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SUBJECTHOOD AND SUBJECTIVITY

The status of the subject
in linguistic theory

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SUBJECTIVITY IN NARRATION : EMPATHY AND ECHO

à John Lyons en amical hommage

1. Bally's paradigm

(1) Tomorrow was Monday. Monday, the beginning of another school-week ! Another shameful, barren school-week, mere routine and mechanical activity. Was not the adventure of death infinitely preferable ? Was not death infinitely more lovely and noble than such a life ?... How sordid life was, how it was a terrible shame to the soul, to live now !...She had had enough.

(1) is an example of the narrative style first described in detail by Bally (1912, 1914) and named by him *style indirect libre* (hereafter SIL) because it seemed to combine the formal and functional properties of *oratio recta* and *oratio obliqua*. Although subsequent commentators have frequently found fault with the name, the descriptive paradigm — in which discussion of the form of SIL begins from the syntax of subordination and discussion of its function begins from the representation of speech — has been remarkably persistent. Bally's account of passages such as (1) appears, essentially unchanged, in even the most recent studies of narrative style :

(2) Briefly, what demarcates sentences of [SIL] is the presence of features of direct speech (direct questions, exclamations, fragments, repetitions, deictics, emotive and conative words, overstatements, colloquialisms) reported in the fashion of indirect speech i.e. with third person pronouns and shifted tenses, but normally without the characteristic inquit formulas such as 'x said/thought that...wondered why...' (Fleischman 1990 : 228)

Work within this paradigm culminated in the series of studies by Banfield, beginning with Banfield (1973), which undertook the task of distinguishing SIL from direct and indirect speech within the framework of a generative grammar. One of the virtues of the generative approach is that the enterprise of supplying a structural description that will cover 'all and only' the sentences of a language (or in this case a style) forces counterexamples into the open and it is a tribute to Banfield's work that over the last two decades it has made Bally's claims for the formal distinctiveness of the style newly controversial. What the controversy has highlighted is the existence of sentences which readers interpret as SIL without the predicted formal markers (e.g. Ehrlich 1990: 23-4) and sentences which display combinations of features expressly excluded by Banfield's account (e.g. McHale 1983).

Banfield has addressed the issues raised by many of these counterexamples (e.g. Banfield 1982: 13-6, 114-6, 185-9), but her effort to save the paradigm succeeds only at the expense of severely restricting the range of data for which it satisfactorily accounts. Others have responded rather by weakening its formal rigour: for example, Leech and Short (1981: 321ff) substitute a stylistic continuum for Bally's division into three discrete styles; McHale (1978) replaces Banfield's cooccurrence rules with an unco-ordinated set of 'indices', any one of which may prompt the interpretation of a sentence as SIL; and many literary critics deny that SIL has any coherent formal identity at all (Banfield 1982: 12).

While accepting the reasonableness of defining SIL as a 'fuzzy category' (Simpson 1993: 36-7), I think we need to beware of overusing this approach. Counterexamples may reveal fuzziness at the boundaries of a posited category but they may equally point to a deficiency in the way the category has been constructed. And in this case, those who have adopted a weaker version of Bally's paradigm have in fact protected it from scrutiny that might lead to appropriate revision. Thus Leech and Short still take the 'central examples' of SIL to be sentences of reported speech in which 'the marker of subordination is absent' (Leech and Short 1981: 331).

What I propose to do here is to explore the advantages of a more radical rethinking of the way we describe SIL and its varieties. This will not involve adding any formal features to those exemplified in (1) and listed in (2), but rather approaching them from a different angle. The effect, as in turning a kaleidoscope, will be to shake the details into a

new pattern, a pattern that will, I believe, give a better explanation of the structure, functions and historical development of the style than has proved possible within the existing paradigm. The turn of the kaleidoscope is to take as the starting point of description not the syntax of subordination but the semantics of subjectivity¹.

What we shall find, I suggest, is that SIL is neither a unitary phenomenon nor an incoherent one; its formal variations can best be explained by positing two distinct though related lines of descent. Both concern forms of negotiation between the subjectivity of the *sujet de l'énonciation* and the *sujet de l'énoncé*. In psychological terms, I shall call these transactions empathy and echolalia. The linguistic systems that encode them are deixis and modality.

2. Deixis and narrative empathy

In saying that language *encodes* subjectivity, I shall intend to occupy neutral ground between the characteristic Anglo-American view, that language expresses a pre-existing self, and a view, more common in French linguistics, that the concept of self is no more than an internalisation of the properties of language. In either case, it is clear that the linguistic analogue for the most fundamental aspects of our notion of selfhood is the sub-system of deixis. The self as subject, distinct from 'the other' as object, but always potentially object to the other's subject, is encoded in the deictic category of person, in speakers' ability to exchange the roles of I and YOU (Benveniste 1966: 260); the self as egocentric — the centre of its own universe — is encoded in the role of I as reference point for such locating terms as *this/that, here/there, now/then* and the tense contrasts that grammaticalise the *now/then* opposition (Bühler 1982: 13-20). The definition of I is so closely bound up with the words that describe its canonical position — *here and now* — that the statement 'I am here now' can never be false: it is the deictic equivalent of an analytic proposition such as 'a bachelor is an unmarried man'.

1. The central importance of subjectivity has been recognised since Bally (1912: 601ff, 1914 *passim*). But early commentators were hampered by the lack of conceptual frameworks in semantics, and their successors, such as Banfield, have been hampered by the inherited need to derive subjectivity from syntax, and specifically from constraints on embedding.

Seen in this context, the most striking feature of SIL is that it violates the basic equations of subjectivity. It breaks the entailment relation binding *here/now* to *I* by removing *here/now* from the narrating subject (whether construed as empirical author or dramatised narrator) and re-centring them on the narrated subject. It also challenges the equation NOW=IS, since the narrated moment is described simultaneously as past (in tense) and non-past (in lexis), as *tomorrow was* and *was...now* in the first and penultimate sentences of (1). If certain uses of the English past progressive and the French *imparfait* are analysed as a grammaticalised version of 'now-in-the-past' (Banfield 1982 : 104-6, 157-60; Lyons 1982 : 117-20), then, in writers such as Flaubert, Zola and their English imitators, this dual temporality, which I shall call the WAS-NOW paradox, becomes at times the very medium in which the narrative unfolds.

How are we to interpret these deictic disturbances? The naive view — which is only to say the view dictated by the logic of deixis — is that two subjective centres are encoded. This might be interpreted either psychologically, as a condition of schizophrenia (*tomorrow was Monday* implying an I that is uncertain whether it's coming or going) or artistically, as an attempt at what Pascal (1977) calls 'dual voice' narration, where the WAS encodes a narrator for whom the event is distant (either historical or fictional) and the NOW encodes a protagonist for whom the same event is part of current experience.

This view is rejected by both Banfield and Hamburger (1973), who take the style to be a purely literary artefact and therefore not subject to normal deictic interpretation. For Hamburger, the WAS-NOW paradox (which she calls the *epic preterite*) is a marker of fictionality precisely because it is a logical impossibility. Any description of historically real time by an empirically real narrator would, she argues, obey the normal deictic logic which stratifies time into zones of IS-NOW and WAS-THEN (Hamburger 1973 : 68-70). Banfield, too, though by a different route, reaches the conclusion that SIL is exclusively literary. Taking as precedent the French *passé historique*, she proposes that the past tense in narrative is a marker not of temporality but of writtenness, and therefore carries no implication of a narrating I situated outside the flow of events which the narrative describes. By contrast, the proximal deictics HERE/NOW retain their normal deictic force and conjure up a sense of self, which, in the absence of an I, is assigned to the protagonist, who becomes the substitute spatiotemporal reference point. Since in spoken language an I cannot be absent, SIL cannot occur.

I propose to challenge these positions, by arguing, first, that SIL derives from linguistic practices which can be found, indeed are extremely common, in speech and non-literary writing and, secondly, that such practices encode two subjectivities. A more extreme version of this argument (which I shall not pursue here) would claim that if only one subjectivity is expressed in SIL it must be, as it is in speech, that of the narrating self, imaginatively projected into the spatiotemporal position of a real or fictional other.

The ordinary language phenomenon in which such projection regularly occurs is named by Lyons *empathetic deixis* — a term which covers both the technical transfer of the canonically egocentric *here/now* to another person (*you/he/she*) and also the kind of emotion by which such a transfer is normally motivated.

(3) It frequently happens that 'this' is selected rather than 'that', 'here' rather than 'there', and 'now' rather than 'then', when the speaker is personally involved with the entity, situation or place to which he is referring or is identifying himself with the attitude or viewpoint of the addressee. (Lyons 1977 :677)

The most salient (and satirised) manifestations of linguistic empathy concern the direct transfer of person (for instance, the nurse who expresses solidarity with her patient by selecting *we* rather than *you* : 'how are we feeling today, Mrs Jones?'). By contrast, equally illogical transfers of spatiotemporal terms pass without comment. They occur quite commonly, for example, whenever the act of encoding a message is separated from the act of decoding it, or whenever the message itself makes reference to disparate spatiotemporal zones. Hence a letter writer may choose either (4a) or (4b), a speaker may choose either (5a) or (5b) :

- 4a) *Will* you remember Paris as you read this ? (egocentric deixis : NOW = the time of encoding)
 b) *Are* you remembering Paris as you read this ? (empathetic deixis : NOW = the time of decoding)
 5a) We're *here* at last (egocentric deixis : HERE = I/NOW)
 b) We're *there* at last (empathetic deixis : HERE = I/THEN)

Here egocentric and empathetic versions in some sense mean the same, but they adopt different perspectives and imply different attitudes. In (4b) the writer projects herself forward, as if to share the moment of reminiscence with her addressee; in (5b) by verbally distancing herself from her current location, the speaker highlights the difficulty of her journey rather than the fact of her arrival.

The deictic transfer in such cases may not be complete. (6b) and (7b) contain mixtures of empathetic and egocentric forms:

- (6a) By *that* time he *was* screaming with pain
 b) By *this* time he *was* screaming with pain
 (7a) John *will be* sorry he *isn't* at home *today*
 b) John *will be* sorry he *wasn't* at home *today*

In (6b) the speaker locates an experience in the past (*was*) but simultaneously represents it as non-past (*this* time). And in (7b) the speaker combines an adverb (*today*) which registers her present position with a tense (*was*) which describes the same time in the terms appropriate to the referent's (i.e. John's) future retrospection.

As these examples indicate, such empathetic dislocations of space and time occur quite unobtrusively in ordinary spoken usage. But they are commonly only momentary disruptions of the egocentric norm. In writing, more sustained transfers are possible. So, for example, the banal formula of (7b) provides the model for the concluding benediction of Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*, where the structure of 'he *will be* sorry he *wasn't* at home *today*' is extended and its underlying temporal paradox is invested with a more powerful expressive force.

- (8) with what healing thoughts
 Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
 And *these* my exhortations! Nor, perchance —
 If I should be where I no more can hear
 Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes *these* gleams
 Of past existence — wilt thou *then* forget
 That on the bank of *this* delightful stream
 We <stood> together; and that I, so long
 A worshipper of Nature, *hither* <came>
 Unwearied in that service...
 Nor wilt thou *then* forget,
 That after many wanderings, many years
 Of absence, *these* steep woods and lofty cliffs,
 And *this* green pastoral landscape <were> to me
 More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake.

In these closing lines, Wordsworth addresses his sister and promises that even after his death, the experience they now share will revive in her memory as a source of healing thoughts. The emotional force of the passage arises to a very large degree from the speaker's empathetic effort to entertain simultaneously two viewpoints which the movement of time will inevitably set apart: his own current perspective, in which the elements of the scene exist as immediate experience (emphasised by the repeated emphasis on *HERE* in the proximal deictics: *these* exhortations, *these* gleams, *this* delightful stream, *hither*, *these* steep woods,

this landscape) and the perspective of his sister's future memories, in which the scene and himself in it exist as things of the past (we *stood* together, I... *came*, *were* to me more dear). The incongruity is highlighted by such proximal-distal pairings as *hither came*, *these were*.

Similarly, the momentary empathy of the letter writer in (4b), is extended in the more consistent empathetic deixis of Latin epistolary style. In the following example, Cicero adopts his addressee's time-frame in several successive forms:

- (9) Haec scripsi a.d. xvi Kal. Febr. ante lucem. Eo die senatus erat futurus (from Cicero: *Ad Fam.* 1.ii.4)
 (usual translation: I *am writing* this on 15th January before dawn.
Today there *is* to be a meeting of the senate.
 literal translation: I *wrote* this...on *that* day there *was* to be...)

What I want to suggest is that (1) should be seen as an empathetic narrative style, derived from the colloquial type of (6b) in the same way as Latin empathetic epistolary style (9) is derived from the type of (4b). The process by which both are derived may be called *stylistisation*. This can be said to occur when a figure of speech is extended syntagmatically across a discourse and paradigmatically through related elements in the language-system: hence Cicero's equation 'my present = your past' is realised by successive forms through the text and by different members of the deictic set. Stylistisation is thus an equivalent on the level of discourse to the more familiar process of grammaticalisation, in which forms of speech are conventionalised into features of grammar. Just as the *imparfait subjectif* grammaticalises the WAS-NOW paradox so empathetic narrative stylises the form of empathetic deixis of which WAS-NOW is the token².

On this reading, what is encoded in SIL is a narrating self which invests its spatiotemporal identity partially in a narrated other. The degree of investment varies widely between authors, novels and even parts of a single narrative span. In the form of SIL that Bally takes as central (essentially the practice of Flaubert) only the WAS normally remains as a marker of the narrator's separate spatiotemporal existence. But this

2. This topic deserves closer discussion than is possible here. It is clear, for example, that at some point in the process of both stylisation and grammaticalisation, semantic bleaching occurs e.g. the reason why the temporal paradox goes unnoticed in (7b) is that empathetic deixis has been grammaticalised into what is virtually a sequence of tense rule; similarly, evidence from recent usage suggests that, in English at least, SIL may be losing its original expressive force. See Bally (1914) for a suggestive discussion of the relation between figures of thought and figures of language.

should be seen as one variety of the style rather than a transhistorical defining norm. In Flaubert's English contemporaries — notably George Eliot and Trollope — the I implied by the WAS lurks in the wings and is always liable to take the stage itself. And some writers create moments where two spatiotemporal identities — the NOW of the narrating subject and the NOW of the narrated subject — are both explicitly represented in the same syntactic space :

(10a) All sorts of things, in fact, *now seemed* to come over him, comparatively few of which his chronicler *can hope* for space to mention. (From James : *The Ambassadors*)

b) I only *know* that *now*, at *this* moment, he *was* at war with himself. (From Christie : *Lord Edgeware Dies*)

c) It pleased God to awaken my soul... yet whether sincere conversion *began now*, or before, or after, I was never able *to this day* to know. (From Baxter : *Reliquiae Baxterianae*)

The fact that (10c) is a counter example for Hamburger's case (the epic preterite — *began now* — in a non-fictional autobiography) and that the dual NOW of all three creates difficulties for Banfield's gives some indication of the advantages of the analysis offered here in allowing for the formal variations found within the family of SIL. Empathetic deixis is, I suggest, the elusive common feature of the style : we find it in narratives which, like (1), represent speech or thought, in narratives which represent perception or inarticulate consciousness, and even in those narratives which have caused most difficulty for Bally's paradigm, where no speech or thought is represented at all and where a sentence such as *war clouds were now gathering over Europe* is not even associated with any protagonist within the narrative. On the present analysis, it expresses the historian's empathetic presence at the historical events he reports, thus placing him momentarily in the same relation to them as Flaubert is to Madame Bovary.

The appeal to empathetic deixis helps explain not merely the forms of the style but the norms of its reception and interpretation. The fact that even relatively unsophisticated readers have no difficulty with sentences which, in logical terms, look as semantically bizarre as *Tomorrow was Monday* (enabling SIL to become the staple style of 'women's magazine' fiction) suggests that it is not, as the Bally-Banfield tradition supposes, an exclusively literary phenomenon but the literary reflex of a common strategy of colloquial language use. Moreover, the nature of readers' responses — the fact that they consistently report feeling solidarity or sympathy with characters in such narratives, even against the grain of their moral feelings (as in the cases of Emma Woodhouse or

Emma Bovary) — is predictable from the ordinary language function of empathetic deixis in encoding feelings such as sympathy, solidarity, deference, politeness.

Finally, the empathetic deixis hypothesis provides an account for aspects of the history of the style that are otherwise difficult to explain. The occurrence of sporadic sentences and passages of SIL as far back as the medieval period, the rapid spread of the stylised version across Europe following its 'invention' in the early 19th century, — such facts become more explicable if the literary style is rooted in normal spoken practice. And if that practice is empathetic deixis then the moment of transition from sporadic to stylised versions can also be explained. HERE/NOW first becomes detached from I and associated with *he/she* as a systematic practice in novels of the Romantic period, — precisely the moment when writers were looking for technical means to implement the general Romantic imperatives towards empathy with the other and fusion of subject with object. In England, Wordsworth's attempt to experience the self as other in (8) is the counterpart in discursive lyric of the attempt by Romantic novelists to experience the other as self in narrative. It is perhaps not mere coincidence that the first OED citation for the word 'sympathiser' is Jane Austen's *Emma*, possibly the first full-length English novel in which empathetic narrative predominates³.

3. Echolalia and narrative detachment

What I have offered in the previous section may seem a somewhat reductive account of both subjectivity and SIL. Spatiotemporal identity may be fundamental to our concept of self but, like all foundations, it goes largely unnoticed, and when we speak of 'self-expression' we usually mean the superstructure of attitudes and beliefs by which we distinguish one personality from another. In the same way, although empathetic narrative is a necessary component of SIL, it cannot fully

3. In a companion piece to this essay (Adamson forthcoming), I develop the argument of this section by looking at an earlier phase in the history of the style, when the Puritan interest in experiential memory led to the transfer of HERE/NOW from the narrating I to the narrated I and hence to a first-person variety of SIL.

A point of more immediate importance to note is that the function of both the embedded echo and the echo question goes well beyond simple speech-reporting. Frequently, the formal markers of echolalia are recruited for use as indicators of a type of epistemic modality in which the speaker expresses only a qualified epistemic commitment to what is said. Lyons sees the *conditionnel de citation* in French as equivalent, in many cases, to the inferential modality in Turkish (Lyons 1982 : 111-12), and the embedded echo in English has become a common hedging device by which newspaper editors qualify their commitment to the accuracy of their reports. Recent headlines in *The Independent*, for instance, have included :

- (16a) 'Three dead' after section of jail seized by prisoners.
 b) Community care 'fails single homeless'.

Since in neither case was a specific source cited for the apparently quoted phrases, it appears that the epistemic function has here displaced the speech-reporting function. In the spoken language, the epistemic function of echoes is even more prominent : many echo questions are used not to request a repeat, but to express incredulity (17a); embedded echoes are often not just non-committal but actively ironic (17b); and when extended as in (17c), the ironic echo becomes an important instrument of satire in the repertoire of colloquial rhetoric. (In each case below, the intonation used is the only indicator that the intended modality is one of dissent.)

- (17a) Two and two make *five* ?
 b) We know that 'John Major is his own man'.
 c) If you try blaming Joan, you'll find that 'it wasn't *her* fault. How was *she* to know he couldn't digest meat ?'

It is at this point that we can make the connection between echolalia and SIL. The concept of echolalia in fact illuminates and develops the attempts of early commentators to derive SIL from ordinary conversational practices, in particular, Thibaudet's suggestion that it is founded on intonation and Spitzer's claim that it is an act of verbal mimicry (Pascal 1977 : 18-19). For in echolalia, the speaker both adopts the speech forms of another speaker and simultaneously signals — characteristically by intonational means — that he is engaging, more or less sceptically, in an act of ventriloquism. Its effects as a narrative technique may be gauged from the passage below, where Clarissa, the novel's dramatised narrator, uses echolalia — in effect, an extended version of (17c) — to report the speech of her sister, Fanny :

- (18) But then, stepping to the glass she complimented herself, 'That she was very *well* : that there were many women deemed passable

who were inferior to herself : that she was always thought comely ; and comeliness, let her tell me, having not so much to lose as Beauty had, would hold, when that would evaporate or fly off. Nay, for that matter... her features were not irregular ; her eyes not at all amiss... Nothing, in short, to be found fault with, though nothing very engaging, she doubted — was there, Clary ?'
 (From Richardson : *Clarissa*, vol.1, letter ii)

Note that Clarissa, like the speakers of (15a-c) retains her own deictic identity of *I/now*. In other respects, we are invited to suppose, she echoes Fanny's original speech, its questions, exclamations, fragments, repetitions and colloquialisms — in short, all the features of (1) and (2) not accounted for under the empathetic deixis hypothesis. The result is a vivid image of 'self-expression' : Fanny speaks her own portrait. But the effect is far from empathetic. The passage has all the detachment and satiric edge associated with the colloquial uses of echolalia as a form of epistemic modality.

The technical explanation for this effect goes beyond intonation (which, in any case, can only be sketchily represented in print⁴). It has more to do with the suppression of empathetic deixis and with the exploitation of the dual modality found in the echo questions of (15). In *Chuck you this book ?* for instance, the lexis and word order of the original command is retained, but its illocutionary force is nullified by its conversion into a question. Similarly, in (18), Fanny's utterances retain the form they would have had in a dialogue where she was I to Clarissa's *you* and where her purposes were mingled coercion and appeal (summed up in the quasi-imperative *let me tell you* and the question *is there, Clary ?*). Echoed in a new dialogic context, in which Clarissa is I to her correspondent's *you*, Fanny's imperative-interrogative modality is subsumed into a framing declarative *she complimented herself that X*; it loses its illocutionary force and becomes, in effect, non-functional. This means that the expressive features which support the original persuasive enterprise (the repetitions and emphatic *well*, the discourse markers *nay, for that matter, in short*) in turn lose their normal pragmatic functions and

4. The loss of intonation in print has important consequences for SIL which I can indicate only briefly here. (i) Since intonation is often the only marker of quotative modality, there will be many sentences of SIL whose status is uncertain (hence those cases which are interpreted as SIL without lexical or syntactic markers). (ii) The use of a distinctive idiom or variety, which in speech supports the intonational signal, as illustrated in (14a-b), becomes much more important in printed echolalia as a means of distinguishing narrated from narrating selves. But the literary representation of a language variety (register, dialect, sociolect) poses major technical problems. For further discussion, see Adamson 1993.

appear simply as patterns of words. The overall impression is that Fanny has been deprived of her role as expressive subject, I, and converted into the mere referent, *she*. Her subjectivity is exhibited but not inhabited. The effect of this process of desubjectivisation is an alienation that lends itself readily to satire.

By contrast, consider the effects of a passage which displays empathetic deixis without echolalia.

(19) Harry sat on the steering seat. He *was looking* ahead, steering out the channel, past the opening into the sub-base *now*, with the notice board to yachts and the green blinker, out away from the jetty, past the fort *now*, past the red blinker; he looked back. The big Cuban had a green box of shells out of his pocket and *was filling* clips. The gun lay by his side and he *was filling* clips without looking at them, filling by feel, looking back over the stern. The others *were all looking* astern except the one that was watching him. *This* one, one of the two Indian-looking ones, motioned with a pistol for him to look ahead. No boat had started after them *yet*. The engines *were running* smoothly and they *were going* with the tide. (From Hemingway: *To Have and Have Not*)

This passage is typical of many in Hemingway's work. The situation is one of extremity: Harry's boat has been hi-jacked and his mate murdered in front of him. Yet there is no echolalia: we do not hear how Harry expresses his anger and fear to himself. On the other hand, the narrative is firmly centred in his consciousness. This is partly done by plotting the description from his point of view, in the sense that what he sees determines both the selection and the sequence of what is narrated; for example the scene changes when he 'look<s> back'. But this is consistently reinforced by the use of HERE/NOW deictics which persuade us that the narrative is centred on the moment when various processes and activities are interrupted by his gaze and registered in his consciousness: the WAS-NOW paradox in particular appears in almost every sentence, either in the form of adverbials (*now, yet*) or in the grammaticalised form of the experiential past progressive. The effect is quite distinctive — the narrative voice has a spatiotemporal identity but no social or emotional personality. This produces a sort of cold commitment. In the absence of a distinctive idiom and a range of expressive or conative forms, we cannot place and know Harry as we can Fanny Harlowe, but precisely because of this, we cannot reject him as socially or emotionally inadequate. We are bound to his view of things as if to a speaking camera.

My case then is that (18) and (19) are the polar extremes between which most examples of SIL are to be found, blending in varying pro-

portions empathetic and echolalic components, spatiotemporal involvement and epistemic detachment. The shifting balance between the two produces the divergent functions for the style that Dorrit Cohn calls its 'lyric' and 'ironic' modes (Cohn 1966: 110-2). On the analysis I have offered here, narratives closer to (19), where empathetic deixis is the main marker of SIL, are likely to be read as 'lyric', those closer to (18), where echolalia provides the leading features, are more likely to be read as 'ironic'. But relatively few examples will exhibit so marked a predominance of a single pole, and (1) illustrates the resulting formal and functional ambiguity. Formally, it adds to (19) the expressive markers of interrogative and exclamatory modality, just as it adds to (18) the markers of empathetic solidarity. The fact that it represents thought rather than speech means that the sense of a frustrated rhetorical purpose which was so marked in (18) is diminished; (1) has, for instance, no non-functional addressee or discourse markers. And yet a degree of epistemic detachment remains: without knowing the opinions of the writer (whose name I have purposely withheld) we cannot determine from this passage alone whether the beliefs expressed — that death is an adventure, work a shameful activity — are offered for our assent or ridicule.

Overall, and with many individual variations, the historical drift of SIL from the eighteenth to the twentieth century has been away from (18) towards (19): a progressive suppression of speech accompanied by a gradual reduction of irony. The great 19th century achievements of SIL — Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, James' *The Ambassadors* — perhaps achieve their greatness just because they mark the moment when empathy and echolalia are in balance, creating from their mutually supportive opposition a style which perfectly encodes the tragi-comedy of subjectivism.

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**SUR LE RÔLE DU SUJET ÉNONCIATEUR
DANS LA CONSTRUCTION DU SENS :
LIENS ENTRE TEMPS,
ASPECT ET MODALITÉ**

**ON SOME CONNECTIONS BETWEEN TIME,
ASPECT AND MODALITY : AN OUTLINE OF
THE PROMINENT PART PLAYED BY THE
SPEAKER IN THE PROCESS
OF ESTABLISHING MEANING**

ABSTRACT . — Examining what seems at first to be purely aspectual morphemes in wolof, this paper will first bring to light the puzzling polysemy of these. On the face of it, the variation in meaning appears to be quite similar in the different aspectual morphemes and can be expressed by the following rule : aspectual specifications yield a temporal expression with dynamic verbs (which is well known) and turn into modal specifications with stative verbs. This shift from time to modality can be quite easily explained within the framework of the theory of enunciation. As a matter of fact, within this theory, the meaning of an utterance results from the relationship with the situation in which the speaker is speaking. The so-called « situation of utterance » is defined by two variables (1) the speaker or « subject of enunciation », who endorses the utterance and who is therefore the source of the modal specifications, (2) the time of utterance, which is the origin of the temporal and spatial specifications. Through this system, we can both explain the polysemy displayed in the aspectual markers and argue that the subject of enunciation does not only stand for the part of the subjectivity involved in language but must be considered as the ultimate source of specifications in the construction of meaning.

T121
B44/13
171