peculiarities of his style. And, maybe, *order*, this time in the sense of *organisation*, transcending into a textual harmony, accord and system, which is again in compliance with the *order* as understood by the author. *Thirdly*, he might have had in mind some kind of *sequence* in an idiosyncratic grammar which would be a violation of norms, but, again, his authentic manner, therefore, recognisable for the readers. It is a style, Joyce’s style. *Fourthly*, the question arises whether this calls intertextually for Coleridge’s definition of poetry as “the best words in the best order” (Simpson, 1993: 153). In her work *Myth, image and metaphor* Patricia Daly-Lipe deposits these words of Joyce’s in the context of his overall style and says that he was known for his ‘stylistic pastiche’. By that she means his (non)communication, which comprises his coinages, referentiality and crossreferentiality, stream of consciousness, lengthy sentences and the like (2011: 21).

Jakobson and Levi-Strauss were able to perform an analysis of the sentence 'What I am seeking is the perfect order of words in the sentences I have' according to the principles of structuralist grammar. It is possible to identify sentence structure, the parts of the sentence, establish the hierarchical relationships between the parts and draw conclusions about its semantics. It is a pseudo-cleft sentence, which means it has two clauses, and when we analyse its sentential functions we obtain the structure of a simple sentence with the copula *to be* represented in the syntactic basic pattern as Subject-Verb-Complement (SVC) with the adverbial phrase at the end of the sentence. More or less, that is it.

The statement in the first clause is a discursive announcement and the signal of the second statement. The speech act of the first statement is a preparation for what is coming, that is the key information, but it also constitutes the motivation for the pseudo-cleft sentences. If Joyce had said: *I am seeking for the perfect order* we would have a simply structured piece of information, but not the impetus of its use and its pragmatic value. We would get a norm, not a deviation from it. In this syntactic peculiarity, we believe, lies the key to the whole statement.

In the pragmatic analysis according to the model of Ellen Prince (Prince 1978, 1985 and Mišić-Ilić 1999, 2004), *what I am seeking* is given, known and constitutes a presupposition, while "the perfect order of words in the sentences I have" now represents information and establishes the focus of the statement.

Such a pragmatic analysis gives a somewhat more complex picture because the parameters of the analysis are more complex. First of all, this, like all pseudo-cleft sentences, follows the logical presuppositions, and we are interested in the arrangement of the *given* and the *new* information. The most important feature of this presupposition, as a function in discourse, lies in the fact that it does not comprise information which is a part of the entailment. Presuppositions are often used to convey new information in whole or in part. The *given* is explicitly mentioned, it is the context of the verb *to seek*, and *new* is a new piece of information, here it is contrasted, i.e. it is an implicit case. Therefore, according to this interpretation, *a perfect order* is new information.

In contrast to this, according to another possible cognitive interpretation of pseudo-cleft sentences devised by Judy Delin, presuppositions may be *new* information and *given* information (Delin, 1992). Presupposition is taken as a part of the anaphoric environment, which means that the information is marked as anaphoric, i.e. a known fact. A part of the anaphoric relationship is contained in the information of the pseudo-cleft presupposition with the function *to remind* rather than *to inform* (regardless of its objective status in discourse). Therefore, if the presupposition means the *given* information it is possible to understand the *perfect order* as a style accomplished by the moment of utterance, which would comprise *The Dubliners* (1914) and *The Portrait of the Artist in his Youth* (1916). *The perfect order* can then mean the announcement of a unique style of stream of consciousness, new and unseen until then, distinctive to the extent that it can be perfect. The above said about the perfect order can be *new* information, i.e. information on what will be a revolution in literature, because writing will not be the same after *Ulysses*. Also, it can be the self-consciousness of a genius who is revealing a new canon to the world.

‘The perfect order of words in the sentence’ may be the perfect formulation of the definition of style, and the perfect linguistic embodiment in the use of artistic expression. It could mean a turning point in terms of style, and can mean the announcement of a genius who knows he is creating a revolutionary piece of art. It does not matter. Many will agree that the new era of literature began with Joyce. We experience this information as new. *Joyce was informing us while he was reminding himself*. And this is no small thing. The information released means that Joyce does not have a pronouncement about his writing, but is confirming what is known: his quest for creation is constant, his style is built up constantly, whereas the anaphoric part – *a perfect order* – has the function in discourse to *remind*. To remind whom of what? That Joyce was a genius and he knew that, that he could not be happy with less, that his literary pursuit was serious and the product a new legacy for the world. Also, perfect order means perfect language in Joyce’s thinking. The perfect order can mean a metaphor for his peculiar style, and can mean metonymy for his unique style. Also, Joyce, in a certain way, made redundant our reflection on the topic of

language and literature. There is no more anger, neither Jacobsonian nor any other.

6. Conclusion

Stylistics posed a question on the interpretation and meaning of text, and gave an answer. Discourse analysis is a good part of that answer. But just one round has been fought – literature is much older than the science analysing it. Today, literature and linguistics fight (if they fight) on points. The judge is a character from cognitive linguistics. The question at the end of this text reads as at the beginning: can linguistics, using its own theories and apparatus, say what literary worth is? Discourse analysis is on a serious scientific mission, with the aim of getting people to understand each other better (Gee, 2005). This paper is an attempt to help the two fields of research understand each other a little better. There is a much better mutual understanding now than several decades ago when we personally stepped into this thrilling area of research. The metaphor of Zeno's paradox is no longer valid, linguistics and the study of literature have significantly converged.

The aim of discourse analysis, especially cognitive discourse analysis, is to lessen, even annihilate, the opposition between linguistics and literature, and to establish similar if not the same goals: that both disciplines can work towards a single goal, and that is to comprehensively understand and interpret a literary work. And that is good. There is, however, a doubt that still concerns us. What if the pendulum of science goes too much in one direction and goes out of control? What if cognitive science has reached such a level that it really can peer into the brain while a writer writes. It would be very interesting to see the power of such an algorithm, such software, by which the virtual writer could write in a disciplined, dedicated and committed way like, say, Anthony Trollope, who wrote 250 words in a quarter of an hour, three hours per session. And if he completed one novel within the three hours, he would start a new one (Currey, 2013: 25).

The extent to which discourse as a linguistic science has advanced indicates the degree of convergence of linguistics and literature. Or to put it an even better way – the development of science both in linguistics and in literary theory has reduced

misunderstanding, thus eliminating mistrust and contempt between the two fields.

In this brief and modest review and analysis of stylistics and discourse, we tried to follow the thread of their steady development and a fairly solid logic of mutual dependence. We adhered to linguistics while discussing literature in the conviction that literature is an activity that 'has something to do with sentences' (Rushdie, 2013: 105).

Appendix

1. From "Baudelaire's 'Cats'" (*Les Chats*), the linguistic categories are italicised:

Les Chats, who are the *direct object* of the *clause* comprising the first three lines of the sonnet, become the *implicit subject* of the *clauses* in the following three lines (...), revealing the outline of a division of this *quasi-sestet* into two *quasi-tercets*. The middle "*distich*" recapitulates the metamorphosis of the cats: from an *implicit object*(...) into an equally implicit *grammatical subject* (...). In this respect the eighth line coincides with the following *sentence*(...).

In general, the *postpositive subordinate clauses* form a kind of transition between *the subordinating clause* and the *sentence* which follows it. Thus, the *implicit subject* "cats" of the ninth and tenth lines changes into a *reference* to the *metaphor* "sphinx" in the *relative clause* of the eleventh line (...) and, as a result, links this line to the tropes serving as *grammatical subjects* in the final *tercet*. The *indefinite article*, entirely alien to the first ten lines with their fourteen *definite articles*, is the only one admitted in the four concluding lines of the sonnet. (Jakobson, 1987: 188).

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