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Irony and gender politics in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh*

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The criticism devoted to Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* (1857) has been an ever-repeated, though ever-revised, focus on the gender politics of this text. Early reviewers were quick to detect, and condemn, its anti-patriarchal stance, as the cases of the *Blackwards'* conservative review and the Dublin University Review show,[1] and few later critics ceased to see the feminism pervading it, although this gradually came to be applauded rather than deprecated. Despite some dissenting voices, like that of Deirdre David, to whom Mrs Browning appears to have made her art "the servitor of male ideal" (1985: 113), most contemporary authors have seen in *Aurora Leigh* one of "the first consciously feminist novel[s]" (Armstrong 1993: 389) and elaborately expanded on how Mrs Browning has made her challenge of patriarchy manifest not only through her portrayal of the eponymous heroine but also through consciously adopted generic and narrative strategies and intertextual games.[2]

In the discussions of the relevance of formal categories to gender politics in Mrs Browning's poem, one aspect seems to have gone unnoticed: the author's use of laughter. Key texts about the social uses of laughter like Henri Bergson's *Le Rire* (Laughter) and Mikhaïl Bakhtin's

[1] For instance, *Blackwards'* conservative review condemned "the extreme independence of Aurora [the eponymous heroine of Browning's verse-novel]" and the Dublin University Review saw "in the effort to stand . . . on a pedestal beside man" one of Barrett Browning's "grave errors" (Kaplan 1978: 13).

[2] For Barrett Browning's recourse to genre subversion to break the restrictions set on women by a patriarchal literary tradition, see (Stone 1987); for her parallel use of a reliable and an unreliable narrators to convey two independent plots (that of a determined artist and that of an emotionally confused young woman), see (Case 1991); see (Stone 1987) again for a comparison between gender politics in *Aurora Leigh* and Alfred Tennyson's *The Princess*, and (Turner 1948) for an analysis of Barrett Browning's allusions to Coventry Patmore's "Angel in the House".

Rabelais and His World tell us not only that laughter can either subvert or reinforce the social order (of which gender hierarchy is part), but that the function it fulfils depends more often than not on the degree of subtlety/crudeness and intellectual effort involved in it. The subversive charge detected and analysed by Bakhtin in popular forms like the carnivalesque is less present in sophisticated categories like irony, sarcasm, and wit, seen as "genres of reduced laughter" (Bakhtin 1984: 120).

In approaching the question of gender in Mrs Browning's poem by interrogating its laughter economy, as it were, I would like to question the anti-patriarchal stance traditionally saluted in it by feminist criticism. As I will illustrate, irony is the form of laughter that is the most frequently used in *Aurora Leigh.* The predominance of this essentially ambivalent category, I will argue, relates to the author's no less ambivalent attitude regarding the Victorian gender politics she is often said to decry.[3] The broadly accepted definition of irony as a "statement in which the meaning that a speaker implies differs sharply from the meaning that is ostensibly expressed" (Abrams 1993: 100) is taken up in analyses by authors like Jean-Marc Defays, who associates irony with ambiguity (1996: 26) and Barry Sanders, who observes that the ironist "speak[s] out of both sides of his mouth" (1995: 93). In opting for a form which has a "capacity for saying two opposing things at once" (Sanders 1995: 95), Mrs Browning submits her text to constant emendation, presenting it as feminist only to replace this reading by the lingering trace of the patriarchal order it seems to subvert.

Victorians and laughter

Nineteenth-century Britain was no exuberant place. The contempt for humour that some critics trace back to the Reformation (Sanders 1995:

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[3] Alison Case holds a resembling view in "Gender and Narration in 'Aurora Leigh'". However, besides centring her analysis on the author's narrative strategy (rather than on her use of laughter), her final argument that "the plot of [the heroine's] poetic "ambition," could be kept relatively isolated from the undermining influence of the traditional love-story" (1991: 31) sounds unconvincing. As will come later in this essay, Barrett Browning's heroine comes to reunite art and love in a hierarchical dichotomy: art is subordinated to love.

224-226) had found a support in the Enlightenment's rejection of some types of humour as incompatible with reason (Bakhtin 1984: 120) and was now further reinforced by the focus that Victorian morality placed on seriousness and sobriety. This is not to say, of course, that no funny passages are to be found in Victorian literary works – Dickens's and Thackeray's novels, among others, contain well-known hilarious passages – but these were expected "to suppress the traditional alliance between laughter and man's unelevated predilections" (Gray 1966: 155) by subscribing to the Victorian sense of propriety and, ideally, fulfilling a didactic role.

This demand for seriousness and restraint was still tighter on female writers. In an age which had as poor an opinion of women's morality as of their brains, the very choice of a writing-career was thought to be improper. In consequence, women writers often found themselves compelled to display an even greater amount of sobriety and moral rigour than their male counterparts if they wanted to invalidate the accusations of deviance and immorality which were levied at them. In choosing to be writers, the Brontë sisters and Elizabeth Gaskell, for example, protested against the limits set on the role of women, and many critics agree that this protest is also voiced in the novels they wrote; nevertheless, it seems that these women were cowed by the weight of the charges pressed by patriarchal discourse (Basch 1974: 106-109). On Victorian heroines Françoise Basch writes that they "were not only more anaemic than their contemporaries in France or Russia, but also paler than their literary ancestors at home" (1974: xiv); this is also true of the authoresses themselves. Victorian women writers were no Aphra Behns; they proved themselves to be more fervent advocates than men of female seriousness and virtue and carefully avoided inserting in their works any form of humour that might be thought improper.

Victorian feminist leaders themselves resembled women novelists in that while fighting for the recognition of women's rights as human beings and as citizens, they took particular care not to deviate too much from the patriarchal path which prepared women to be wives and mothers, and insisted on the natural domesticity of women as well as on their innate moral sense (Caine 1997: 112). The moral argument was thus as central to feminist discourse as it was to patriarchy. And because patriarchy associated morality with earnestness and grave manners, Victorian feminists also strove to display the greatest sobriety in their

way of dressing and their overall behaviour and rebuked those among them who were naturally inclined to jesting and laughter, as shown by the following remonstrance, which Emily Davies, one of the leading champions of women's education, formulated against another feminist figure – high-spirited Elizabeth Garret: "It is true that your jokes are many and reckless. They do more harm to the cause of women than you know" (quoted in Ducroq 2000: 58).

The aim of this paper is to show that while, in such a priggish context, Mrs Browning's portrayal of a heroine with a sharp sense of derision was a bold departure, opting for irony – a "timid" and didactic form of humour in comparison with other types like nonsense or carnivalesque laughter – was certainly safer for any writer wishing to shield herself against possible charges of impudence. Although, as Barry Sanders notes, some writers, like Edward Lear, attempted to flee the stifling decorum of the Victorian age and disregarded the two fundamental criteria through which it assessed the value of a literary work – morality and seriousness (1995: 246-247) – these were usually dismissed as minor poets and their works as "light literature". In 1838, James Spedding noted that "[i]n the nineteenth century in which every hour must have its end to attain . . . the foolishness of fools [was] only folly" (quoted in Gray 1966: 157). Far from being mere folly, irony is purposeful and, inasmuch as it denotes contempt for laughter for laughter's sake, it is the type of humour which is the least challenging to Victorian seriousness.

Laughing at patriarchy

The identification of *Aurora Leigh* as a feminist text owes much to its independent, strong-willed heroine. Aurora's rejection of her cousin's marriage proposal and her aspiration to be a woman-poet have predictably been read as subversive towards Victorian space-gendering, which sought to confine women to the domestic sphere. Indeed, one of the first strokes of irony in the novel is directed against the narrowness of the space mapped out for women by the patriarchal cultural code, a narrowness well-illustrated by the tedious life led by her aunt. A rigidly conventional woman, the latter never went beyond her county, where

> The poor-club exercised her Christian gifts
> Of knitting stockings, stitching petticoats,
> Because we are of one flesh, after all,
> And need one flannel (with a proper sense
> Of difference in the quality) – and still
> The book-club, guarded from your modern trick
> Of shaking dangerous questions from the crease,
> Preserved her intellectual. She had lived
> A sort of cage-bird life, born in a cage,
> Accounting that to leap from perch to perch
> Was act and joy enough for any bird. (I, 297-306)

Sketched out by a woman who will soon turn her back on her aunt's provincial lifestyle and seek wider horizons in London, this seemingly laudatory portrayal of a healthy (if simple) life which enhances the heart's generosity and the mind's purity is, of course, meant to elicit mockery rather than approval. While ensuring an accurate comprehension of her description with an anterior, and more forward, observation that her relative's was "not life at all" (I, 289), Aurora also signals the irony underlying her words in the passage itself, through the obviously negative metaphor of the cage. Instead of weakening the ironic charge, however, this image reinforces it by drawing attention to the gap between the obviously detestable condition of living in a cage and the aunt's failure to see this. The life which is said to have "preserved her intellectual" is thus subtly shown to be the very opposite – mind-dulling – and narrowness of geographical space is paralleled with narrowness of mind, which Aurora's aunt indeed incarnates in Mrs Browning's text. The very Christian charity which is presented as the aunt's chief activity is mocked as a guardian of social inequality in disguise: the poor-club which takes pains to provide the poor with decent clothing also ensures that the "flannel" in which they dress is not of the same quality as that of their benefactors. Stripped of its claimed function as a disinterested corrector of social injustices, the poor-club where the narrator's relative spends most of her time thus becomes a mere metaphor for the poverty of this relative's life and mind.

As a "[v]ery kind" woman (I, 311) – another of Aurora's ironical statements – the aunt dutifully ensures that her niece receives the education that befits any respectable Victorian wife-to-be. Aurora explains that she had to learn

> [...] the royal genealogies
> Of Oviedo, the internal laws
> Of the Burmese Empire, – by how many feet
> Mount Chimborazo outsoars Teneriffe.
> What navigable river joins itself
> To Lara, and what census of the year five
> Was taken at Klagenfurt, – because she [her aunt] liked
> A general insight into useful facts. (I, 407-414)

The obviously useless character of a knowledge that Aurora ironically calls useful points out not only the inadequacy (and, once again, tediousness) of Victorian education but also the contradictions of a patriarchal cultural code which requires young females to learn the laws of the Burmese Empire or the height of Mount Chimborazo when such knowledge is the last thing they need in their predicaments of wifehood and motherhood.

The heroine's irony reaches a peak precisely when she comes to denounce the patriarchal background behind the education she received:

> I read a score of books on womanhood
> To prove, if women do not think at all,
> They may teach thinking (to a maiden aunt
> Or else the author), – books that boldly assert
> Their right of comprehending husband's talk
> When not too deep, and even of answering
> With pretty "may it please you," or "so it is,"
> Their rapid insight and fine aptitude,
> Particular worth and general missionariness,
> As long as they keep quiet by the fire
> And never say "no" when the world says "ay,"
> For that is fatal, – their angelic reach
> Of virtue, chiefly used to sit and darn,
> And fatten household sinners, – their, in brief,
> Potential faculty in everything
> Of abdicating power in it: (I, 427-442)

Aurora ridicules the Victorian image of women through the incongruous associations which assimilate comprehension to a right (and limit this right to understanding only what is not too deep) and juxtapose the verb "prove" to statements as contrary to logic as claiming the possibility, for one who is unable to think, to teach thinking. Simultaneously, in referring to men as "household sinners", Aurora denounces the patriarchal focus on women's morality, in which domesticity is central,

as having not so moral motivations: in teaching women to be content with the sole tasks of mending and "fattening them", male oppressors secure not only their comfort but also, and more importantly, their domination. As Aurora's explicit sentence eventually puts it, the faculties they assign to women are conveniently also those by virtue of which the latter "abdicate power".

Such attacks on patriarchal prejudices make it difficult to dismiss *Aurora Leigh* as no more than "a woman's voice speaking patriarchal discourse", (David 1985: 135) as Deirdre David, despite her quoting from some of the passages discussed here, does.[4] The step away from patriarchal discourse in *Aurora Leigh* is, in fact, more determined than the discourse of some contemporary feminist figures. A case in point is Caroline Norton. Made famous by her fight against the laws which made it possible for a husband to sequestrate his children and keep them out of the reach of their mother in case of separation or divorce – a situation from which she herself suffered following her separation from her husband – Norton nevertheless always insisted on her firm belief in men's superiority over women (Caine 1997: 66-70). In contrast to this strategy, which consisted in pointing out women's suffering under the patriarchal yoke and appealing to men's compassion without questioning the female sufferers' status as a subaltern, Mrs Browning's depiction of a heroine who represents herself as man's equal in brains as well as independence betokens a refusal of self-victimisation; a refusal also conveyed through Mrs Browning's intensive recourse to irony. Because they are directed at patriarchal discourse and its representatives, Aurora's deliberately ironic sentences function as a discursive weapon that reverses the traditional gendered distribution of power by making women the laughing subject while turning their male oppressors into objects of mockery.

Rejecting the patriarchal ideal which tried "to flatten and bake [her] to a wholesome crust / For household uses and proprieties" (I, 1041-1042), the independent heroine is determined to be something other than a mere "angel in the house." The phrase is of course a reference to Coventry Patmore's poem – another verse-novel which was published in 1856 and to which *Aurora Leigh* is said by critics like Paul Turner to be

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[4] David quotes the lines where Aurora ridicules the kind of education dispensed on Victorian women only to dismiss them without further comment (1985: 128).

an answer.[5] Patmore's poem celebrates middle-class domesticity; as its very title suggests, there is no doubt for its author that the only suitable place for a woman is her husband's home. By contrast, Mrs Browning makes her heroine reject without hesitation the offer of her cousin Romney, who, in asking her to marry him, seems to see in her no more than a suitable helpmate in his project of assisting the poor and healing the world from its social flaws:

> "Sir [her answer goes], you were married long ago.
> You have a wife already whom you love,
> Your social theory. Bless you both, I say.
> For my part, I am scarcely meek enough
> To be the handmaid of a lawful spouse.
> Do I look a Hagar, think you?" (II, 408-413)

Deirdre David reads this rejection of the cousin's proposal as the reaction of an "angry woman utter[ing] a sentimental attack on male insensitivity", arguing that the dissatisfaction it voices has much more to do with the lack of feeling her suitor puts in his marriage offer than with his conception of gender roles (1985: 130). My own reading, however, is that it has to do with both. Although the ironical words and the sneering tone with which she meets her suitor's proposal are certainly the expression of a pride hurt by her being seen more as a collaborator than as a wife, Aurora also denounces, through her own example, the eternal second position to which patriarchy is often wont to subject women. The name of Hagar, Abraham's slave-wife, does more than epitomise this female subjection; inasmuch as it is unavoidably associated with one of the oldest and most famous patriarchs in the Judeo-Christian tradition, it can be read as a condemnation of patriarchy as such. In other words, Aurora's irony is directed not so much towards Romney Leigh as towards the long patriarchal tradition of which Romney acts as a representative.

This long patriarchal tradition also infests the world of letters in which Aurora hoped to find an alternative to the subordinate status

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[5] Turner's article "Aurora Versus the Angel" argues, among other things, that the "books on womanhood" mentioned by Aurora in the line 427 of the First Book is a hint to Patmore's "Angel in the House" and that the word "author" inserted two lines later refers to Patmore's character Felix Vaugham and, through him, to Coventry Patmore himself.

offered by Romney. Realising this, the heroine who has ridiculed the cultural code which confines women to domestic chores soon showers her irony on the traditional conventions defined and perpetuated by literary patriarchs. *Aurora Leigh* displays an irreverent attitude *vis-à-vis* literary predecessors unanimously held in high esteem, mocking the obsequious submission to the literary canon which makes young poets' writings read as pieces composed centuries earlier:

> I count it strange and hard to understand,
> That nearly all young poets should write old,
> That Pope was sexagenary at sixteen,
> And beardless Byron academical,
> And so with others. (I, 1011-1015)

What grieves Aurora in this male imperviousness to novelty is that it manifests itself through a suspicion towards any woman's attempt to find a place in the male-dominated literary world. *Aurora Leigh* parodies the falsely encouraging discourse with which male readers welcome female literary productions:

> "Oh, excellent,
> "What grace, what facile turns, what fluent sweeps,
> "What delicate discernment ... almost thought!
> "The book does honour to the sex, we hold.
> "Among our female authors we make room
> "For this fair writer, and congratulate
> "The country that produces in these times
> "Such women, competent to . . . spell." (II, 237-243)

Through this sort of "ironic pastiche" (Hutcheon 1989: 89), the heroine denounces the contempt in which women's intellectual faculties are held. In this regard, the irony which pervades Mrs Browning's text is a serious challenge to patriarchy not only because it is showered on its social and literary representatives, but also because by showing the ease with which the poet – a woman – handles a device long thought to be reserved to men, it overthrows the cliché which holds that a woman's mind is incapable of roundabout turns of phrases and that "the headache is too noble for [her] sex" (II, 111). In a culture where women were, at best, only thought able to write tear-jerking romances, the intensive resort to "irony's intellectualism" (Lang 1982: 276) reads as a wilful rejection of the widespread belittling representations of women. As such, it is in total

accordance both with the subject and the form chosen for the novel. It echoes the decision of the young heroine who, by opting for an artistic career while rejecting the love and marriage proposal of her cousin Romney, prefers intellectual success to emotional fulfilment, in which the Victorians saw the only possible form of female happiness.

The form chosen for the narrative goes in the same direction. Indeed, the charge of conventionality Aurora levies at the guardians of the literary tradition can also be seen as a justification of Mrs Browning's own innovative thrust in writing her "unscrupulously epic" (V, 215) text – the blend of novelistic genre and traditional epic that *Aurora Leigh* is. As Marjorie Stone has argued, writing a verse-novel instead of a traditional prose narrative is a way of re-assessing the female mind, showing that women can write more than the domestic novels to which Victorian bias wanted to confine them, and voicing rejection of the traditional male/female dichotomy:

> Barrett Browning does not merely mingle genres; she fuses them together to form a new whole . . . This fusion of genres entails a fusion of genders since Victorians viewed epic, philosophic, and racy satiric poetry as male domains, but thought the novel more suited to female writers. Beyond associating the skills of the novelist with the supposedly female virtues of the heart, Victorians found the writing of novels by women more acceptable than attempts in the major poetic genres because, as Gilbert and Gubar observe, novels did not require or display the knowledge of classical models barred to most women, novelists did not aspire to be priestly or prophetic figures interpreting God and the world to their fellows, and the novel was less subjective than the prevalent lyric and confessional poetic forms and therefore more congruent with the self-effacing role prescribed for Victorian women (pp. 545-549). Precisely these features of the major poetic modes – the imitation of classical models (above all, the epic), prophetic aspirations, and confessional subjectivity – are the most prominent in Aurora Leigh. (Stone 1987: 115)

The 8000-line verse, the figures of style with which it teems, and the impressive bulk of Biblical and classical references inserted in it all betoken a will to invade a literary sphere long thought to be exclusively male and subvert the gender categories shaped by her conservative culture. Like these, the irony which pervades the novel is meant to deconstruct the myth of feminine fragility, re-appraise the female mind, and assert women writers' intellectual abilities. As such, irony is, independently from the targets it aims at, itself an indication of the feminist stance of the writer.

Laughing at unconventionality

While, in reassessing women's brains, the intellectual character of irony challenges an important Victorian prejudice, this very sophistication makes this form of laughter only mildly subversive. As Candace D. Lang remarks,

> In works on the comic which attempt to differentiate among its various manifestations, irony usually appears as a minor category, and frequently as only marginally funny (despite the difficulty of measuring "funniness"). Irony's intellectualism, its pointedness and its often harshly critical quality are evoked to distinguish it from the truly risible. (1982: 276)

Victorian times had precisely little patience with the "truly risible." Moreover, irony is accommodating for Victorianism because "it clothes itself in respectability" (Sanders 1995: 234) and avoids the shocking effect produced by more explicit forms of humour. Mrs Browning is indeed far from the bawdiness of predecessors like Aphra Behn; as an ironist, she "displays . . . her wit precisely by *not* eliciting gales of laughter and thus seems to avoid violating social decorum" (Sanders 1995: 235).

Mrs Browning's unconventional heroine is herself subjected to social decorum by the end of the verse-novel. She, who has hitherto shunned marriage and sung the praise of woman's emancipation, eventually gains recognition of the vanity of woman's aspiration to do without man's love and recognition. Despite the fame and success she has achieved as a poet, Aurora comes to understand

> How dreary 'tis for women to sit still,
> On winter nights by solitary fires,
> And hear the nations praising them far off,
> Too far! ay, praising our quick sense of love,
> Our very heart of passionate womanhood,
> Which could not beat so in the verse without
> Being present also in the unkissed lips (V, 439-445)

Deirdre David relies on this passage to argue that Aurora sees sexual fulfilment as inseparable from artistic fulfilment (1985: 129-130), without lingering on the irony that underlies the expression of such a vision of art. Indeed, it is ironical that the woman who gives voice to it has hitherto always kept sex and art apart; that she has actually

relinquished love to write poetry. The irony is all the more accentuated by the fact that she has made love the main content of this poetry, deluding her readers (who seem to share her art theory) to believe that she has been writing out of experience:

> To sit alone
> And think for comfort, how, that very night,
> Affianced lovers, leaning face to face
> With sweet half-listenings for each other's breath,
> Are reading haply from a page of ours,
> To pause with a thrill (as if their cheeks had touched)
> When such a stanza, level to their mood,
> Seems floating their own thoughts out – “So I feel
> For thee,” – “And I, for thee: this poet knows
> What everlasting love is!” (V, 447-456)

Thus, instead of acting on her theory of art, Aurora, wearing a mask, as it were, contented herself with giving her readers the illusion of doing so. The mockery that Aurora showers on what she comes to see as her dishonest self – which gives the illusion of knowing “what everlasting love is” when love is what she is actually hankering for – is reminiscent of Henri Bergson’s claim that “a person in disguise is risible” (1947: 32).[6] Aurora laughs at herself as she comes to see her former uncompromising search for independence as that of a borrowed persona, a mere self-deception. Moreover, in convergence with Bergson’s analyses of the corrective role of laughter, her self-mockery heralds a change in her attitude towards patriarchy. Bergson argues that individual impertinence towards society – departure from its norms – is punished and corrected through the still greater impertinence of laughter, which aims both at humiliating (and thus punishing) and correcting the transgressor (1947: 148-150).[7] The Aurora of the end of the poem has indeed little resemblance with the arrogant girl who pokes fun at conventional women. She has now ceased to mock such patriarchal stereotypes as those which look down at women writers:

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[6] Bergson, “Un homme qui se déguise est comique”. Translation mine.

[7] Through her strokes of self-irony, however, Aurora acts out both as the transgressor of social norms and as the corrector.

> "A good book," [...]
> "And you a woman." I had laughed at that,
> But long since. I'm a woman, it is true;
> Alas, and woe to us, when we feel it most!
> Then, least care have we for the crowns and goals
> And compliments on writing our good books. (VII, 738-743)

This more subdued stance does not, however, indicate that its owner has reconciled herself to patriarchal prejudiced discourse. Although the assertion that she cares little for "crowns and goals" is in sharp contrast with their owner's former contempt for women's eagerness to "abdicate power in [everything]" (I, 442), it indicates only that Aurora places less value on the recognition of her talents, *not* that she has ceased to see herself as man's intellectual equal.[8] A similarly undecidable stance is illustrated in the comparison she draws between herself as an artist and two fellow male poets:

> Well, well! they say we're envious, we who rhyme;
> But I, because I am a woman perhaps
> And so rhyme ill, am ill at envying.
> I never envied Graham his breadth of style,
> Which gives you, with a random smutch or two
> (Near-sighted critics analyse to smutch),
> Such delicate perspectives of full life:
> Nor Belmore, for the unity of aim
> To which he cuts his cedarn poems, fine
> As sketchers do their pencils [...]
> I envy you your mother [Belmore]!– and you, Graham,
> Because you have a wife who loves you so,
> She half forgets, at moments, to be proud
> Of being Graham's wife, until a friend observes,
> "The boy here, has his father's massive brow,
> Done small in wax . . if we push back the curls."
> Who loves me? (V, 502-540)

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[8] Inasmuch as this recognition is usually bestowed or denied by male readers, it is even possible to read Aurora's ignorance of it as a liberation from male judgement. Such a reading would join Barbara Charlesworth Gelpi's view (1981) that Aurora's marriage with her cousin is less surrender to patriarchy than reconciliation with a femininity long stifled by male gaze, which measures woman's achievements against male criteria of success. Gelpi's argument, however, seems to me to submit too readily to the traditional definition which sees femininity as inseparable from romantic love.

Having, through her own roundabout turns of phrase, ironised on the view that women cannot be good poets and expressed the little admiration she feels for the art of Graham and Belmore, Aurora nonetheless admits that she envies them the love with which they are surrounded and their wives and mothers the joys of maternity and domesticity that she herself lacks. Thus, without ceasing to reject the patriarchal prejudices against her sex, Aurora is now more willing to accept the patriarchal assumption that love and family life are what matters most for a woman. In reconsidering her conception of the art/love hierarchy, Aurora aligns herself along Victorian female writers like Elizabeth Gaskell and Charlotte Brontë, who, while achieving success in their literary career, continued to rate this second to their status as wives and/or mothers (Basch 1974: 46). Mrs Browning might be "a non-conformist in more ways than one" (Basch 1974: 46-47), but her heroine's revision of her own unconventionality cannot but mitigate such a qualification.

Presenting itself alternately as a patriarchal and a feminist text, *Aurora Leigh* constantly defers its own meaning. The heroine's ironic attacks on patriarchy are inserted only to be erased and mocked in their turn. Eventually, irony itself is erased, and the end of the narrative is significantly rendered in the earnest tone that characterises traditional didactic literature. The solemn lesson Aurora learns as she achieves moral and emotional maturity is that "Art is much, but Love is more" (IX, 656). She now vows to be

> A simple woman who believes in love
> And owns the right of love because she loves,
> And, hearing she's beloved, is satisfied
> With what contents God: (IX, 661-664)

That the narrator distances herself from her former uncompromisingly feminist stance is in fact explicitly stated at the very beginning of the novel. Aurora starts her narrative by warning us that she is not the woman she used to be and, what is more, that she *dislikes* the sort of woman she used to be:

> And I who have written much in prose and verse
> For others' uses, will write now for mine, –
> Will write my story for my better self,
> As when you paint your portrait for a friend,

> Who keeps it in a drawer and looks at it
> Long after he has ceased to love you, just
> To hold together what he was and is. (I, 02-08)

The tacit opposition, all along the narrative, between the gender politics of the narrator – older Aurora – and her younger self,[9] gives Browning's novel the overall ironic structure that is characteristic of the *Bildungsroman,* where the object of irony is the proud but foolish protagonist retrospectively analysed either by an omniscient narrator or, as the case is here, by the very same protagonist once he/she has completed his/her process of growing up. The structure of *Aurora Leigh* is, in this regard, reminiscent of Jane Austen's *Emma*, where the narrator gently laughs at the eponymous heroine who, as proud as Aurora, tries to convince herself that she need not marry only to finally acknowledge her love for Mr. Knightley and become his wife. In both works, laughter serves as a pretext to denounce possible departures from the cultural and moral norm, thus fulfilling the conservative (because corrective) social role assigned to it (laughter) by Bergson. The unconventional heroines afford to laugh at conventions, but it is they who are actually mocked. Eventually, as they realise their foolishness and repent from their defiant attitudes, laughter ceases, and the novel ends on a solemn tone that announces the triumph of the traditional order.

Lagging behind

In his book on the history of laughter, Barry Sanders observes that although they subvert the *status quo*, ironists do not aim at overthrowing the reigning order (1995: 235). This paper has been an attempt to show not only that this is the case in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's verse-novel *Aurora Leigh*, but that privileging irony in the writer's laughter economy in turn matches her gender politics. As an ambiguous category, irony in

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[9] Although Alison Case proposes a similar reading of this passage, she also suggests that the friend "who has ceased to love" is male and that the passage can therefore be read as a hint to "a tale of thwarted or denied romantic love" (1991: 20). My own view is that both the "you" and "he" used in Aurora's simile are meant as impersonal pronouns, and that the male third person pronoun denotes more an unconscious subscription to male-governed writing conventions than an actual male category.

Aurora Leigh echoes the poem's undecidable stance towards patriarchy, whose definition of women's role and behaviour it endorses while also attempting to dismantle its association of femininity with weakness and inferiority. Inasmuch as it demonstrates that female writers are as capable as their male counterparts of subtle and clever turns of phrases, resorting to irony contributes in re-appraising the female mind and challenges the traditional patriarchal cliché according to which women are intellectually limited. However, opting for irony rather than for the roughness and sexual allusions that characterise bolder categories of laughter betrays a prudish submission to the Victorian patriarchal discourse which held female modesty in high esteem.

The hostile criticism showered on *Aurora Leigh* at the time of its publication was obviously the outcome of its departure from the ideal of femininity triumphing at that period, as the examples given at the outset of this paper show: despite its compromising attitude *vis-à-vis* the prevailing cultural and moral norm, Mrs Browning's verse-poem did go much further than many contemporary novels in its transgression of the Victorian patriarchal ethos and its oppressive seriousness. While *Aurora Leigh* is not the uncompromisingly feminist text enthusiastically applauded by critics like Isobel Armstrong and Marjorie Stone, it is therefore not the patriarchal pamphlet Deirdre David takes it to be either. Rather, it is caught in an evasive, undetermined position. In the discursive battle that opposed Victorian patriarchy to rising feminism, the former had the advantages of priority and hegemony; as a result, the patriarchal assumptions which shaped the moral and cultural outlook of the advocates of male authority also infiltrated the discourse of its feminist opponents – including Mrs Browning's text.

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Space, time, and plane travel in Walter Kirn's novel *Up in the Air*

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Abstract
This article applies Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of the literary chronotope to an analysis of the depiction of corporate air travel in Walter Kirn's novel *Up in the Air* (2001). The analysis shows how the novel positions itself in relation to the genre of road narratives, at the same time transforming it by exchanging the car and the road for airplanes and airports. It further examines how the "airworld" chronotope is characterized by a disjunction between space and time. This contributes to a critique of commercialization and reification of space and time in contemporary American society, and also serves to question ideals traditionally associated with the American road genre.

Introduction
The literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin borrowed the concept of chronotope—literally "timespace"—from Einstein's theory of relativity in order to describe the "intrinsic connectedness" of time and space in literary texts (Bakhtin 1981: 84). Literary chronotopes give concrete expression to a particular kind of space at a particular time, such as the nineteenth-century French salons depicted in Balzac's novels (Bakhtin 1981: 246-47). In "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel," written in the 1930s, Bakhtin calls chronotopes the place "where the knots of narrative are tied and untied" (Bakhtin 1981: 250), pointing out, for example, that in Dostoevsky's novels pivotal events occur in threshold spaces such as doorways, staircases, and corridors (Bakhtin 1981: 248-49). Chronotopes act as prisms, refracting the contexts that have given rise to particular texts and the worldviews expressed in them. "All the novel's abstract elements—philosophical and social generalizations, ideas, analyses of cause and effect," writes Bakhtin, "gravitate toward the chronotope and through it take on flesh and blood" (Bakhtin 1981: 250). His conclusion, added in 1973, declares that "every entry into the sphere of meanings is accomplished only through the gates of the chronotope" (Bakhtin 1981: 258).

In his discussion of specific kinds of chronotopes, Bakthin identifies the "chronotope of the road" as one of the most enduring in Western

literature (Bakhtin 1981: 244). In narratives containing the road chronotope, the protagonist undertakes a journey, in which the distance travelled typically stands in stable relation to the amount of time elapsed. The protagonist's travels are often paralleled by a metaphorical inner journey, where the "choice of a real itinerary equals the choice of 'the path of life'" (Bakhtin 1981: 120). Bakhtin exemplifies the road chronotope with Apuleius' *The Golden Ass*, in which the protagonist Lucius is transformed into a donkey and wanders in search of a way back to his original state, acquiring new perspectives on Roman society along the way.

Many later examples of the road chronotope can be found in the American road genre. Here the open road represents adventure, discovery, escape, freedom, and rebellion, often drawing upon the myth of the West as a new frontier or promised land. Road narratives also typically offer a critique of the society from which their protagonists seek escape by taking to the road (Laderman 2002: 1). Influential examples of the American road genre include Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* (1884) and Jack Kerouac's beat generation novel *On the Road* (1957), as well as the films *Easy Rider* (1969) and *Thelma and Louise* (1991).[1] Janis P. Stout attributes the prevalence of road narratives in American literature to the significant role played by various kinds of journeys throughout American history. "Spatial movement," she argues, "has been the characteristic expression of our sense of life" (Stout 1983: 4-5).

Walter Kirn's novel *Up in the Air* (2001)[2] explicitly evokes the road genre through intertextual references to other road narratives, such as Walt Whitman's "Song of the Open Road" (in the epigraph), *Huckleberry Finn* (Kirn 2001: 54; 219), and *On the Road* (Kirn 2001: 43). Like many road story protagonists, Kirn's narrator assumes a critical stance toward aspects of contemporary American society. *Up in the Air*

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[1] For studies of the road genre in literature and film, see Laderman 2002, Mills 2006, and Stout 1983.

[2] The novel was first published in July 2001. It received positive reviews and sold well until the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. As Walter Kirn recounts, "After 9/11, *Up in the Air* stopped selling instantly—its eye-catching cover didn't help: a cartoon of flying businesspeople, one of them on fire and hurtling earthward." The novel received renewed attention several years later, when Jason Reitman's film adaptation was released in 2009 (Kirn 2009).

differs, however, from many other postwar American road narratives in that the primary mode of transportation is not the automobile, but the airplane.[3] The chronotope of the road is thus refashioned into what I will call, adopting the narrator-protagonist's own term for the space he inhabits, the airworld chronotope. His perceptions of "Airworld" change over the course of the narrative, with space and time becoming increasingly disjointed. By juxtaposing the airworld chronotope with contrasting chronotopes of home and the open road, the novel provides a critique of the commercialization and reification of space and time in contemporary American society and also questions ideals traditionally associated with the American road genre.

Airworld

The novel's narrator and protagonist Ryan Bingham is a corporate business traveler who exists in a state of constant transit. Although flashbacks reveal that he has previously led a more rooted life, he is now divorced and lacks a permanent residence, dwelling exclusively in what he calls "Airworld," comprised of airplanes, airports, and surrounding hotel chains. He works as a consultant flown in by downsizing companies to give motivational talks to redundant employees, but having begun to question the ethics of his profession, he has submitted his resignation, effective at the end of the workweek depicted in the novel. In the intervening days, Ryan uses his corporate travel account to reach his goal of accumulating one million frequent flier miles by travelling throughout the American West and Midwest. He bases his choices of destination and means of transportation on the number of bonus miles he can earn. He thus flies not primarily for the sake of arriving, adventure, or the pleasure of travel itself, as is often the case in road stories, but in order to receive credit for miles logged. In addition to flights, he acquires these symbolic miles through car rentals, hotel stays, and credit card purchases. Over the course of his six-day odyssey, he meets with a

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[3] David Laderman observes, "While some very important road movies involve motorcycles, trains, busses, bicycles, or even walking, the most common and most generically privileged vehicle is the automobile" (Laderman 2002: 13). Jessica Enevold's term "narratives of mobility" expands the scope of the road genre to include "transportation by means of walking, hitchhiking, or going by train," as well as non-American narratives (Enevold 2003: 4).

coaching client, a management guru, and a publishing agent, and also visits the MythTech company, which he believes is secretly trying to recruit him. Ryan's attempts to pitch his business ideas recall earlier cultural representations of the figure of the traveling salesman, with the difference that Ryan is peddling abstract ideas, rather than concrete wares.[4]

The first pages of the novel draw the reader's attention to the spatial and temporal parameters of the plot through a detailed travel itinerary indicating flight numbers and times, as well as rental car and hotel reservations. Despite occasional deviations, the novel's plot is structured around this itinerary. The narrator adopts the shorthand of itinerary abbreviations in his speech: "BZN to SLC departs on time" (Kirn 2001: 212); "Along with Hartsfield and O'Hare, DIA is one of Airworld's three great capitals" (Kirn 2001: 278). The narrative is addressed in the second-person singular to a fellow passenger who has been randomly seated next to the narrator on an airplane. The narrative as a whole is thus conceived as arising out of a chance encounter determined by the airworld chronotope. By identifying with the narratee, the reader, too, becomes inscribed into the novel's imaginary world of corporate air travel.

"To know me you have to fly with me," declares Ryan in the novel's opening line (Kirn 2001: 1). He characterizes himself as a quintessential flyer, stating, "Planes and airports are where I feel at home" (Kirn 2001: 5), and "I'm in my element up here" (Kirn 2001: 6). He recalls his first flight (when as a teenager he was taken to the hospital by helicopter after an accident) as a pivotal experience because it accorded him an overview of the world:

> The landscape looked whole in a way it never had before; I could see how it fit together. My parents had lied. They'd taught me we lived in the best place in the world, but I could see now that the world was really one place and that comparing its parts did not make sense or gain our town any advantage over others.
>
> (Kirn 2001: 141)

Ryan recounts that his attachment to his small Minnesotan hometown subsequently weakened, leading him to adopt the lifestyle of a jet-setter,

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[4] For a study of the figure of the traveling salesman in American culture, see Spears 1995.

which accords him a feeling of omnipresence: “Don’t tell me we can’t be everywhere at once,” he declares (Kirn 2001: 141). As the analysis below will show, however, this illusion of a unified world is gradually undermined over the course of the narrative.

Airworld is depicted as a self-contained realm, existing parallel to the world on the ground. Ryan avers that “America’s airspace has its own geography” (Kirn 2001: 59), as well as its own time: “Every flight is a three-act play—takeoff, cruising, descent; past, present, future” (Kirn 2001: 60). It also has particular social codes and conventions, gender roles, and ethical standards, the latter of which Ryan initially believes are better than those on the ground: “In Airworld honesty carries no penalty and deception has no upside” (Kirn 2001: 82). Airworld is further described as “a nation within a nation, with its own language, architecture, mood, and even its own currency—the token economy of airline bonus miles” (Kirn 2001: 7). These abstract miles comprise a reification through which the experience of travel is reduced to a commodity. As Ryan’s interlocutor points out, “It’s just a number. It doesn’t mean a thing” (Kirn 2001: 10). But Ryan claims to value these symbolic miles more than money: “Inflation doesn’t degrade them. They’re not taxed. They’re private property in its purest form” (Kirn 2001: 7). He views them as intrinsic to his identity, as becomes clear from his reaction at the suggestion that he give some away: “The lines we draw that make us who we are are potent by virtue of being non-negotiable, and even, at some level, indefensible. [. . .] To apologize for your personal absolutes [. . .] means apologizing for your very existence” (Kirn 2001: 39). The abstraction of bonus miles can be seen as a result of the capitalist system. Henri Lefebvre views space as a social construction, arguing that different socio-historical conditions have given rise to different conceptions of space. In particular, “capitalism and neocapitalism have produced abstract space, which includes the ‘world of commodities,’ its ‘logic’ and its worldwide strategies” (Lefebvre 1991: 53). He notes that “the spatial practice of neocaptialism” includes air transport (Lefebvre 1991: 59).

Kirn’s depiction of Airworld recalls anthropologist Marc Augé’s concept of non-place. In *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, Augé argues that an increased speed of travel has contributed to changing notions of time and space, giving rise to a variety of “non-places,” including airplanes and airports, which are not

tied to "a culture localized in time and space" (Augé 1995: 34). Although the non-place is inhabited, it "cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity" (Augé 1995: 77-78). In non-places, time seems to stand still, "as if space had been trapped by time, as if there were no history other than the last forty-eight hours of news, as if each individual history were drawing its motives, its words and images, from the inexhaustible stock of an unending history in the present" (Augé 1995: 104-105).

Kirn's Airworld is similarly devoid of historical perspective. On a flight to Ontario, California, Ryan wonders, "But where's Ontario? I don't really know. A secondary airport outside Los Angeles, a clearing in the suburbs and subdivisions. They call such places faceless, but it's not true. They're bodiless, just signs and streets and lights" (Kirn 2001: 107). He states that "the big-screen Panasonics in the club rooms broadcast all the news I need, with an emphasis on the markets and the weather" (Kirn 2001: 7). He calls the national dailies the *Wall Street Journal* and *USA Today* his "hometown papers" (Kirn 2001: 7), valuing the latter for its undemanding style (Kirn 2001: 215). Jean Baudrillard views this kind of "*universality of the news item* [*le fait divers*] in mass communication" as typical of consumer society, in which "political, historical, and cultural information is received in the same—at once anodyne and miraculous—form of the news item" (Baudrillard 1998: 33). The pervasiveness of such media is emphasized in a passage in which a journalist seated next to Ryan on a plane struggles to finish an article before deadline, unwittingly reproducing the text of a news story Ryan had read shortly before in *USA Today* (Kirn 2001: 108). Ryan is seen to suffer from a similar lack of originality; he believes he is writing a new self-help book—a "motivational fable" entitled "The Garage" (Kirn 2001: 28)—when in reality he inadvertently plagiarizes someone else's work.

Human relationships in Airworld are superficial, determined solely by physical proximity. Upon learning that a chance acquaintance from his travels has died, Ryan exclaims, "I adored that man." When questioned, "On what basis? [. . .] Occasional proximity?", Ryan counters, "As if there's anything else" (Kirn 2001: 214). Bakhtin argues that the chronotope of the road is often associated with the motif of encounters: "The road is a particularly good place for random encounters. [. . .] the spatial and temporal paths of the most varied people—representatives of all social classes, estates, religions,

nationalities, ages—intersect at one spatial and temporal point" (Bakhtin 1981: 243). Although the inhabitants of Airworld are less diverse, limited as they are to business class passengers and airline employees, the plot contains several chance encounters, as Ryan initiates conversations with strangers on each flight, which, he recounts, often lead to one-night stands. He remarks, "Chance is an erratic matchmaker. Now and then it seats me next to women I wouldn't dream of approaching on my own" (Kirn 2001: 36). In its depiction of women as sexual objects, *Up in the Air* recalls earlier examples of the road genre, of which Brian Ireland argues, "When women do appear in this genre, usually they are portrayed in stereotypical, male chauvinist ways [. . .] the treatment of women in the road genre is one of its most troubling aspects" (Ireland 2003: 481); David Laderman similarly notes that road movies tend to "retain a traditional sexist hierarchy that privileges the white heterosexual male" (Laderman 2002: 20).[5]

The stereotypical and superficial character of Airworld comprises part of its appeal to Ryan, who claims, "launch yourself into Airworld, with all its services, and the higher mental functions become irrelevant" (Kirn 2001: 205). Just as the road represents an escape from society in many road narratives, Airworld frees Ryan from the obligations of life on the ground. In the words of Augé, "a person entering the space of non-place is relieved of his usual determinants [. . .] he tastes for a while [. . .] the passive joys of identity-loss (Augé 1995: 103). Similarly, Pico Iyer, reflecting on how frequent travel influences perceptions of place, argues that "Airports can be vertiginous places because we have nothing to hold our identities in place there" (Iyer 2000: 62). Ryan, however, presents the idea of identity loss as a desirable state in his explanation of what makes a particular hotel chain successful:

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[5] Although Enevold also characterizes the road in American road narratives "as a primarily male territory in which the travel experience becomes a male identity project which engages in a culturally dependent spatial othering of women and minorities" (Enevold 2002: 158), she identifies an ongoing rearticulation of the genre, in which the protagonists of narratives of mobility are female, and which she believes "will lead to the formulation of new identity processes which will [. . .] make more room and road for the female mobile subject" (Enevold 2002: 169).

> Every great corporation does one thing well, and in Marriott's case it's to help guests disappear. The indistinct architecture, the average service, the room-temperature, everything. You're gone, blended away by the stain-disguising carpet patterns, the art that soothes you even when your back's turned. And you don't even miss yourself. That's Marriott's great discovery. Invisibility, the ideal vacation. No more anxiety about your role, your place. Rest here, under our cloak. Don't fidget, it's just your face that we're removing. You won't be needing it until you leave, and here's a claim check. Don't worry if you lose it. (Kirn 2001: 214-15)

Ryan prefers franchises to independent restaurants for the same kind of uniformity: "Unless a dish can be made to taste as good no matter where it's prepared, LA or Little Rock, it doesn't entice me" (Kirn 2001: 75). Of airports, he comments, "By rotating its personnel, who pop up again and again in different cities, the airline creates a sense in flyers like me of running in place. I find this reassuring" (Kirn 2001: 56). At the same time, Airworld is described as a distillation of particular tendencies of the outer world into their purest, hyperreal form—a place in which "the passions and enthusiasms of the outlying society are concentrated" (Kirn 2001: 7). For Ryan, Airworld represents a refuge from life on the ground, but he also expresses ambivalence toward it. As the narrative progresses, Airworld becomes increasingly associated with the very aspects of American life—such as overcrowding and commercialization—which he seeks to escape. He views the airline's bonus program as a way to beat the commercialized system at its own game: "For years, Great West has been my boss, my sergeant, dictating where I went and if I went, deciding what I ate and if I ate. My mileage is my one chance to strike back, to snatch satisfaction from humiliation" (Kirn 2001: 38).

Unlike the road chronotope, in which there is a close correlation between time elapsed and distance covered, the airworld chronotope highlights a disjunction between time and space resulting from air travel. Spatio-temporal relationships appear unstable to Ryan. Air itself represents an abstract, undefined space, a quality highlighted by the idiom in the novel's title, designating a state of uncertainty.[6] Ryan can be seen to be "up in the air" in two senses: literally, as he spends much of his time traveling in airplanes, and figuratively, in that his future is uncertain. The phenomenon of jet lag is repeatedly mentioned in the

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[6] *The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms* states that this "metaphoric expression likens something floating in the air to an unsettled matter" (Ammer 1997: 449).

novel, as when passengers "reset their watches from Central time to Mountain. For some of them this means a longer day, for others it means eating supper before they're hungry" (Kirn 2001: 1). Jet lag results in disorientation, leading Ryan to wonder, "It's Wednesday down there, but what day is it up here?" (Kirn 2001: 173). Although he does not transverse more than three time zones as he flies over the American Midwest and West, he nevertheless uses the excuse of jet lag to justify ordering a drink in the morning.

The contrasting chronotopes of home and the road

A literary text may contain multiple chronotopes, which stand in various relations to one another. "Chronotopes are mutually inclusive," writes Bakhtin, "they co-exist, they may be interwoven with, replace or oppose one another, contradict one another or find themselves in ever more complex interrelationships" (Bakhtin 1981: 252). Gary Saul Morson and Caryl Emerson characterize interaction between chronotopes as dialogic, noting that "in society and in individual life, chronotopes also compete with each other. As senses of the world, they may implicitly dispute (or agree with) each other" (Morson and Emerson 1990: 369).[7] As Barbara L. Pittman explains, "a novel is not finally reducible to a single chronotope but is a complex of major generic chronotopes and minor chronotopic motifs," creating "a web of competing chronotopes in dialogue and a central chronotope that serves as a unifying ground" (Pittman 1995: 778). Jay Ladin observes that "from the reader's point of view, chronotopes become 'visible' by comparison with other kinds of space-time" (Ladin 1999: 219).

The dominant chronotope in Kirn's novel is that of Airworld, which is in turn highlighted by interaction with the contrasting chronotopes of home and the road. Ryan defines his lifestyle and identity in contrast to a domestic chronotope, claiming that unlike his colleagues, he has "never aspired to an office at world headquarters, close to hearth and home and

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[7] Later in the same chapter, Morson and Emerson write, "works often contain more than one chronotope. Some may be drawn from life, others from literary works of various genres; still others may be present as congealed events in specific chronotopic motifs. In life, too, particular institutions or activities combine and are constituted by diverse chronotopes" (Morson and Emerson 1990: 426).

skybox, with a desk overlooking the Front Range of the Rockies and access to the ninth-floor fitness center. I suppose I'm a sort of mutation, a new species, and though I keep an apartment for storage purposes [. . .] I live somewhere else, in the margins of my itineraries" (Kirn 2001: 7). The ideal of home is embodied in different ways by the female characters of Linda and Alex. The former flight attendant Linda urges Ryan to buy a house in her neighborhood, prompting him to declare, "Homeowning may not be in my makeup" and "A zip code is something I'd rather do without" (Kirn 2001: 25). Alex, who like Ryan travels on business, decorates her hotel rooms with objects from home. She observes, "I miss my own bedroom, my stuff. I think we all do," while Ryan explains, "I don't comment. I let her think I'm human too" (Kirn 2001: 99).

Ryan's relatives inhabit a domestic chronotope. This is especially true of female characters in the novel, such as his mother, whom he describes as possessing "a developed sense of place; her mental map of the country is zoned and shaded according to her ideas about each region's moral tenor and general demographics" (Kirn 2001: 86). In arranging a marriage and choosing a house for their younger sister Julie, Ryan's sister Kara strives to create the kind of historically and geographically rooted life that Ryan flees. He states, "Kara's goal is time travel, it seems: a marriage that will approximate our parents' and secure our family's future in its old county. Even the house [. . .] could double for the home place" (Kirn 2001: 32-33).

When Ryan takes a brief road trip with Julie, their differing perceptions of geographical space become apparent. In his description of their car trip, Ryan contrasts Julie's view of geographical space with his own mental map of the United States. While she "holds fundamentalist attitudes toward time and space and motion" (Kirn 2001: 201), Ryan conceives of the distance between two points as dependent on their proximity to airports:

> As long as you're aimed at a city with an airport, you can get anywhere from anywhere and there's no such thing as a wrong turn. That's why I didn't consider myself off course last night while driving north in accordance with Julie's request to get her as close as I could to Minnesota before I flew back to Utah and then Nevada. It seemed to surprise her when I agreed to this, perhaps because she holds fundamentalist attitudes toward time and space and motion. [. . .] She failed to take into account my mental map. In Billings, Montana, I'd find a portal to Airworld, and I could be back in Salt Lake by 9 A.M. then off to Vegas by noon. (Kirn 2001: 201)

On the few occasions when Ryan travels by car, these trips either culminate at an airport, or turn out to be circular and disorienting.

The contrasting chronotopes of Airworld and home collide when, temporarily stranded in an airline lounge by a delayed flight, Ryan runs into his ex-wife's new husband Mark. He is a real estate agent who tries to sell Ryan a house in a new development. Because it raises the issue of a more settled life, this chance encounter is disconcerting to Ryan, who experiences it as "a jolt, collapsing time and space" (Kirn 2001: 160). Using arguments such as, "we all need a place to call our own. This is America. This is what we're promised" (Kirn 2001: 163), Mark peddles a commodified ideal of home which Ryan categorically rejects. His aversion is apparent elsewhere in the text, as well. Of home décor magazines, he remarks, "They intrigue me, these pictures, because the rooms they showcase strike me as buffed-up funeral parlors, basically, designed to display and preserve the upright dead" (Kirn 2001: 155). The homes Ryan visits in the course of the narrative are described as artificial and excessive. His sister Kara's house is located in "a suburb that might have been squeezed from a tube" (Kirn 2001: 32). His client Art Krusk's "palace in Mafia Moderne" is described as "offensive" for its "fresh sod lawn whose seams still show and a faux-marble fountain of dancing cupids" (Kirn 2001: 68), and the golf course adjacent to it is deemed an ecological "sin" (Kirn 2001: 67). Ryan justifies his own homelessness with his distaste for urban sprawl: "I look down on Denver, at its malls and parking lots, its chains of blue suburban swimming pools and rows of puck-like oil tanks, its freeways, and the notion of seeking shelter in the whole mess strikes me as a joke" (Kirn 2001: 25).

The narrative suggests, however, that Ryan's self-characterization as a jet-setter belies a longing for home. He comments, "My dream is to land a position in brand analysis, a benevolent field that involves less travel and can be done from home" (Kirn 2001: 15). Underlying this vague longing is a sense of loss—a motif which appears in various forms, both literal and metaphorical, throughout the narrative: Ryan mourns his father's death, as well as his own divorce. Significantly, he relates that he began flying regularly after his marriage began to falter (Kirn 2001: 27). Although Ryan initially appreciates travel for what Augé calls the "passive joys of identity-loss" (Augé 1995: 103), they are replaced in the novel by a growing suspicion that he has fallen victim to identity theft when mysterious charges appear on his credit card and

bonus miles disappear from his frequent flier account. The suggestion of financial identity theft can also be read metaphorically as a loss of Ryan's individuality. This is a loss from which American society also suffers, according to the critique expressed in passages such as this one:

> in the course of certain American lives, way out in the flyover gloom between the coasts, it's possible to arrive—through loss of love, through the long, formless shock of watching parents age, through inadequacies of moral training, through money problems—at a stage or juncture or a passage—dismiss the buzzwords at your peril—when we find ourselves alone in a strange city where no one lives any longer than he must and all of our neighbors come from somewhere else. (Kirn 2001: 276)

Using flight as a metaphor for the idea of "the path of life," this passage expresses a generalization about American life as characterized by loneliness and loss. Other forms of loss are represented by Ryan's memory lapses, when he is unable to remember having been in a particular city the previous week (Kirn 2001: 70; 150), and embodied by the redundant corporate employees to whom Ryan gives pep talks.

By opting out of a mainstream American notion of home in favor of Airworld—much as Huck Finn takes to the Mississippi River—the protagonist assumes an outsider's position from which he can literally look down upon and criticize the world. Ryan views his accumulation of frequent flier miles as a rebellion against the commercialized world, epitomized by the airline. His belief that Airworld offers an escape proves to be an illusion, however, as exemplified by his growing suspicion that his movements and purchases are being tracked for the purposes of manipulating consumer behavior. While air travel had previously appealed to Ryan because it gave him a sense of a unified perspective on the world, he now begins to believe that he is the one being watched.

The disjointedness of space and time

Despite Ryan's self-proclaimed allegiance to Airworld, he grows disillusioned with it as he closes in on his goal of one million bonus miles. At the same time, the temporal-spatial matrix of Airworld is depicted as increasingly disjointed. This is first suggested when Ryan feels "out of sorts, confused," because his hotel room deviates from the standard layout of his favorite chain, whose name—Homestead Suites—

alludes ironically to the idea of the Western frontier (Kirn 2001: 85). He then sees a financial analyst he had met on a flight to Reno earlier the same day on a television program ostensibly set in New York. This leads Ryan to reflect on the illusory nature of place: "Though he must have taped it in Reno this afternoon, the set features a lit-up New York skyline. It's the little deceptions that no one catches that are going to dissolve it all someday. We'll look at clocks and we won't believe the hands" (Kirn 2001: 86). On his victorious final flight, Ryan, unable to pinpoint his exact location and thus the precise moment at which he has reached his goal of one million miles, reflects on the relative nature of time: "Factoring in leap years and cosmic wobble, our anniversaries aren't our anniversaries, our birthdays are someone else's and the Three Kings would ride right past Bethlehem if they left today and they steered by the old stars" (Kirn 2001: 296). This uncertainty with regard to the passage of time recalls Lefebvre's argument that as a result of capitalism, time has lost its connection to space: "It is recorded solely on measuring-instruments, on clocks, that are as isolated and functionally specialized as this time itself. Lived time loses its form and its social interest [. . .] Economic space subordinates time to itself" (Lefebvre 1991: 95). The passage of time is significant to Ryan only in relation to his progress toward the goal of accumulating one million bonus miles.

Ryan's spatio-temporal disorientation is further evidenced by his difficulty in distinguishing one city from another and by his memory lapses about where he has recently been. "The cities don't stick in my head the way they used to," he observes (Kirn 2001: 150). It is as if Ryan suffers from the effects of what Frederic Jameson calls "postmodern hyperspace," which he characterizes as "transcending the capacities of the individual human body to locate itself, to organize its immediate surroundings perceptually, and cognitively to map its position in a mappable external world" (Jameson 1984: 83). Ironically, while Ryan begins to lose his bearings in the physical world, he hopes for a new job at the MythTech company, which aims to create a "perfect comprehensive map" of commerce (Kirn 2001: 248).

Whereas the American road genre is typically characterized by open space and unlimited time, Kirn's protagonist perceives both time and space as contracting as the narrative progresses. The narrative timeframe is limited to six days and Ryan races against the clock to acquire the remaining miles before his corporate credit card is canceled. At the same

time, he begins to experience the physical space of Airworld as cramped and claustrophobic, as expressed in statements such as: "Sealed in a tube again, but going nowhere" (Kirn 2001: 167), and "There's no room to move, to gesture" (Kirn 2001: 172). Passengers are described as physically compressed, "six inches shorter than they should be" (Kirn 2001: 181). Just as the air on the ground is described as polluted by smoke from forest fires, the recycled air inside planes is described as polluted by "superviruses [. . .] steeled by exposure to diverse immune systems and virtually injected into the lungs by high-efficiency ventilation systems" (Kirn 2001: 106). Ryan begins to feel an aversion to airports and no longer wants to fly (Kirn 2001: 180). Kirn's depiction of contracting space and time recalls David Harvey's concept of "time-space compression." Harvey argues that capitalism's emphasis on fast production has given rise to a change in conceptualization of time and space:

> Strong currents of innovation have focused on speed-up and acceleration of turnover times. Time-horizons for decision making [. . .] have shortened and lifestyle fashions have changed rapidly. And all of this has been coupled with a radical reorganization of space relations, the further reduction of spatial barriers, and the emergence of a new geography of capitalist development. These events have generated a powerful sense of time-space compression. (Harvey 1990: 426)

Airworld turns out to be subject to the same time-space compression engendered by capitalism on the ground.

The novel also rejects the idea, prevalent in the American road genre, that travel brings discovery. Ryan both alludes to and discredits the myth of the West as a new frontier when he observes, "The West gave people so much trouble once, mostly because they couldn't see over its ridges, but now we can, and it's just another place" (Kirn 2001: 191). The linearity of travel is also rejected; when plotted on a map, Ryan's traversal of the Western United States is zigzagging and circular, full of detours. Significantly, his last stop in the novel is Las Vegas—symbolizing a "dead end" in many American road movies (Ganser et al 2006: 13). Here he attends the "GoalQuest" business conference, the name of which plays ironically on the motif of a quest, common in the road genre (Ireland 2003: 479). While the quest narrative "suggests a movement *toward* something" (Laderman 2002: 20), Ryan's only goal or quest consists of his pursuit of frequent flier miles. While American road

narratives typically depict movement from East to West—with the West "associated with images of the frontier and the idea of freedom" (Ireland 2003: 475), the final leg of Ryan's journey completes a round trip, ending where his life began, in his home state of Minnesota.

On his final flight, Ryan questions the need to travel at all in the following passage, which recalls his feeling, during his very first flight, "that the world was really one place" (Kirn 2001: 141):

> The mist just keeps on lifting and soon I'll be able to see all the way, as far as the earth's curvature allows. It's a blessing, that curvature, that hidden hemisphere—if we could take it all in at once, why move? and it may be the reason why one-ways cost the same as round-trips. They're all round-trips, some are just diced up in smaller chunks. (Kirn 2001: 295)

There are indications in the final chapter that Ryan has returned to the starting point of his life journey in a metaphorical sense, as well. Movement through space begins to seem pointless: "We move 'over there,' which feels like the same place and wasn't, to my mind, worth the whole upheaval, emotional and physical, of getting to" (Kirn 2001: 240). Despite an ongoing effort to expand his active vocabulary, he now observes, "I'm back the way I started; single syllables" (Kirn 2001: 298). The circularity of Ryan's inner journey is further represented by the closing scene, in which he dials his own phone number. Upon hearing his own, previously recorded voice declare, "You're there," he responds "We're here" (Kirn 2001: 303). Steven Connor holds, in his cultural history of ventriloquism, that there is an "inalienable association between voice and space. [. . .] the voice takes up space, in two senses. It inhabits and occupies space; and it also actively procures space for itself. The voice takes place in space, because the voice *is* space" (Connor 2000: 12). Ryan's short conversation with his past self, in which he uses the spatial deictic pronouns "there" and "here," can be seen to overcome the spatial distance between "there" and "here," as well as the temporal distance between the moment of recording and the present. It also overcomes the disjunction between time and space by bringing together the temporal and spatial axes (there/here is connected to past/present), and it is at this point that Ryan finds himself in a metaphorical sense.

Dominant chronotopes within literary texts, Ladin argues, "define and limit the ways in which human character can exist in the narrative" (Ladin 1999: 223). At the end of his airplane odyssey, Ryan relinquishes

not only flying, but also his accumulated mileage, explaining that he no longer has any use for it. But he has identified himself with Airworld to such an extent that the reader is left to wonder if he can survive outside it. None of his future plans are realized: the management guru buys someone else's idea, Ryan's book manuscript turns out to be a plagiary, and MythTech headquarters have relocated to Canada. During his final flight, having passed the one-million-mile mark, he reveals that he suffers from increasingly frequent seizures, which he fears may be symptomatic of a serious illness (Kirn 2001: 302). He plans to drive to the Mayo Clinic alone, "in case it's not good news" (Kirn 2001: 302). While Sal Paradise in Kerouac's *On the Road* proclaims "the road is life" (Kerouac 1991: 211), Ryan's journey ends with the possibility of death.

Conclusion

Up in the Air suggests that travel is no longer linear and teleological; it results not—as in more traditional road narratives—in arrival, discovery, opportunity or escape, but merely in the accumulation of abstract miles. Early in the novel, Ryan, recalling a cross-country car trip with a Kerouac-reading girlfriend, makes the following metafictional comment on the road genre:

> I wanted to show her something she hadn't seen. I failed. Nothing there. That America was finished. Too many movies had turned the deserts to sets. [. . .] And everywhere, from dustiest Nebraska to swampiest Louisiana, folks were expecting us, the road-trip pilgrims. They sold us Route 66 T-shirts, and they took credit cards. [. . .] The real America had left the ground and we'd spent the summer circling a ruin. Not even that. An imitation ruin. (Kirn 2001: 43)

This passage, which suggests that the trope of the open road has been exhausted, replaced by simulacra, is preceded by the assertion that the air "is the place to see America, not down there, where the show is almost over" (Kirn 2001: 42). By the end of the novel, however, Ryan has come to view air travel, as well, as incapable of offering anything new to the traveler. Although he initially sees the non-place of Airworld as a refuge, he grows disillusioned with it over the course of the narrative, concluding that it is subject to the same commercializing forces which have exploited space on the ground and made time a commodity.

The final chapter of *Up in the Air* alludes to the fable genre, used by Bakhtin to exemplify his concept of the road chronotope. In this passage, Ryan contemplates an imminent visit with his relatives and wonders, “Will we last a whole week together? We just might. Everyone’s exhausted. Exhaustion soothes. It’s a fable now, anyway. We’ve used up our real substance. In a fable, you find new resources, new powers. Pick an animal, then take its shape” (Kirn 2001: 302). In Kirn’s novel, it is above all the road chronotope which is transformed. “The road is always one that passes through *familiar territory*,” Bakhtin writes, “and not through some exotic *alien world* [. . .] it is the *sociohistorical heterogeneity* of one’s own country that is revealed and depicted” (Bakhtin 1981: 245). By depicting a world in which time and space lose their intrinsic connectedness, *Up in the Air* does the opposite, offering a bird’s eye view of the commercialization and reification of American society, where identities are lost and the experience of travel no longer carries meaning.

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“What are you?” Fear, desire, and disgust in the Southern Vampire Mysteries and *True Blood*

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Among the monsters that populate written pages, stages and large and small screens, the figure of the vampire, often both dashing and terrifying, most clearly evokes the emotions fear and desire. The two guiding emotions are particularly closely intertwined in the many contemporary vampire narratives which are based in the romance genre rather than in traditional horror. The intermingling of the emotions occurs on two levels: inside and outside the text itself. Focusing on the latter—the reader, viewer and listener’s affects—Jeffrey Cohen argues that the “escapist fantasies” the monster provides as well as the “fantasies of aggression, domination and inversion are allowed safe expression in a clearly delimited and permanently liminal space” (1996: 17). This space, then, is figured not as the monster itself, but as the audience’s temporary experience. Significantly, many discussions about vampire texts follow in this vein, with focus on what the monster represents to the listener, reader or viewer and seeing the experience of the text itself as a site of emotional meaning. In what follows, interest is rather in how fear and desire are mapped onto a liminal body, and how characters voice these emotions and act according to them.

Whereas vampire representations of earlier time periods may have provoked fear and repulsion simply because “vampirism as such was evil” (Carter 1999: 27), there is a noticeable trend in contemporary narratives to represent vampires as attractive, romantic heroes. These sympathetic vampires, rather than being based on the Dracula figure, are modeled on the early 19th-century Romantic instantiations created by John Polidori and Lord Byron, and they have ties to the glamorous vampires as envisaged by Anne Rice (Williamson 2005: 29-50). In contrast to Rice’s novels, however, romance and love between human and vampire (rather than between vampire and vampire) are now in focus. Such is the case in Charlaine Harris’ as yet unfinished Southern Vampire Mysteries series (2001 —), and Alan Ball’s adaptation in the hitherto five seasons of the HBO-series *True Blood* (2008-2012). Despite

differences on the plot level, the adaptation is fairly faithful to the novels in terms of setting and, with a few exceptions, characterizations. In the following discussion written and visual text will often be seen as forming one, more or less cohesive, text world, which will be seen in relation to other, past and contemporary, narratives to tease out the vampire's function, particularly in the depictions of fear and desire. Of interest is also how the emotion of disgust is figured in the text world, both in relation to the seeming paradox inherent in human attraction to the revenant, and to the vampires' reaction to the prolonged contact with humans in the supposedly multicultural society.

Rather than seeing the affects as automatic responses, thus reading both vampires and human characters from a psychological angle, the emotions will in what follows be approached from the political cultural studies perspective as outlined by Sara Ahmed in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Ahmed maintains that "emotions should not be regarded as psychological states, but as social and cultural practices" (2004: 9) and that they are shaped by repetition. Rather than being biologically unavoidable responses inherent in the subject, fear, desire and disgust stem from the tradition with which the object (the vampire in this case) has been represented within a culture. That is, emotions are "shaped by contact with objects, rather than being caused by objects" (Ahmed 2004: 6). To apply highly political theories to popular culture is not intended to in any way trivialize the important claims Ahmed makes regarding racism, but rather to show how patterns reoccur and have similar effects in the studied text world. Readings of how different forms of Othering occur throughout the SVMs and *True Blood* thus illuminate how emotions are evoked in the meeting between human and monster.

Bodies that fear

Through its literary and cultural history, the figure of the vampire has reflected various anxieties and fears connected to the invasion of either bodily or geographical space (or commonly, both). In the contemporary "post-colonial, post- or trans-national world," such as the one depicted in the text world, the vampire is increasingly useful in reflecting "anxieties [which] focus on the struggles of integration rather than expulsion" (Muth 2011: 76). No longer threatening the outside borders of the nation, the vampire is figured as already part of it, which entails, on the part of

humans, different, albeit still fearful, forms of encounters. One of Ahmed's central arguments is that both individual and collective surfaces are made in the meeting between bodies; meetings which create rather than enforce already existing boundaries. She suggests that we "think of the skin as a surface that is felt only in the event of being 'impressed upon' in the encounters we have with others" (Ahmed 2004: 25). It is only when surfaces are felt that a distinction can be made between self and Other. In contrast to the majority of traditional vampire narratives, where the nature of the beast is initially unknown and only gradually revealed to the human protagonists, intermittent meetings between humans and vampires strongly emphasise the difference between an individual self and an Other, but it is seldom the case that humanity at large becomes aware of the supernatural existence.[1] That is, the body of the community as such is rarely impressed upon by the body of the vampire group. In contrast, vampires in the Southern Vampire Mysteries and *True Blood* are a known reality: the "legally recognized undead" (Harris 2001: 1). The outing of the new minority is a fairly recent, global event, the "announcement … made in hundreds of different languages, by hundreds of carefully picked personable vampires" (Harris 2003: 5). The temporal contact between humans and vampires is limited, but it still entails an ontological shift by which surfaces of bodies are strongly felt, and boundaries between self and Other erected.

In the meeting between bodies in the text world, differences abound, but vampires also attempt to emphasize potential similarities, both positive and negative, to forge links between themselves and humans. The new minority group insists on vampirism as being brought on by a virus, which aligns them with other groups whose conditions are involuntary. Issues of free will and choice, rather than traditional vampiric determinism, forge another link and are predominantly

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[1] In these types of narratives, the process of uncovering the vampire's true nature often constitutes the main plot, and there are many contemporary texts which reiterate it. Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula* (1897) and Joel Shumacher's film *The Lost Boys* (1987) can be mentioned as examples of texts which dwell at length on the identification of the monster and its weaknesses and strengths. In narratives contemporaneous with the text world considered here, and with a similar focus on romance, such as Stephenie Meyer's Twilight-saga and L. J. Smith's *Vampire Diaries*, the human protagonists have an awareness of vampires, but the supernatural element is kept secret from the larger community.

connected to the possibility of mainstreaming: subsisting on the synthetically produced Tru Blood. The blood substitute radically decreases the vampiric threat, and comparisons with human atrocities further the image of the unharmful Other. In *True Blood,* vampire spokesperson Nan Flanagan appears on *Real Time with Bill Maher* and when asked about vampires' alleged "sordid history of exploiting and feeding off innocent people," turns the tables to human history. "We never owned slaves, Bill, or ... detonated nuclear weapons" (2008: 1.1 "Strange Love"). These moves align the text world with other narratives in which the "'good vampire' is defined as such by his or her interaction with humanity," and in which fear and hate caused by the human characters' meeting with the Other is "called into question by measuring vampiric 'evil' against the evil perpetrated by humanity" (Carter 1999: 165-66). In the text world there is thus a conscious strategy on the part of the vampires to on the one hand downplay the threat they pose and represent themselves as victims, on the other to relativize the threat they do pose.

The global community has reacted in various ways to vampires coming out and illustrated different levels of tolerance of the new minority. Sookie Stackhouse, the (initially) human protagonist and narrator in the novels, reports that the US has "adopted a more tolerant attitude" than many other nations, but it is also established that regional differences play a part in what reactions are seen as permissible (Harris 2003: 6). The sociocultural Othering of the vampire in the American South, and then particularly the small Louisiana town of Bon Temps, plays into the long, although by no means unique, history of segregation of various minority groups.[2] Reading vampire texts through the lens of regional fiction, Evangelia Kindinger suggests that the "deviance" of the regional setting, seen in relation to the supposedly heteronormative and cohesive larger American nation, "is enhanced and elaborated on through the presence of supernatural and monstrous characters" (2011: 17). Vampire presence in the regional setting, and the emotion of fear evoked

[2] Maria Holmgren Troy reads *True Blood* in conjunction with Jewelle Gomez's *The Gilda Stories* (1991), parts of which are also set in the American South, arguing that very particular aspects of the past, such as slavery, are usefully illuminated through the vampire protagonists' position "between memory and history: [they are] remembering subjects as well as embodiments and transmitters of the past" (2010: 71).

in human/vampire contact, highlight a long history in which differences between individuals have been enforced. Bon Temps, where inhabitants keep close tabs on each other and have a shared history which locks people into roles,[3] is represented as “less tolerant” of sexual and ethnic minorities than cosmopolitan cities (Harris 2002: 9). Ignorance and homophobia have free reins when customers at Merlotte’s bar accuse the gay cook Lafayette of contaminating their food with AIDS (2008: 1.5 “Sparks Fly Out”). When African American Tara suggests to policemen that she is in a relationship with a white man, she reflects that: “Race is still a button you can push” and that “mixed couples” are frowned upon despite the changing times which see an increasing number of vampire/human relationships (2008: 1.4 “Escape from Dragon House”). Discourses of racial segregation and sexual prejudice thus work as a backdrop to fearful feelings towards vampires. Reactions to the new minority group in many ways mirror previous structures, evoked by long histories of contact between bodies, and reiterated by those who have something to gain from hate and fear.

Despite these tensions and prejudices, human inhabitants come together in the face of approaching disruption from the outside. As Ahmed discusses in relation to the emotion hate, the creation of a cohesive community is dependent on individuals’ love for something (a nation, an idea) in relation to which other subjects’ “‘unlikeness’ from ‘us’” identifies Others (2004: 44). Despite differences in sexuality and skin colour, the common denominator in the text world becomes humanity and a sharp contrast forms in relation to the non-human (or used to be human). The threat to the temporarily cohesive community, the shared space, is often figured “as a border anxiety: fear speaks the language of ‘floods’ and ‘swamps’, of being invaded by inappropriate others against whom the nation must defend itself” (Ahmed 2004: 76). In *Dead Until Dark* this anxiety is verbalized by a lawyer who states the necessity of “a wall between us and the so-called virus-infected. I think God intended that wall to be there, and I for one, will hold up my section” (Harris 2001: 264-265). The metaphorical wall is intended to shield self from Other, same from different, and to avoid the vampiric

[3] See for example Detective Andy Bellefleur’s struggle with his professional role due to “the old connections, the shared high school, the knowledge of each other’s family” (Harris 2001: 87-88).

body impressing upon the human. The stress on sections being upheld by individuals also works towards the idea that the protection of the human community is a joint effort.

The fear of the Other articulated on collective levels in the text world is aptly illustrated through attitudes expressed by members of the Fellowship of the Sun, an organization which consistently stresses an oncoming threat and consequently "works to secure the relationship between [the] bodies" of self and Other (Ahmed 2004: 63). Focusing on killings allegedly perpetrated by vampires, the Fellowship maintains and kindles the image of the vampire as a "bloodsucking abomination" (1:12 "You'll Be the Death of Me") and it is described as being to vampires, "[w]hat the Klan was to African Americans" (Harris 2002: 104).[4] Its leader uses a Christian rhetoric arguing that "hating evil is really loving good" (2009: 2.3 "Scratches") and repeatedly comes back to this binary with good, predictably, connected to light and the sun, and evil to darkness and night. The military approach of the Fellowship's boot camps and the stress on obedience emphasize the border anxiety and in time develops into a full out war scenario, exposing the hypocrisy of an organization which on the surface stresses peace and the importance of doing God's work.

Through both individual and collective reactions, characters in the text world illustrate the social and cultural practices which produce and reproduce a fear of the Other. The human characters have previously, in Ahmed's terminology, felt their skin as a surface in relation to other minority groups, but their past, shared history has also meant that their attitudes because of the sociopolitical climate need to be hidden. The character Maxine Fortenberry provides a succinct example as, even though full of contempt for a whimsical array of demographics, such as Methodists, Catholics and ladies who wear red shoes, she is also hateful towards African Americans. Racism is the only form of hate she tries to hide, with the line "hush, that's a secret," and her reason for her emotions is age-old: "That's how I was raised up." The personal history cited here is illustrative of the social and cultural practice by which she has been instructed to hate African Americans, but she is not ignorant of the

[4] In the fifth season of *True Blood*, the KKK, which here functions as an analogy, takes concrete shape. In response to increasingly violent vampire attacks, a local Bon Temps Chapter forms.

changing times making statements to this effect impermissible. Her view of vampires, that they are "wrong, wrong, wrong [and] devils" is on the other hand not an emotional reaction she strives to hide (2009: 2.9 "I Will Rise Up"). For Maxine, like the lawyer and the Fellowship of the Sun, the difference, not in degree but in kind, between human and vampire makes for a more accepted outlet of emotive, hateful expressions.

Romance, deadness and danger

Cultural and social constructions of Otherness are central even in contemporary vampire narratives which focus on relational, romantic attachments. What is different in these texts can also be perceived as deeply attractive, or even be a prerequisite for this attraction in a culture in which outsiders (in some contexts) are less stigmatized. As Milly Williamson argues, the contemporary vampire "has become an image of emulation [offering] a way of inhabiting difference with pride, for embracing defiantly an identity that the world at large sees as 'other'" (2005: 1). The main vampires in the text world, Bill Compton and Eric Northman, are depicted as objects of love and desire, but simultaneously as very different. They can be labelled "heroic antagonist[s]," the oxymoron signaling characters that are simultaneously "admirable and subversive" (Heldreth and Pharr 1999: 1). Romantic conventions influence how these heroic antagonists are portrayed, but also how Sookie is placed in relation to them. In contrast to other human characters in the text world, Sookie has expanded knowledge and abilities to assist the vampires in various ways. The romance staples of overcoming odds, of portraying the human character as able to disarm potential threats because of attraction or love, and of depicting her as extraordinary thus work to stress not only why Sookie is drawn to the outsiders, but why they are drawn to her.

The attraction between Sookie and the main vampires also hinges on the depiction of her as an outsider. The novels' first-person perspective and the initial voice-over in the TV-series, along with a continuous focalization, establish that Sookie is the character inhabiting the normative role. In a fictional world increasingly populated by supernaturals of various kinds, she is initially the human touch stone, with a liberal attitude to the marginalized, non-human groups she comes

into contact with. Further, she is characterized as relatively open-minded about ethnicity and sexuality, yet she displays human (perhaps familiar) shortcomings in some of her views.[5] But Sookie is also literally open-minded in that she has access to other people's thoughts. Her telepathic gift enables her to overhear bigoted opinions, demeaning views about herself, and secrets that people have no desire to have known. In the text world there are few stereotypical traits and no cultural script governing attitudes and reactions to telepaths, arguably making Sookie into one of the main sources of fear. The question "what are you?" is not, as would be expected, asked of vampires (or even the lesser known supernaturals in the text world), but rather, and repeatedly, of Sookie herself.[6]

Sookie's ability, or "disability" as she characterises it, along with the fact that she is revealed as part fae, place her in a marginalized position and make it difficult to unreservedly read her as the norm (Harris 2001: 2). She is considered (both by others and herself) as an aberration and is repeatedly referred to as a "freak" (Harris 2001: 217; 2002: 60). Her and her family's struggle with her Otherness has given rise to feelings of embarrassment and shame (see e.g. Harris 2001: 51); emotions which naturalize her gravitation towards other outsiders. Ahmed states that shame can be read as "*the affective cost of not following the scripts of normative existence*" leading to an individual seeking to "enter into the 'contract' of the social bond" (2004: 107, original emphasis). Sookie enters into one kind of social bond whereby the vampires offer a sense of togetherness, and inclusion in the vampire community offers a release from the shame since the scripts of normative existence in their company is substantially rewritten.

The friendly, romantic or erotic appeal of the vampires' Otherness may seem at odds with the fact that they are dead (or undead) and that the meeting between human and vampire bodies should produce disgust rather than desire. Drawing on Julia Kristeva's discussions about abjection, Ahmed suggests that what is perceived as disgusting is not alien to the subject: "what threatens from the outside only threatens

[5] Especially in the Southern Vampire Mysteries where the reader is privy to her thoughts, it is made clear that she is quick to jump to conclusions, sometimes based on peoples' actions, sometimes because of her lack of exposure to ethnic and sexual difference.

[6] See for example *Dead Until Dark*, where Bill asks this question at least three times (Harris 2001: 13, 27, 32).

insofar as it is already within" (2004: 86). The corpse, or the revenant in this case, is therefore likely to provoke disgust as it is the negation of the living body. In the text world, however, the issue of deadness is initially downplayed by the suggestion that vampires suffer from a mysterious virus. Rather than being dead, they simply manifest allergic reactions to, for example, sunlight, garlic and silver. But this version, or "propaganda" as Sookie's employer Sam terms it, becomes untenable as additional categories of supernaturals make their appearance in Bon Temps. Sam (himself a shape shifter) concludes that, "I'm sorry, Sookie. But Bill doesn't just have a virus. He's really, really dead" (Harris 2001: 252). Sookie later reflects that she has been "happier [believing that] Bill had some classifiable illness" (Harris 2002: 63), but his deadness does not make her terminate the relationship. Genre plays an important part in changing attitudes because with the general change from horror to romance comes a shift in focus from the vampire as signifying the dead body to it representing a figure of immortality. Rather than representing "deadness or dead things" the contemporary, romantic vampire trope represents "death as transformation" (Bosky 1999: 218-19). Sookie's own position as an outsider explains why she would desire transformation and the text world's partial grounding in traditional romance downplays potential disgust in favor of an idealization of the immortal state.

Even as threats are diminished, and as deadness shifts to signal a sought-after transformation, there are tendencies in vampire fiction to continue the stress on potential dangers. In connection with audiences, Fred Botting argues that a lingering "negativity suggests a reason for [their] continued emotional investment in figures [even when] horror cedes to romance, and revulsion to attraction" (2008: 4) and the same can be maintained regarding characters in the text world for whom the emotions presuppose each other. In their initial meetings, Bill himself draws attention to the lingering traces of negativity, and tries to instil fear in Sookie. "Vampires" he says, "often turn on those who trust them. We don't have human values, you know" (Harris 2001:13). In connection with another human/vampire couple, Sookie reflects that Hugo "might be in sexual thrall to Isabel, he might even love her and the danger she represented" (Harris 2002: 125). In a situation featuring Hugo in *True Blood*, he reflects that: "It's addictive, isn't it? To be desired by something that powerful" (2009: 2.7 "Release Me"). Similarly, Talbot,

another human, "liked that he had won the heart of Russell Edgington, a being who could kill easily, who deserved to be feared" (Harris 2003: 164). The very Otherness which comes into being when the meeting of bodies establish boundaries is here portrayed as a source of a powerful attraction. The human characters are singled out by Bill, Isabel and Russell; dangerous, extraordinary beings, which in turn means that the humans can be perceived as extraordinary too. The danger and lingering negativity are thus constructed both from the inside by the monsters themselves, and from the outside by humans, the latter construction serving to maintain and enhance the human's own desired apartness, and following similar lines as the romantic script.

Stereotypes, stickiness, and sympathy

The diversity of the literary vampire trope and the plethora of popular culture vampires in novels and on screens today necessitate in-text delineations of the specific vampire conventions at work, and of what stereotypes do and do not apply. Ahmed argues that fear is produced by "the repetition of stereotypes" (2004: 63), that is, to experience fear of what is approaching, the object drawing near has to have been perpetually (mis)represented. The stereotypical representation of the literary vampire involves various genealogies and strengths which are designed to Other the trope and establish the vampire as fearsome even at a first glance. But in many contemporary vampire narratives there are also tendencies to play with and subvert stereotypes to create unique representations. Subversions of this kind presupposes associations characters, readers and viewers have in common, however these come from a literary and cultural tradition which shifts and changes throughout history. As Cohen argues, "the undead returns in slightly different clothing, each time to be read against contemporary social movements or a specific, determining event" (1996: 5). With an eye to what each new incarnation is clothed in, the traditional vampire myths serve an important function. They become a backdrop to the new and enable discussions about what specific cultural moment this new is born into. This connects to Ahmed's idea of stickiness "*as an effect of the histories of contact between bodies, objects, and signs* […] what sticks 'shows us' where the object has travelled through what it has gathered onto its surface, gatherings that become part of the object" (2004: 91, original

emphasis). Even though the vampires in the text world are a reality rather than myth, the human characters' reactions and curiosity are influenced and aroused by traditional and contemporary vampire stereotypes; a varied history of figurative contact with the vampiric body. In a meta-textual sense, that is, the fictional characters are highly aware of other fictional texts, such as *The Addams Family* or *Interview with the Vampire* (Harris 2001: 101), or *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (2008: 1.3 "Mine"), and prone to draw conclusions based on these experiences. It is thus the history preceding the present—what the vampires concretely or symbolically have travelled through—which makes reactions in the now make sense.

Some often reiterated stereotypes are modified, which aligns the text world with general developments in vampire narratives. A.J. Grant describes 19th-century vampires as "theologically evil, having made an eternal pact with the devil […] morally evil, in the sense that they *intend* evil [and as resembling] natural forms of evil—earthquakes, floods, fire and lightning—because they strike randomly" (2011: 64, original emphasis). In contemporary narratives, on the other hand, the "theological framework is abandoned altogether" and with it "the power of crosses, rosary beads and holy water." Vampires have acquired a morality, and they no longer "strike arbitrarily" but rather find specific (and often not innocent) victims (Grant 2011: 65). The secularization Grant illustrates has the effect that the text world's vampires are not adverse to crosses or other religious symbols and many of them do not intend evil, but are rather represented as moral, conscientious citizens who aim for peaceful coexistence. In many cases where vampires choose human blood instead of the synthetic option, the randomness of attacks is eliminated as humans volunteer for thrills.

Other stereotypes are revealed to be true and they make vampires simultaneously vulnerable and threatening. The text world's vampires still have to sleep under ground or in coffins, they burst into flames in the sun, and stakes through their hearts are as effective as in the countless analogues in the literary tradition. On the one hand, these traits work to signal an enhanced Otherness, on the other, they render vampires vulnerable because they conform to the cultural tradition within which the trope has been represented. Human characters know about these limitations, and consequently know how to destroy the monstrous Others. Stereotypical vampire strengths that are retained in the text world

are the vampires' ability to manipulate minds and turn humans. Ahmed maintains that "fantasies [of fear] construct the other as a danger not only to one's self as self, but to one's very life, to one's very existence as a separate being with a life of its own" (2004: 64). Rather than a fantasy, the vampire's power to turn human into monster is a literal illustration of the self being subsumed, but the text world's vampires initially rarely use this ability. Bill is forced to do so once as punishment for having taken another vampire's (un)life, and during his centuries-long existence, Eric has only sired Pam. However, the human characters' fantasies of this fear have been perpetuated and reinforced by the repeated stereotype and consequently holds the possibility "to justify violence against others" (Ahmed 2004: 64). That is, although rarely literalized, the threat of turning is anticipated and used to unite the human characters against the Others.

Despite these potential and literal threats, the vampires in the text world conform to another stereotype, found in many contemporary narratives: the sympathetic vampire. Using Rice's tormented Louis as an example, Botting argues that the late 20th-century vampire is often depicted as "a solitary wanderer seeking companionship and security, intensely aware of his difference and fascinated by the frailty and mortality of the humans around him" (2008: 77). The representation of the romanticized outsider may, as noted, produce desire rather than fear, but the stereotype is similar to the fearsome vampire subverted in the text world, as in Bill's self-reflexive pronouncement: "I AM a vampire, I'm supposed to be tormented." Bill's torment, however, is not necessarily produced by a search for belonging, but rather by the blurred boundaries between human and vampire. Bill says: "When I was made one was forced to live outside society. As an outlaw, a hunter. Humans were prey and nothing else" (2009: 2.4 "Shake and Fingerpop"). The co-existence between different species portrayed in text world has confused the categories of hunter and prey and given rise to a postmodern identity crisis.

Bill is not the only vampire in the text world to voice this view. At the end of his undead existence, the ancient vampire Godric states that "I

don't think like a vampire anymore."[7] This lack of a stable identity has altered the perspective he has on the vampire species, and the identification with humanity leads to his view that: "Our existence is insanity […] We're not right" (2009: 2.9 "I Will Rise Up"). Godric is represented as an authoritative character, having lived a long life and executing power over large groups of vampires, but he is also characterized as a "renouncer" who has "betrayed" vampires and "allied himself with humans" (Harris 2002: 104). Like Bill's wish for a return to more clearly defined roles, Godric's condemnation of vampires as an aberration works to re-enforce the boundaries between human and monster. This tendency to question the blurring of boundaries and reclaim some of the vampires' monstrosity may be read as somewhat of a backlash to the increasingly sympathetic vampire representations in contemporary culture.

"We Are Vampire"

A backlash of a more concrete kind comes towards the end of the third season of *True Blood* as Russell Edgington rips the spinal column out of a news caster on live television, effectively undoing the careful PR strategy presenting vampires as unharmful neighbours next door. A terrified audience looks on as Russell, like Nan Flanagan in the first season, nods to the proclivities humans and vampires have in common. In this scene, however, the aim is not to forge links between vampires and humans, as Russell concludes: "in the end we are nothing like you. We are immortal." His attack has interrupted a news segment about the increasing support for vampire rights, through the work of the American Vampire League, and he finishes off by referring to their perpetuated smoke screens, asking: "Why would we seek equal rights? You are not our equals. We will eat you after we eat your children" (2010: 3.9 "Everything is Broken"). At this stage in the narrative arc, humans and vampires have lived in close proximity to each other for a long time, and Russell's attack illustrates a clear regression from the initial coexistence

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[7] The TV-series conflates two novel characters in the figure of Godric. As a renouncer, he corresponds to the character Godfrey; as Eric's Maker, he corresponds to the character Appius Ocella.

to a state in which humans are openly considered as beneath the vampires, albeit in this instance only by one individual.

But Russell is not alone in holding this view; on the contrary, a theme of hierarchies develops throughout the narrative and connects to Ahmed's discussions about disgust, an emotion which, in contrast to fear which can be produced also by a distance between bodies, "is clearly dependent upon contact" (2004: 85). A prolonged "relationship of touch and proximity between the surfaces of bodies and objects" may give rise to reactions which single out objects as "'lower' than or below the subject, or even beneath the subject" and allow for a distinction between "more or less advanced bodies" (Ahmed 2004: 85, 89). Several vampires voice views to the effect that humans are pets or cattle, and Eric tells Sookie that vampires "for hundreds, thousands of years have considered [themselves] better than humans, separate from humans" and that they have the same "relationship to humans as humans have to, say, cows" (Harris 2005: 214). Ideas of emotional refinement further this distinction between animals and higher beings. The vampire known as the Magister, for example, argues that "humans … are incapable of feeling pain as we do." Feeling pain could arguably be construed as a sign of weakness and as a vulnerability, but the Magister simultaneously states that the human incapability stems from their "quite primitive" state (2008: 1.11 "To Love is to Bury"). These statements all echo colonial and racist discourses through which groups are depicted as occupying different rungs on a developmental ladder, and where less advanced bodies produce disgust.

The move back to segregation between humans and vampires effectively undermines the text world's initially promising depiction of multiculturalism, but it is complicated at the very outset by vampire's attitudes to mainstreaming. Nicole Rabin (while focusing solely on the first two episodes of the TV-series' first season), argues that *True Blood*'s "critique [of] pluralist, post-race ideologies," depict vampires as threatening because they "are literally mixing blood within their bodies like multiracials" and that mainstreaming becomes a way of "passing" in the multicultural society (2010: n. pag.). While Bill initially appears to embrace mainstreaming not only in his dietary choices but in his conscious efforts to educate humans in vampire ways and share his knowledge of the past, several of his kind resist this approach. Eric, for example, keeps himself aloof, feeds on human blood with relish and

quips about Tru Blood that "It'll keep you alive, but it'll bore you to death" (2008: 1.9 "Plaisir d'amour"). A rogue vampire, not abiding by the strict rules of the minority community, emphatically states that he, and others of his ilk, have no desire to go to sports events and "disgustingly human … barbecues! We are Vampire" (Harris 2001: 152). In line with the new status for vampires as a legally recognized minority, this will to live apart, to enforce boundaries, is equated with the reactions of conservative humans. These, "the backward-looking undead," continuously strive for segregation and secrecy and regard positively "a return of persecution of their own kind" (Harris 2002: 106-107). Like human communities at the early stages of co-existence, this type of vampire needs antagonism to create a sense of togetherness amongst themselves. As Bruce A. McClelland argues, the resistance to assimilation can be construed as a fear of "the gradual disappearance of those cultural features that provide the vampire community (or any community, for that matter) with a sense of identity and cohesiveness" (2010: 83). It is only by being apart that the community can be united and the emotions of love and hate—effects of cultural processes rather than their starting points—are clearly linked to the formation of a particular group mentality. Both the backwards-striving vampires and organizations like the Fellowship of the Sun love their own kind and its supposed superiority, while hate and disgust for the Other and inferior surface with prolonged contact. Passing as human, that is, is depicted as problematic at the outset, laying the foundation for more violent outbursts of disgust at later stages in the narrative.

In Ahmed's discussions about multiculturalism, Otherness is crucial, but there are provisos attached to how it is to be maintained and acted out. "The others can be different (indeed the nation is invested in their difference *as a sign of love for difference*), as long as they refuse to keep their difference to themselves, but instead give it back to the nation, through … mixing with others" (2004: 134). The vampires' tendencies to withdraw suggest a violation of the multicultural contract. This narrative strand is at focus in the fifth television season when extremists within the vampire community isolate themselves, keep human beings as livestock in pens and turn to apocryphal texts in which "God is a vampire," thus leading the visual text down a dark path (2012: 5.10 "Sunset"). No longer constrained by mainstreaming limitations, vampires are instructed to feed off humans, to procreate (in the sense of indiscriminately turning

humans), and to assume what is seen to be their rightful place at the top of the food chain. Although several individuals resist this development, the cliff-hanger ending in which Bill, once the paragon of mainstreaming, seemingly turns into a vampire deity, suggests a continued plot development in which the initial promise of the multicultural society is revealed to be always already hollow.

Conclusion

As the fictional universe in both novels and TV-series expands with the inclusion of more and more varieties of supernaturals, it emphasizes that what is different is perceived as dangerous. Once the nature of vampires is established (or so it seems), along comes another category; a fairy, perhaps, or a goblin, and with it a new set of rules, myths and stereotypes to relate to. Ahmed argues that "[t]he more we don't know what or who we fear *the more the world becomes fearsome*" (2004: 95, original emphasis). As the focalizor of the text world, Sookie learns bit by bit, and the reader/viewer along with her, to relate to these new groups, but a telling quotation from the fifth novel illustrates that peace of mind does not necessarily come with expanded knowledge: "*If vampires exist, what else could be lurking just outside the edge of light*" (Harris 2005: 11, original emphasis). At this point, Sookie, and again the reader/viewer with her, knows that fearful reactions produced by the contact between human- and vampire bodies can be tempered by the realization that no two vampires are alike, but their mere existence still brings with it frightening possibilities of other Others appearing.

While emotions are not commonly discussed as forms of power, sustained close readings of texts show that the reiteration of affective terms, along with the depiction of how bodies are pushed together and pulled apart, do illustrate forms of social and cultural power. The political implications of "attending to emotions" in Ahmed's analysis reveal how larger discourses of racism structure and limit the movement of bodies in contemporary society and culture (2004: 4). In the case of the studied text world, power is initially connected to how vampires rhetorically are made fearful and hence marginalized and restricted by the human bodies that fear. Parallel to discourses of fear, the romantic discourse depicts these same bodies as desirable and attractive, also

because of their marginalization and the relief from societal norms their outside position can offer.

The vampire as a fictional construct has a long history and has come to stand for a number of fears and desires; culturally constructed and maintained by the repetition of stereotypes. Stereotypes are also featured in the text world, but with a handful of important modifications and subversions which on the one hand forge links with earlier instantiations of the trope, on the other illustrate a meta-textual, postmodern play with signification. Further, the oscillation of power, resting first in the hands of the human characters with the vampires as a minority group, and gradually moving into the grasp of the vampires with the increasingly pronounced differences between frailty and strength, clearly illustrates how the movement of bodies is policed and critiques the text world's initial promise of a multicultural society, with ample room for both the living and the undead.

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Paper-thin walls: Law and the domestic in Marie Belloc Lowndes' popular gothic

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Marie Belloc Lowndes was a prolific author, publishing over forty novels in addition to plays, memoirs and a large number of short stories spanning the first five decades of the twentieth century. Most of these are now largely forgotten. Despite her obvious popularity, evidenced by a significant number of film adaptations of her novels, Lowndes has not yet reached the radar of literary studies. Though the work of Lowndes features relatively regularly in anthologies and compilations of criticism of mystery and detective fiction, this rarely exceeds a few sentences and there is little scholarly work on her significance outside this limited sphere. With rare exceptions,[1] these brief mentions of Lowndes deal almost exclusively with her most famous novel, *The Lodger* (1913), which was initially filmed by Hitchcock in 1927 as *The Lodger: A Story of the London Fog*.[2] *The Lodger* was subsequently filmed by Maurice Elvey in 1932, John Brahm in 1944 and again by Hugo Fregonese in 1953 as *The Man in the Attic.* 2009 saw the most recent remake of *The Lodger* in David Ondaatje's adaptation. In this paper I read Lowndes' 'real crime' fiction as representing the domestic sphere as a place of almost supernatural uncanniness. The walls of the house here do not operate as armour against the outside world but instead are permeable and seem to encourage border crossings; the psychic partitioning off of the perilous outside world, which the architecture of the home strives to achieve, starts to crack and subside.

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[1] Jane Potter is one of these rare exceptions who looks beyond *The Lodger* in Lowndes' oeuvre by providing a reading of *Good Old Anna* (1917) in *Boy in Khaki, Girls in Print: Women's Literary Responses to the Great War 1914-1918* (2008).

[2] These brief mentions include works such as Great Women Mystery Writers: Classic to Contemporary, ed. by Kathleen Gregory Klein (1994) and Albert Borowitz's, Blood & Ink: An International Guide to Fact-Based Crime Literature (2002).

Focusing primarily on Lowndes' novels about murderesses, I interpret law in these novels as being aligned with a patriarchal moral code; as that which functions to reprimand female excesses of 'dangerous' sexuality. Law becomes not just the enforcement of legality, but that which exerts control over all areas of life in its additional regulation and policing of morality. In their function as the body empowered by the state to enforce (with legitimated 'strength' if necessary) the set of rules and regulations that are deemed necessary for social order, the police and the figure of the policeman become crucial to my argument. In Lowndes' psychological murder thrillers the boundaries of the domestic provide scant protection against the threat of law (often made flesh in the form of the policeman) which seeps (or makes his presence felt), in the house uninvited. Charlotte Perkins Gilman writes in *The Home: Its Work and Influence* (1903), that '[t]he time when all men were enemies, when out-of-doors was one promiscuous battlefield, when home, well fortified, was the only place on earth where man could rest in peace, is past, long past.' Despite this, she claims that 'the *feeling* that home is more secure and protective than anywhere else is not outgrown' (2002: 37-8). These thoughts from turn-of-the-century America can be seen to persist throughout the following decades in post-war Britain. Though the domestic can be read as a realm of comparative safety, it can simultaneously and paradoxically be read as a site of vulnerability and of danger. The boundaries between the domestic and the public spheres are not as distinct as they might initially appear, and in the fiction I examine there are multiple instances of the conflation of these two spheres. As external danger creeps inside the home so too does the very law designed to keep these forces in check.

Lowndes' body of work is vast and varied and is by no means limited in terms of genre; Lowndes published short stories and plays as well as romance and crime novels. Here I focus on three novels, *The Lodger* (1913), *Letty Lynton* (1931) and *Lizzie Borden: A Study in Conjecture* (1939). All three novels are at least loosely based on 'real-crime'. Though Lowndes repeatedly states that her novels are works of fiction rather than fact, they are nevertheless represented in a realist mode which sees the accused subjected to judge and jury. Murder here is firmly associated with the feminine. Even in *The Lodger*, the murderer

Mr Sleuth, the Jack the Ripper character, is decidedly feminised; death in Lowndes' fiction is centred in a very domestic space.[3]

The home as the fortress

The Lodger unavoidably inflects itself on readings of Lowndes' other works. In large part owing to the successful film adaptations, *The Lodger* has become virtually the sole representative of its author's labours and has been assured a continued readership as an upshot of its relatively regular republications. The *Times Literary Supplement* review of 1913 was indeed favourable: 'Comparatively guileless people – people who would take a pitiful teaspoon to a drowning fly – can appreciate a really good murder. A tinge of the morbid, some sensitiveness to what is known as "the creeps," must be theirs' (364). Elsewhere Lowndes states that she is 'mournfully aware that a good many intelligent people will not read [her] books because they are afraid they are going to be frightened or horrified. This is largely owing to the fame of *The Lodger,* which I admit does contain some horrible passages' ("Answers to Questions", n.p.). The *TLS* review of the novel confirms this, reporting that '[h]orror thickens into horror – probably *ad nauseum* for the queasier of her readers' (364). Whilst by today's standards *The Lodger* is fairly tame, Lowndes here anticipates the reality of her future works being dwarfed by the reputation of this one book.

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[3] Mr Sleuth is described as 'a strange, queer looking figure of a man' who 'was not like other gentlemen' (1996: 33; 34). He is repeatedly described as eccentric and exudes a sense of otherness. Whilst I do not wish Mr Sleuth's vegetarianism to become a proof of his effeminacy it is a point worth noting in the construction of his apartness: 'The perceived strangeness of vegetarianism allowed authors to indicate the otherness of characters, as with Rider Haggard's terrible Ayesha in his bestselling *She;* or the serial killer Sleuth, based on Jack the Ripper, in Belloc Lowndes' Edwardian chiller, *The Lodger*' (Gregory 2007: 26). As Mr Sleuth says to his landlady on being offered meat, 'A sausage? No, I fear that will hardly do. I never touch flesh meat, […] it is a long, long time since I tasted a sausage, Mrs. Bunting' (1996: 20). Sleuth's rejection of Mrs Bunting's domestic services such as cooking and cleaning also pertain to a sense of his own domesticity: I shouldn't want anything of that sort done for me […] I prefer looking after my own clothes. I am used to waiting on myself' (18).

The Lodger is, as Chris Steinbrunner and Otto Penzler describe it, '[a] psychological suspense thriller rather than a tale of detection, […] more a "why-done-it" than a "who-done-it"' (1976: 252). Though the novel, which was initially conceived as a short story, was inspired by real crime, Lowndes made it clear that she did not intend it as a factual account. She states that '[b]efore writing either the long or short version of *The Lodger* I avoided reading the contemporary records of Jack the Ripper's activities. When his crimes startled and horrified London I was not only very young, I was actually living abroad, so I only knew the story in a vague outline' ("The Novelist's Creative Mind", n.p). The story is centred around the London home of Mr and Mrs Bunting. In the novel, the Buntings, who are in financial crisis, rent out their spare rooms to a mysterious but gentlemanly stranger, Mr Sleuth, who knocks on their door in search of lodgings where he might also carry out what he claims are to be scientific experiments. Based on the case of Jack the Ripper, Lowndes' novel tells the tale of Mr and Mrs Bunting's gradual suspicion that their house-guest is in fact the infamous murderer. Both husband and wife are apprehensive about Mr Sleuth but they do not comprehend that they are both harbouring the same unease until they realise that Daisy, Mr Bunting's daughter from a previous marriage, has been left alone in the house with their lodger. The scene that concludes the novel is one of the few incidents that takes place outside of the house, in Madame Tussauds. Confronted with a party of policemen (upholders of the patriarchal law), who are being shown around the museum, Mr Sleuth believes that Ellen Bunting has tipped off the police about his identity as murderer and escapes through a side exit of the museum and fails to return to his lodgings; the reader is left with the assumption that Mr Sleuth is indeed the serial-killer known as 'the Avenger'.[4]

The Lodger is a London-based novel set in large part within the domestic sphere of the Buntings' home. Whilst the focus of the action in the novel is always brought back to the private sphere, *The Lodger* is concerned with the continual breaching of the domestic by the public world outside the house. As Laura Marcus asserts, in *The Lodger* '[t]he

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[4] It is interesting to note that Sleuth's name ('sleuth' meaning spy or detective) places him in the time honoured tradition that equates the figure of the criminal with that of the detective. Both detective and criminal are, in some respects, outside of the law.

action is thus divided almost entirely between the house and the sites of law, policing, and criminality – the Black Museum, with its "relics" of infamous nineteenth-century murderers, the Coroner's Court, and Madame Tussaud' (1996: xiii). This breaching of the safety of the home is something that Marcus emphasises:

> The traditional role of the butler is to guard the threshold of the house and to protect the inner sanctum, but for the ex-servants who let in lodgers the boundaries between inside and outside are no longer secured but crossed […]. Mrs Bunting's response to such transgressions of boundaries and spaces is to attempt to 'lock in', and thus to both guard and make safe, the danger that has entered from outside. (xii)

In *The Lodger* class becomes a major concern in setting out the boundaries of the domestic. The feminised domestic realm is associated with the lower class whilst the lodger, whose status remains unknown but who is apparently a gentleman, penetrates the tranquillity of the home. Daisy's suitor, the detective Joe Chandler, who has been placed on the Avenger case, represents the public sphere but, as an embodiment of the legal system, denotes the antithesis of the Avenger.[5] As Marcus affirms, Chandler 'also represents a Law that comes knocking and, like the lodger, cannot be kept out' (xiii). Both become symbolic of the breaking or the enactment of justice and law; notions that find themselves manifested in the newspapers which document the development of the Avenger case, the newspaper itself becoming another way in which public sphere manifests itself.

Initially, it seems that Mr Bunting at least welcomes the intrusion of the public into the private, even if Mrs Bunting does not agree. When the Buntings have to give up their newspaper in a money-saving effort Mr Bunting feels that '[i]t's a shame – damned shame – that he shouldn't know what was happening in the world outside! Only criminals are kept from hearing news of what is going on beyond their prison walls' (Lowndes 1996: 7). For him it is a distraction from his own troubles. Mrs Bunting is less keen to have these harbingers of bad news brought into her home. Whilst the husband feels a sense of entrapment within the domestic, the wife is keen to guard her home against the encroachment

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[5] Perhaps also, as the embodiment of what I later go on to discuss as an upholder of a patriarchal law, Chandler is Sleuth's inverse by virtue of his supposed manliness.

of the outside world. It is only when Ellen Bunting's suspicions about the identity of their lodger begin to weigh heavily on her mind that she actively seeks out news of the Avenger: 'Oddly enough, she was the first to wake the next morning; odder still, it was she, not Bunting, who jumped out of bed, and going out into the passage, picked up the newspaper which had just been pushed through the letter-box' (47). It is Ellen Bunting who has the initial inklings about Mr Sleuth and it is she who takes on the role of defender of the domestic sphere.

Despite her horror at the realisation that her lodger is liable to be a serial killer, Mrs Bunting's abhorrence is outweighed by her compulsion to guard her house-guest against the force of the law: 'To her sharpened suffering senses her house had become a citadel which must be defended; aye, even if the besiegers were a mighty horde *with right on their side.* And she was always expecting that first single spy who would herald the battalion against whom her only weapon would be her woman's wit and cunning' (Lowndes 1996: 77). The Buntings' home, though only a modest abode, is their castle and in it reside their wards. Mrs Bunting's feeling of duty towards her lodger outweighs her sense of obedience to the law. The Buntings see their home as a sphere that should be protected from the infiltration of law and the public world. Lowndes' narrator describes Mrs Bunting's fear of the law: 'Again and again the poor soul had agonized and trembled at the thought of her house being invaded by the police, but that was only because she had always credited the police with supernatural powers of detection' (175). To the Buntings, the law is a source of fear and an almost mystical force. Mr Bunting echoes his wife's sentiments: 'Bunting, like Mrs Bunting, credited the police with almost supernatural powers' (177). The police in *The Lodger* are very real but in the minds of the Buntings their power remains something of a mystery and with this lack of understanding comes a sense of anxiety. As Lowndes' narrator articulates, 'Londoners of Bunting's class [the class of ex-servants] have an uneasy fear of the law. To his mind it would be ruin for him and for his Ellen to be mixed up publicly in such a terrible affair' (182). While the Buntings' dread of the law is based in part on a very real and practical sense that any dealings with it could lead to a loss of respectability, these concerns are engulfed by a more intuitive trepidation.

The workings of the law are, to the Buntings, menacing by virtue of their appearance as part of some huge and almost monstrous machinery.

When Daisy's suitor, Joe Chandler, takes her father to the Black Museum, the 'regular Chamber of 'Orrors' (the place where murder weapons and objects associated with crimes are kept at Scotland Yard), Daisy senses this impression of the law as an almost ungovernable and autonomous entity: 'The moment she passed through the great arched door which admits the stranger to that portion of New Scotland Yard where throbs the heart of that great organism which fights the forces of civilized crime, Daisy Bunting felt that she had indeed become free of the Kingdom of Romance' (Lowndes 1996: 63). The buildings at Scotland Yard are the physical manifestation of this 'creature', this living being with its own beating heart. Mr and Mrs Buntings' view of the law as a kind of machinery which operates independently of its individual actors makes it a menacing spectre which might creep into their house unnoticed at any given moment. On hearing a tap at the door to their house the Buntings wonder whether it was 'possible that, in their agitation, they had left the front door open, and that *someone,* some merciless myrmidon of the law, had crept in behind them?' (191). These 'myrmidons', the brave warriors who are the loyal servants of law in Lowndes' novel, are held in the tide of this superior force. Even Chandler, though a family friend and the future husband of Daisy, is seen, to a degree, as part of this inauspicious mechanism. When Chandler goes to Mr Bunting asking for his daughter's hand in marriage Bunting fears he is about to confront him about their lodger. When he realises that this is not the case he is overcome with relief but nevertheless senses the potential threat that Chandler symbolizes: 'And, indeed, the relief was so great that the room swam round as he stared across at his daughter's lover, that lover who was also the embodiment of that now awful thing to him, the law' (184). Chandler's position is problematic for the Buntings because his presence in their lives is twofold; he is at one and the same time an impersonal representative of the thing they most fear and a personal friend who they are ready to welcome into their home and family. Chandler, being representative of both the public and the private, makes the boundaries of their home less secure.

The Lodger treats the law unsympathetically as a force to be feared. While it in no way condones the crimes of the Avenger it nevertheless expresses sympathy with the criminal hunted by this greater power. Part of this stems from the notion that whilst the criminal might take lives, the law exerts a similar power over life and death. Looking at the relics in

Scotland Yard's Black Museum, Daisy 'guessed that these strange, pathetic, staring faces were the death masks of those men and women who had fulfilled the awful law which ordains that the murderer shall be, in his turn, done to death' (Lowndes 1996: 65). The law is represented rather ambiguously in *The Lodger*; capital punishment is not portrayed as essentially unjust, but the novel expresses a typically conservative sense that perhaps justice in itself is terrible. There is a sense that human nature can be atrocious and that therefore justice has to be equally appalling.

Murder in the Wendy House

Letty Lynton, published eighteen years after *The Lodger,* is a further novel loosely based on a real-life murder. It was made famous by a 1932 film adaptation starring Joan Crawford and directed by Clarence Brown.[6] In the foreword to the novel Lowndes writes that '[a]lthough many readers will realise that the two chief characters of *Letty Lynton* were suggested by a famous Scottish murder trial, the writer wishes to make clear that this story is fiction' (1931: n.p.). Drawing on the Madeleine Smith case, which has provided inspiration for other works of fiction and film including Wilkie Collins' novel *The Law and the Lady* (1875) and Dorothy L. Sayers' *Strong Poison* (1929), Lowndes' aim was not to provide an accurate account of the actual events but rather to make a study of the motivations that might lead to murder. She writes in the foreword:

> Every memorable murder trial opens a window through which can be surveyed a section of a human ant-hill, suddenly isolated and exposed. Of all these people two, the victim and his supposed murderer, stand out with startling clearness; but the writer has always felt particularly interested in the subordinate, what may be called the accessory characters, who remain to the onlooker but dim and shadowy figures. And yet, some of them, at least, may be far more profoundly affected in their lives than even the chief actors in a drama, and this makes them, from the creative point of view, of absorbing interest to the novelist (n.p.).

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[6] Lowndes was not impressed with the film of *Letty Lynton.* As she writes in a letter to Alexander Woollcott, 'It seems so strange that the only novel of mine made into a real talking picture was *The Lodger.* I do not count *Letty Lynton,* for I am convinced (secretly) that that was only bought for a blind, for nothing could be more unlike the novel than the film that was called by this name' (Marie Belloc Lowndes to Alexander Woollcott, 1935).

Lowndes repeats this sentiment in a letter to Alexander Woollcott in which she responds to praise of her novel, stating that 'character is what interests me, not plot or environment' (Lowndes to Woollcott, 1930).[7] Though Lowndes claims that she is not interested in environment, as in *The Lodger*, the very domestic setting of the murder would suggest otherwise. My discussion of *Letty Lynton* here will focus on the movement of the site of murder to within the domestic sphere. Whereas *The Lodger* represents the beginnings of the border-crossing between public and private, *Letty Lynton* sees this threshold effectively dissolved. The eponymous protagonist of *Letty Lynton* embodies a dangerous and deadly femininity. Transgressing the bounds of the domestic serves as a moral rejoinder in this conservative popular work of fiction; such offenses are shown to be highly perilous for the perpetrator.

Letty Lynton narrates the story of 'Lovely' Letty Lynton, an upper-middle class eighteen-year-old girl who, finding herself restricted by the limitations of her privileged but dull home life, embarks on various trysts with men who, invariably, fall in love with her and desire her hand in marriage. The first of these is one of her father's employees, Maclean. He is followed by the Swede, Axel Ekebon, who is at first perceived by Letty to be a 'splendid looking, fair young man, [...] a true hero of romance in her eyes', and then finally by Lord Tintagel (Lowndes 1931: 49). Letty murders Ekebon by poisoning him with the arsenic that she obtains from her father's chemical works when the Swede threatens to hold her to her prior agreement to marry him whilst she is engaged to Tintagel. She is let off the crime on the verdict of 'not proven', but the reputation of her family is left in tatters by the controversy caused by the court proceedings. Maclean, her initial suitor (and the only character in

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[7] Lowndes goes on to write that '[t]he enigmatic character of Madeleine Smith has always puzzled me, and always I have meant to write a story about her. I have been a good deal in Scotland, and at various times I have met people who knew members of her family. The young woman, I can't remember her name as I have carefully avoided reading any record of the trial, who certainly loved Angelier, did go to the Smiths' house the day after his death, and undoubtedly told Madeleine what had happened. That was why Madeleine rushed off in a foolish aimless way to the Smiths' country house whence she was brought back to the unfortunate Minoch, to whom she was engaged. That fact has never been published, but was told me by someone who knew the Smiths' (Lowndes to Woollcott, 1930).

the novel who has definitive proof of her guilt), agrees to marry Letty and emigrate with her at the novel's conclusion. Unlike *The Lodger*, in which the protagonist's guilt is only (albeit strongly) implied, the reader is left in no doubt as to Letty's culpability as we directly witness her crime. Whilst Letty might appear to most of her acquaintances to be the model of innocent wholesomeness, we, the reader, know this to be a falsehood. In a *Times Literary Supplement* review from 1931 *Letty Lynton* is described as 'painful not because Mrs Belloc Lowndes, who has told it admirably, is among those who take pleasure in emphasizing what is painful, but because in her very willingness to distinguish human weakness from depravity she makes it clear that all is not well with a world which visits one and the other with the same penalty' (114). I recognise this lack of distinction in the punishment meted out for Letty's crime of murder, which turns out to be a mere telling-off for her social digressions rather than punishment through law.

Letty, in her deceitful virtuousness, is represented as otherworldly: 'Though it was a hot early September day, there was no hat on her pretty little head, and, as she moved among the rose bushes, clad in a flesh-coloured cotton frock, she looked like a beautiful nymph whom neither age nor trouble could touch – much less destroy (Lowndes 1931: 11). Physically, Letty epitomises an ideal of femininity to such a degree that 'a connoisseur in feminine beauty would have agreed that all Letty Lynton's "points" were perfect' (15). Being this epitome of the feminine, Letty apparently exerts an almost supernatural force over those who surround her. Even at the outset of the novel Letty is aware of this influence; she 'had learnt something of the almost miraculous power exceptional beauty confers on its fortunate feminine possessor. Not only did she attract almost every man she met; women too were softened and subjugated' (15). Letty appears almost ethereally as a timeless beauty, '[s]o different [...] from those bold, cocktail-drinking young minxes one hears so much about!' (15) Seemingly unpolluted by the supposedly lax morals of her contemporaries, Letty is in all her conventionally good and innocent guile, at first, an unlikely candidate for murderess.

In the *TLS* review of the novel it is noted that, '[h]ad [Lowndes] not dwelt on the commonplace routine of a sheltered life her catastrophe would have been less poignant' (1931: 114). It is this focus on the quotidian which makes Letty's actions exaggeratedly disconcerting and provide them with an added strangeness. Paralleling Letty's overt

femininity, the murder in *Letty Lynton* takes place in a rather playfully exaggerated and almost uncanny sphere of domesticity. Whilst in *The Lodger* murder takes place both outside the home and off the page, and we only hear the crimes reported after they occur, in *Letty Lynton,* the 'home' becomes the site of the crime. In *Letty Lynton*, the barn, also the scene of the previous secret meetings of the lovers, in which the murderess administers the fatal dose of arsenic disguised in hot chocolate, has been assembled so that it resembles, in miniature, the essence of domesticity. The barn which 'had been [Letty and her brother's] playroom in summer weather' is described as 'still retain[ing], inside, something of a nursery character' (41). Lowndes' narrator describes the building:

> About the centre of the barn, to the left, there stood a small cooking stove and, hung on to a board close to the stove, a row of tiny shining pots and pans. This miniature kitchen was shut off from the door side of the barn by a high six-leaved screen on which were pasted, and varnished over, all kinds of funny pictures, engravings, and photographs. [...] The farther side of the barn contained a queer medley of sofas, easy chairs, and heavy tables – all things which had been banished from Lee Stoke Place last year by the London decorator, and which Mrs Lynton had thought too good to give away. (41)

The mismatched household articles and various rejected items of furniture give the barn something of the eerie and otherworldly presence that Letty herself embodies. There is something rather artificial and conceited about the doll's house world in which Letty conducts her relationship with Ekebon, and Letty has a doll-like quality within this world. Susan Stewart's description of the secret at the centre of the doll's house illustrates well the sensation the reader of these novels gets on encountering the domestic sphere: '[o]ccupying a space within an enclosed space, the doll-house's aptest analogy is the locket or the secret recess of the heart: center within center, within within within. The dollhouse is a materialized secret' (1993: 61). The action within the barn too has the quality of a game; it has a fantastical and almost dream-like feeling. Running to her old nurse (still known to Letty by the childhood nickname of Squelchy), who is still in the service of the household, and holding tea parties, Letty is portrayed as a child still inhabiting a child's world.

In his essay 'The Uncanny' (1919), Freud discusses the linguistic particulars of the German term *das Unheimliche* (the uncanny) and its

peculiar conflation with its opposite. According to Freud, *heimlich* 'merges with its antonym *unheimlich*': 'The uncanny (*das Unheimliche,* "the unhomely") is a species of the familiar (*das Heimliche,* "the homely")' (Freud 2003: 134). Freud writes that the word *heimlich* 'belongs to two sets of ideas, which are not mutually contradictory, but very different from each other – the one related to what is familiar and comfortable, the other to what is concealed and kept hidden' (132). Julia Kristeva elucidates this phenomenon when she writes that, 'in the very word *heimlich,* the familiar and intimate are reversed into their opposites, brought together with the contrary meaning of "uncanny strangeness" harboured in *unheimlich*' (1991: 182). In the uncanny, the strange is harboured in a position of interiority to the familiar. The imitation of domesticity which the barn in *Letty Lynton* exemplifies can be perceived as an instance of the uncanny; it is at once familiar, in that it is apparently made up of the components of a home, and unfamiliar, in that there is something askew with its presentation. The fantasy world of this space is one that in childhood may have appeared playful and entirely commonplace, but it recurs in adulthood with a sinister aspect. In her analysis Kristeva explores the uncanny in terms of its temporality, writing 'that which *is* strangely uncanny would be that which *was* (the past tense important) familiar and, under certain conditions (which ones?), emerges' (183). It is in very much this sense that both the barn and Letty herself seem to be almost out of place in an adult world, and it is in this sense that we see an element of the Gothic creep into *Letty Lynton.*

However, Letty's defence against the outside world is not water-tight. In fact, the barn in which she has constructed her play-like world is literally porous. Her imaginary world is breached by reality when a gap in the wood of the barn allows an outside onlooker to witness one of Letty and Ekebon's meetings. This onlooker happens to be another of Ekebon's lovers, the daughter of his landlady at Napier Street. On suspecting Ekebon of unfaithfulness, Kate Roker follows him one evening to the barn:

> Putting out her hand, Kate found that there was a small hole or chink between two of the planks. Though she could see nothing, for the barn was in darkness, by pressing one side of her head towards the aperture, she could hear plainly all that the two standing in the barn, a few feet from where she herself stood outside, were saying. (Lowndes 1931: 81)

When later testifying in court to what could be crucial evidence in the murder trial, Kate's account is undermined because in the intervening time the crack in the barn wall has been repaired. Despite her culpability, it seems that forces are still at work to protect Letty from a guilty sentence.

Although there is not enough evidence to convict Letty of the crime, there is a sense that Letty gets her just deserts. After the trauma of the court proceedings, Letty finds her own and her family's reputation irrevocably broken; her engagement to Lord Tintagel is broken off and the novel ends with her marriage to Maclean imminent. Letty finds that the tables of power have turned on her. She has never been physically attracted to Maclean; '[w]hat had enchanted her had been the exercise of her power over a man who had always appeared to be both cold and extremely reserved' (Lowndes 1931: 20). By the end of the novel, however, Letty finds that her only possible course of action is to submit to him. Though 'Letty was a child of nature, and nature is predatory' (110), she finds herself ultimately ensnared

The reversal of the gendered power dynamics that occurs here is the culmination of a broader theme that runs throughout the novel, pitting the masculine against the feminine in a kind of battle of the sexes. For instance, although Ekebon is under the power of Letty, he still seeks to prove his dominance over his other lover, Kate. The narrator describes how in relation to this other woman '[t]here swept over him a violent, irrational wish to prove his mastery anew over her heart and senses' (Lowndes 1931: 46). Ekebon has a vehement and fierce desire to conquer Kate in a way that he is unable to do with Letty. Ekebon has a 'brutal desire to tame her, to bend her to his will' (85), which seems to be a reaction to his impotence in relation to his other lover. There is the suggestion throughout *Letty Lynton* that Ekebon's demise might be in part due to his effeminacy. In *Letty Lynton* it is the masculine which is aligned with the law and ultimately comes out triumphant having put feminine guile in its 'proper' place. In *Letty Lynton,* Letty is not punished by law, she is not convicted of murder, but, nevertheless, it is the legal and courtroom proceedings which provide justice for her moral 'crimes' aside and distinct from the crucial act of murder; the fact that she was behaving in what was seen to be an improper manner by meeting men by moonlight seems to be her more serious offence, or at least the offense for which she is punished. Nevertheless it is the enactment of the

courtroom process that sentences Letty to social ostracism. As Letty is shepherded into the courtroom there is a sense that it is as a social and sexual deviant rather than the murderess she truly is:

> A storing double-line of police men still form a blue hedge between which Letty and her escort have just hurried up the wide row of steps which lead to the high doors of the State Building. But by now those high doors are shut and bolted, and it needs but one uniformed man to shepherd the miserable little group along the broad passage broken by fluted columns. (204)

Whilst the police are there to protect the party from the baying crowds, the single policeman who steers them into the court represents a symbolic show of authority. The mob from which the police are protecting Letty represents the social order which has condemned Letty's behaviour and which is endorsed by the apparatus of the law. Though the building in which the proceedings take place is literally a centre of the law in that it is a tangible architectural manifestation of the concept—'the inquest is to take place in a huge hall, lit by a skylight, situated in the centre of the State Building, and known by its old name of Court-House' (Lowndes 1931: 204) —the building retains something of the domestic. The fact that the law has become conflated in *Letty Lynton* with social norms is further illustrated by the homely appearance of the court-room:

> [Letty] realises with a pitiful sense of relief, that the scene, that the scene round her is very different from that which she remembers having witnessed in the Assize Court. There is no grim judge in long red robes and grey-white wig, sitting up aloft ready to put on a black square of cloth which means the coming of a horrible death. Instead of a judge, Dr. Powell, the coroner of the district, with whom Lady Lynton and her daughter have always had a bowing acquaintance, is sitting in an ordinary arm-chair, with a table before him. (205)

Letty, the murderess, gets an embarrassing telling off rather than a criminal conviction or death sentence. Rather than law entering the sphere of the domestic it seems that the domestic has entered the sphere of law; either way, as in *The Lodger,* the two are most definitely conflated.

The doors are bolted but still the law seeps in

Lowndes' 1939 novel *Lizzie Borden: A Study in Conjecture* is written along a similar premise to *Letty Lynton*, providing a possible account of the actions and motives of the infamous 1892 Fall River, Massachusetts murder case in which Lizzie plays the role of key suspect in the murder of her father and stepmother. For Lowndes, the process of writing *Lizzie Borden* was a foray '[i]nto the dark secrets of motive [that] only surmise can penetrate' (1939: vi).[8] Whilst Lowndes' *Lizzie Borden* did not repeat the success of *The Lodger*, it still enjoyed a good reception. In a letter Flora Mervill wrote to Lowndes praising her work and claiming that '[a] friend of mine who lives at London Terrace told me that the lending library there had eight copies of "Lizzie" and that the book was so popular she had quite a time getting it' (Mervill to Lowndes, n.d.).

Lizzie, though certainly beautiful, is not the embodiment of female perfection that Letty is; nevertheless there are certain features of these protagonists which mean that we can read them as analogous. Although, at thirty-one, Lizzie is over ten years older than Letty, her story shares the backdrop of an overly restrictive domestic existence which means she is largely cut off from the broader society of her peers. Unlike Letty's loving father, Mr Borden is a tyrant in his home: 'Even his attachment to her, his wife, was a tyrannical attachment. […] He did not often quote the scripture, but when he did so, invariably when they were alone together, it was always some verse concerning the duty of a wife to submit to her husband' (Lowndes 1939: 131). However, despite this, Lowndes' Lizzie believes it is her stepmother who holds sway over the family. In the novel Lizzie's crimes are motivated by her attachment and

[8] Like other authors who have been attracted to the Borden case, for instance Elizabeth Engstrom in *Lizzie Borden* (1990), Evan Hunter in *Lizzie: A Novel* (1984) and Sharon Pollock in her play *Blood Relations* (1980), Lowndes does not seek to solve the crime but she does seek to 'offer a possible, even a probable solution' (*1939:* vi). Lowndes continues to write that '[t]his study in conjecture tries to relieve, by offering a credible solution, the staring that arises when the incredible has happened, and no reason can be found for it. For on the fourth of August, 1892, the incredible did happen. As was so powerfully pressed in the closing Argument for the Commonwealth, 'It was a terrible crime. It was an impossible crime. But it was committed…Set any human being you ever heard of at the bar, and say to them, "You did this thing," and it would seem incredible. And Yet it was done. It was done' (vi).

secret engagement to a man she believes herself to be in love with. In an uncharacteristic decision, Mr Borden sends his daughter away to Europe with a party of women. On this trip she meets and falls in love with the rather pathetic and dour Hiram Barrison. She realises, however, that her father will never let her marry this man who, like the man her sister was engaged to long before and was forbidden to marry, is in a rather unfavourable financial situation.

In a remarkably similar style to *Letty Lynton*, Barrison meets Lizzie secretly in a barn which is a very short distance from the house. It is here that the future weapon of murder is revealed to Barrison with a distinct sense of the Gothic as 'he noticed the glint of a moonbeam on what looked like an oddly shaped knife. But, as he stared down at it, he told himself it was the steel belonging to a handless axe' (Lowndes 1939: 106). Lizzie's stepmother is witness to Barrison, and then Lizzie, leaving the barn. She confronts Lizzie and threatens to tell her father for, as Lowndes' narrator reveals, 'Abby Borden had not lived for sixty-five years in this strange, and so called civilised, world, without becoming aware, even if unwillingly so, of certain curious and sinister facts concerning the part sex plays in the hidden lives of many women' (136). It is this idea of a potentially promiscuous sexuality that is at the heart of Lowndes' fiction; it is this that ultimately constructs the 'dangerous' femininity which must be curbed. The day after Lizzie and Barrison's secret meeting, when her stepmother reveals that she knows about this man, Lizzie violently kills both Mr and Mrs Borden in the house they share, using an axe from the barn. This is no 'unobtrusive' poisoning but a bloodthirsty attack which Lowndes depicts in a concise and measured yet gruesome manner. Though we never gain access to the inner workings of Lizzie's mind and motives are only implied, there is a clear link between the murders and the restrictions of Lizzie's home and family life.

Even when Lizzie is away from home on another continent, her American home continues to haunt her. Lizzie has her fortune told in Paris by Madame Pythagora (who reveals to Lizzie her more commonplace name of Ann Hopkins). Though the fortune-teller never divulges the fact to Lizzie, she sees a future disaster befalling her. Thus, it is the fortune-teller's house which, in its uncanny similarity to Lizzie's own, strikes dread into her heart. Lowndes' narrator tells of how, '[w]ith hesitating steps Lizzie followed the English-woman into a plainly

furnished bedroom which, oddly enough, reminded her or her own home' (1939: 52). Here 'Lizzie suddenly felt frightened. She longed to escape from this commonplace bedroom, and from this commonplace woman' (53). Though there is an ocean between this room and her own there is a sense of trepidation with which Lizzie unconsciously contemplates the home she is has temporarily left and is soon to return to. *Lizzie Borden* is, like both *Letty Lynton* and the earlier *The Lodger*, very much concerned with the boundaries of the private sphere. As Marcus writes:

> The most striking aspect of *Lizzie Borden: A Study in Conjecture* is not, in fact, the portrait of Lizzie, but the depiction of domestic space in the novel. The unhappy family members – and the asymmetry of father, stepmother, and daughter repeats that in *The Lodger* – turn themselves or are turned into prisoners inside their home. Belloc Lowndes gives us a house in which entrances and connecting doors are locked, but in which family secrets make themselves heard through the walls. (1996: x)

Gina Wisker, in describing the Gothic, writes that '[k]nowing what we fear, we know what we desire: safety, mother, friends. Our worst fears arise from dangerous domestic disillusionment […] The removal or undercutting of the dependable domestic is the stuff of horror' (2004: 106-7). The house, as it is described in the early pages of the novel, has something of the uncanniness that the barn possesses in *Letty Lynton*. Initially there is nothing peculiar about the house: it 'stood on the east side of the street, and was separated from the sidewalk only by wooden fence, in which there were two gates' (Lowndes 1939: 9). The first indication that the reader gets as to the slight oddities of the house is when Lizzie, approaching the door, 'proceeded to take out a steel ring on which were four keys, out of the pocket of her pretty pink dress' (9).

Though the house she grew up in is normalised in her own mind—'[t]o Lizzie Borden there appeared nothing strange in the fact that number Ninety-Two Second Street, while looking exactly like the other houses clustered round about it'—the house contains peculiarities which make it the ideal Gothic setting (9):

> There were three outside doors, and as to that there was nothing strange or unusual. But what to most people who were aware of it seemed very strange was that on each of these doors had been fixed an outside lock of a substantial make, and on the inside, a spring latch, and also a strong bolt. […] Even the doors to the barn and the cellar, where there was nothing of any value, were kept locked all day, as well as all night. (Lowndes 1939: 9)

As the Bordens' servant, Bridget Sullivan, ponders to herself, 'What a constant, unending source of trouble were all those locks and bolts and bars! Why couldn't the Bordens go on like other folk?' (169). Kate Ferguson Ellis writes that the eighteenth-century Gothic novel 'can be distinguished by the presence of houses in which people are locked in and locked out. They are concerned with the violence done to familial bonds that is frequently directed against women' (1989: 3). With its vast quantity of locks and bolts, the Borden house is like a prison. There are locks on both sides of the doors as if the Bordens are trying to shore up the domestic from the public, but this also serves to stop the interior seeping through the doors and escaping into the outside world.

Mr Borden had not only sought to exclude the outside world from his home, but also to manage and have control over the internal workings of his house by segmenting its interior. 'Even more strange, in some ways', than the locked and bolted doors, 'was a fact only known to the inmates' close friends. This was that the second floor of the house was practically divided into two parts, each part having its own set of stairs' (Lowndes 1939: 10). This home is not a home but a prison in which inmates have their own set of keys but are segregated from one another. It is not through force that the inmates of this prison conform, but fear that makes them self-regulate their own behaviour. Lowndes writes that '[t]here was a door between the listener's [Lizzie's] room and their room, but it was locked and barred. Locked on [Mr and Mrs Borden's] side, bolted on hers' (17). Lizzie too, though shut out of the other side of the house, is complicit in this division. Despite all attempts by both parties to shut out the other, noise could still pass between the rooms: 'The door between her room and theirs might be locked and bolted, but she could not but overhear a good deal the couple said to one another' (20). The boundaries that have been set up within the home are permeable in much the same way as the house is porous to the outside world. Though Mr Borden has attempted to make his home secure against the outside world, parts of it creep in. Just as Lizzie hears the goings on from her father and stepmother's side of the divided house, sounds that mirror the process in *The Lodger* are capable of penetrating the walls. Having just killed her victims, Lizzie hears joyous voices from outside which 'seemed to belong to another planet from that on which she was now living. Theirs was a simple, normal, everyday world, remote from the world where deeds of darkness and of secret cruelty might be committed without

remorse or even fear of discovery' (186). The world that Lizzie now inhabits, and arguably has always inhabited, is far removed from this place that exists on the other side of her front door.

The police and the law are one aspect of public world from which Mr Borden is seeking to shield his home. Though, as far as we are aware, Mr Borden is no criminal, he sees the police as a threat to his own sovereignty over the home. When some money goes missing from his desk, the police are called in but dismissed without a resolution: 'he intimated to the City Marshal that he did not wish the matter to be pursued further' (Lowndes 1939: 59-60). The police briefly feature at the end of the novel in the aftermath of the murders, but other than on these occasions mention of the law is largely absent from the novel. Just as Lizzie thinks only of her father's wrath, considerations of the law seem to be entirely missing from the page. This absence seems all the more glaring in light of the high-profile nature of the Borden case and Lowndes' focus on legal proceedings in other novels. Though in both *The Lodger* and *Letty Lynton* the notion of law is cast ambiguously, it is central to the plot in both instances. In *Lizzie Borden*, law is notably left out and the figure of the father, arguably the figure who has sought to exclude a more public law from his home, comes to bear instead.

Despite her fear of her father, in the aftermath of the first murder Lizzie re-enters the home which has been the scene of her brutal murders; she unlocks the door 'and lifting the latch, walked into the hall'. To Lizzie, the hallway she enters remains unchanged and the fact '[t]hat everything there looked as everything had always looked there filled her with a sense of dull surprise'. Lizzie knows, however, that 'behind the door of the living-room on her right everything was different from what it had always been, and in a sense presented what might be called an incredible sight' (Lowndes 1939: 184). Maria Tatar writes of the uncanny house that '[w]hether we are dealing with the marvellous legend, the fantastic romance, or the strange novel, it is knowledge that transforms the sinister habitation of supernatural powers into the secure haven of a home' (1981: 182). Tatar's sense of the uncanny originates in the mystery at the heart of the home. In Lowndes' thrillers, though a possible explanation of events is given, it is never given as knowledge, only as conjecture, and for this reason the home always remains unhomely. While none of the novels discussed here are explicitly supernatural, they retain their uncanniness as mystery always remains.

As Lowndes writes of the Lizzie Borden case in the preface to her novel, ‘the more we know what happened, the deeper the mystery’ as to why ‘Lizzie Borden killed her father and stepmother’ (1939: vi). The mystery here is essentially unfathomable. However much the mystery is impenetrable it is important to note that, in murdering her father, Lizzie has destroyed the personification of patriarchy and thus struck out at the male-dominated moral codes that weighed down on her.

The impenetrability of the concealed is what gives Lowndes’ fiction its distinctively Gothic tone. Furthermore, there is, as Tatar affirms, an intimate connection between the home and that which is kept secret. This becomes even more pertinent when considered in relation to the Freudian reading of the uncanny. Tatar explains:

> A house contains the familiar and congenial, but at the same time it screens what is familiar and congenial from view, making a mystery of it. Thus it comes as no surprise that the German word for a secret (*Geheimnis*) derives from the word for home (*Heim*) and originally designated that which belongs to the house. What takes place within the four walls of a house remains a mystery to those shut out from it. A secret, for the Germans in any case, literally ex-cludes others from knowledge.
> (1981: 169)

While in both *Letty Lynton* and, more exaggeratedly, in *Lizzie Borden*, we are witness to the crime, the motive always remains something of a mystery, just as the houses in which the murders occur appear uncanny. However, the susceptibility of the domestic sphere to the influences of the outside world means that we are able to catch stolen glimpses of the hidden; the very nature of the Gothic house with its indefinite threshold necessitates this. Both Anthony Vilder, who states that the house in the Gothic becomes uncanny through the fact that this ‘most intimate shelter of private comfort’ is subject to ‘the terror of invasion by alien spirits’ (1987: 7) and Homi Bhabha, who writes that in the uncanny the ‘border between home and world becomes confused’, affirm this tendency (1992: 141). Bhabha’s claim that, ‘uncannily, the private and the public become part of each other, forcing us upon a vision that is as divided as it is disorientating’, supports this argument (141). In Lowndes’ fiction, however, the transgression of this border means that the threat of law is ever present to punish those who overstep the bounds of proper domesticity.

Conclusion

In Lowndes' fiction the Gothic is manifested in a palpable way; her novels employ many of the genre's tropes such as suggestions of the supernatural, madness and concealed secrets. Most pertinently for this present article, the theme of the haunted house is one that recurs, implicitly but repeatedly, in Lowndes' novels. In Lowndes, the Gothic is tied up with notions of law and sovereignty in that it represents a female sphere saturated with repressed and dangerous sexuality which attempts to exclude the law with murderous results; the patriarchal law attempts to penetrate and make safe this sexuality. Drawing on Judith Walkowitz's argument that cultural representations of the Ripper case exclude the narrative of the female, Elyssa Warkentin argues that such early narratives provided a space for moralization. As Warkentin writes, 'the cultural narrative or "modern myth" of the Ripper's crimes developed as a warning for women: if they transgress the margins of traditional, domestic femininity, they risk incurring the ferocious punishment meted out by the Ripper. Thus the Ripper narrative is one means of controlling potentially subversive female behaviour' (2010: 38). Though Lowndes' *The Lodger,* functions in much the same way, her later novels too serve as moral warnings against the transgression of the domestic sphere.

With the exception of *The Lodger*, Lowndes writes about murderesses (and this is typical of her broader oeuvre), usually upper-middle class women who falsely envisage murder to be the way out of the restrictions of their class and gender. These restrictions usually manifest themselves in the form of seemingly unfathomable romantic entanglements. Ultimately I argue that, in Lowndes' work, though it exists to enforce a patriarchal moral code, law and order is privileged over the law-breaking and destructive power of the female protagonist. Lowndes' protagonists are repeatedly engaged in attempting to thwart such domination at the hands of a repressive system of male authority. Lowndes represents a rather conservative approach whereby positively endorsed notions of order and justice are symbolised in terms of the masculine. The notion of law in Lowndes is articulated in terms of a totalising system of thought in which notions of justice are always fed back to the legal system. In Lowndes' fiction, the absence of a controlling external form of law with which to govern behaviour is disturbing. Incapable of self-policing, the individual as represented in

Lowndes' fiction is an unpredictable entity whose dangerous sexuality must be curbed by an external set of rules and regulations.

Though the scope of this project was small in attempting to amass three of Lowndes' novels by recourse to a shared thematic concern with the triangle of law, domesticity and sexuality, my hope is that it will contribute to a revival of interest in Lowndes. The vast body of fiction that was voraciously devoured by Lowndes' contemporary reading public has much to add to an understanding of a genealogy of the popular gothic. Moreover, as artefacts of cultural history, Lowndes' novels have a great deal to reveal about rather conservative conceptions of sexuality and morality. In addition to her portrayal of crime and punishment, feasibly Lowndes intended her novels to contribute to a self-regulation of society that might control a potentially 'unseemly' promiscuity that was in her mind 'at large'.

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Genre theory: A horn of plenty for EFL learners

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Abstract
The present article focuses on genre theory and its pedagogical use in the EFL classroom. The functional nature of language is discussed. The article emphasises that people use language to accomplish various communicative and social functions. By incorporating genres into the EFL classroom, learners become aware of how language works in context. Learners concentrate on texts as discourse rather than on their content. It is demonstrated how specific genres, job interviews in particular, can be identified through structural organisation and the various linguistic features within it.

1. Introduction

English language teachers tend to interpret *grammar* from two perspectives, namely a mental system which is a cognitive constituent of a human brain (Chomsky, 1980) and a set of rules about English delineating how it is literally employed (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik, 1985). The first is known as *mental grammar* and the second as *descriptive grammar*. Both positions are very important in language instruction, yet they allow for quite a narrow scope of linguistic analysis. As applied linguistics research reveals (Halliday, 1985; Martin, Matthiessen, & Painter, 1997), there is a third approach, *functional grammar*, which should be more frequently taken into consideration by EFL practitioners. The latter perspective pertains to the grammatical composition which is grounded in the functional concept of the nature of language.

This article will argue that the genre theory, a component of functional grammar, is of great value to EFL students. There are several reasons for such a forthright statement. Firstly, the theory of genre reflects communicative language teaching in that it allows for the analyses of both the formal and functional facets of language in social and cultural contexts. The systemic correlations between forms, functions and meanings are systematically highlighted, as are “language, content, and the context of discourse production and interpretation” (Paltridge, 2001: 2).

Secondly, the theory of genre promotes the teaching of language through authentic situations or functional language activities. Learners have a chance to actively practise doing things with language. The learners are fully aware of their roles as receivers, processors and producers in the communicative process. Learners should be encouraged to regularly respond to diverse communicative situations. Such interaction will provide them with the skills and information that are required for successful communication in different discourse communities (Swales, 1990).

Thirdly, the close relationship of the theory of genre with the theory of register is also helpful in text-based or literature-based English instruction. Both theories can help learners to distinguish between various literary genres as well as perform critical text analysis, demonstrating how meaning is created through language in literary texts and how ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings are realised in texts. Thus, Hyland's (2008: 543) conviction that "genre is one of the most important and influential concepts in literacy education" is well-grounded.

Fourthly, the theory of genre together with the theory of register greatly contribute to the teaching and learning of productive skills. Both theories emphasise that language is a social event. Language used either in the spoken or written modes means being involved in a social activity. The choice of words people make, types of clauses or sentences they construct and the kinds of texts they produce are determined by social reasons. Since speaking and writing are social practices, learners should be made aware that both skills are invariably linked to such social factors as power, gender, age and geographic location.

Fifthly, in ESP and EAP contexts, for instance, the genre theory can help students to learn to construct texts which are not only congruent with the nature, processes and socio-cultural contexts of speaking and writing in the target language, but are also in agreement with discipline-specific situations (e.g. English for business, English for tourism or English for medical professionals). The intricacies of writing business letters, application letters, business emails or discursive essays should be carefully discussed. Likewise, the final products, that is, texts as well as the contexts of their disciplines should be thoroughly investigated and reflected upon. The technical jargon in spoken activities should also be widely practised. If students' attention is consistently drawn to

similarities and differences among genres, they will be better prepared to generate texts in a large array of contexts. For more information on the place and role of genre theory in ESP and EAP contexts see Hyland (1990, 2004); Flowerdew (1993, 2000); Dudley-Evans (1995); Jacoby, Leech and Holten (1995); Bhatia (1997); Swales and Feak (2000); Paltridge (2001); Yan (2005); Bax (2006); Swami (2008) and Myskow and Gordon (2010).

Sixthly, spoken narratives produced by people on different occasions could be used to provide learners with pragmatic nuances of conversational discourse (see Eggins & Slade, 2005). For example, EFL students could analyse words or phrases used for chronological order of events (e.g. at first, while in London, then, etc.). Students could focus on discourse markers employed in the introductions of new topics (e.g. Now …) or as delaying tactics (… OK … erm …). Likewise, EFL students could be provided with conversational strategies which people employ in order to maintain harmony in social relationships, to "save face" and to avoid interpersonal conflicts. In other words, students should be aware of how politeness functions in conversations. What is regarded as polite in one culture is not necessarily good manners in another culture.

As can be seen, genre theory enables students to describe texts in social terms as well as understand the intentions of text producers. *Text* in this article refers to both written and spoken discourse. It additionally makes learners realise that genres are not only extremely culture-specific events, but they are also ubiquitous and all people face them in their everyday lives. The literature has extensively discussed the benefits of various genres for language education. This article will describe how job interviews can be implemented in EFL courses. Job interviews are real-life events and can provide an authentic example to be used in the classroom. It is vital that foreign language learners have a chance to study the structure of job interviews and familiarise themselves with various conventions (e.g. routines and etiquette) which govern them. This analysis should caution students that insufficient knowledge in these respects may result in discrimination and failure against them when facing a competitive job market.

The aim of the first part of this article is to briefly present a critical analysis of the nature of language. The main tenets of the theory of language which underpin Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) are identified. The second part will focus on a theoretical description of the

theory of genre and its relationship to a spoken discourse analysis. It is in this part that the genre of a one-on-one job interview is offered as a useful didactic material.

1.1. Systemic functional linguistics: Its tenets and approach to language

Systemic Functional Linguistics, as opposed to structuralist and interactionist positions, views language as a social semiotic (Halliday, 1975). In other words, language constitutes a vehicle humans apply in order to express or exchange functional meanings in various contexts. This explanation is reflected in Halliday's (1973: 11-15) theory of language functions. According to this theory, children use seven (*instrumental*, *regulatory*, *interactional*, *personal functions*, *heuristic*, *imaginative*, and *representational*) functions in order to adjust to the surrounding reality. There is a tendency, as Halliday (1973) notes, for these functions to merge with the age of the language users. Adult speakers end up using three metafunctions simultaneously: *ideational*, *interpersonal* and *textual*. The ideational function represents ideas about the world in the content of a text, whereas the interpersonal function reflects the social and interpersonal relationship between interactants (Halliday & Hassan, 1976). The textual function connects the ideas and interactions mentioned above into meaningful texts (Halliday & Hassan, 1976). It can be surmised that in the semiotic system of adults the three metafunctions assume the system of grammar. The mechanism for various functions is then able to be integrated in a text (Halliday & Webster, 2006).

Since SF linguists regard language as a systematic resource for accomplishing language functions, the implication is that the organising principle in linguistic description is not a grammatical structure but a system. Language is no longer seen as being comprised of sentences but of "text" (Halliday, 1996: 89). Unlike structural linguistics, which seeks to identify generalised units (e.g. sentence patterns), SFL establishes its description of language on choice-making or "a discrete network of options" (Halliday, 1978: 113). Particular choices not only depend on the context in which the language is used, but they also relate to the three strata of language known as *phonological/graphological*, *lexico-grammatical*, and *discourse-semantic* (Eggins, 2004). In other words, when people construct texts, they make choices about what and how they

intend to say/write something; this, in turn, is affected by who their interlocutors/audience are and in what situation/context everyone happens to be. As far as the three levels of language are concerned, they are all detailed in terms of systems and structures. Systems handle the paradigmatic groups of choices accessible in the language. Structures, on the other hand, display the choices from the systems in the form of syntagmatic structures whose components convey functions assigned by the system choices. The assumption is that all the linguistic structures are natural since they signify the meanings needed in a particular context. Language is understood to exist "because of its life in social interaction" (Halliday & Yallop, 2007: 50) and it must be analysed in context. This seems to indicate that SFL is similar to the theories of Berger and Luckmann (1966) and Vygotsky (1978), who state that humans construct the extra-linguistic world through language. They all agree that social reality is integral to the formation of the semantic system in which the social world is concealed.

Vital information for the EFL classroom is conveyed through SFL where both meaning and context prevail over linguistic form. Context provides meaning and purpose to texts. These texts are semantic units which are not comprised of sentences, yet are realised in sentences. The integrity between language and social order elucidate how humans employ language in social situations and "what language is required to do in those contexts" (Butzkamm, 2000: 235). Systemic Functional Linguistics communicates to EFL students that language operates semantically, grammatically and phonologically/orthographically, at the same time interrelating within the socio-cultural context.

1.2. Context of culture in text: The theory of genre

In light of the above, SFL delineates language in categories of its semantic function in the social as well as cultural contexts within which language is employed. This directly leads us to the theory of genre, which, as Martin, Christie and Rothery (1994: 232) note, "is a theory of language use." Additionally, Martin (1985: 250) argues that "genres are how things get done, when language is used to accomplish them." Turning to Eggins and Slade (2005), we find that genre theory illustrates how humans apply language to attain cultural goals. Genres need to be

recognised as purposeful, step-by-step organised activities (Martin, 1984) shared as well as interactively constructed by cultures.

According to Frow (2006), despite sharing communicative purposes, genres are conventionally structured. It is the schematic structure, as Christie and Unsworth (2000) observe, that enables communicative purposes to be achieved. This is true because it is impossible for people to make all the meanings they wish at once. The schematic structure in genres brings together parts of the complete meanings that must be produced so that genres can be successfully realised (Martin, 1985). Interpreting genres in this particular manner, we make it clear that the number of genres equals the number of clear-cut social activities in our cultural context. It follows that apart from literary genres, which are excluded from this discussion, there are various types of everyday genres in which people are actively involved. Everyday genres refer to such things as gossiping, buying and selling things, as well as attending job interviews. All of these activities represent re-utilised or, as Berger and Luckmann (1966) note, habitualised undertakings. As far as habitualisation in developing genres goes, Martin and Rose (2003: 7) reveal that:

> [a]s children, we learn to recognise and distinguish the typical genres of our culture, by attending to consistent patterns of meaning as we interact with others in various situations. Since patterns of meaning are relatively consistent for each genre, we can learn to predict how each situation is likely to unfold, and learn how to interact in it.

On the other hand, Bakhtin's (1986) opinion is similar to Martin and Rose's. He asserts that:

> [w]e learn to cast our speech in generic forms and, when hearing others' speech, we guess its genre from the very first words; we predict a certain length (that is, the approximate length of the speech whole) and a certain compositional structure; we foresee the end; that is, from the very beginning we have a sense of the speech whole, which is only later differentiated during the speech process.
>
> (Bakhtin, 1986: 78-79)

In the preceding quotation, Bakhtin clarifies that genres establish linguistic expression through a number of "functional stages" (Eggins, 2004: 58) or "functional moves" (Gruber, 2006: 98), which develop in a certain sequence. All these stages, being constitutive segments of genres, are described in functional terms. The stages are provided with labels

which mirror achieved social purposes. For instance, the social purpose and functional labels of a review can be presented as follows (see Figure 1):

GENRE	review
PURPOSE	to assess a work of literature
STAGES	{Context ^ Text Description ^ Judgement}

Figure 1. The social purpose and functional labels of a review

These individual stages are easily recognisable due to specific semantic and lexico-grammatical choices through which the stages are realised (Eggins & Slade, 2005).

Linguistic patterns, though, take us to another facet of SFL, namely register, which occurs in a precisely defined correlation with genre where the former represents the context of situation and the latter reflects the context of culture (Eggins & Martin, 1997). Both of them are not only semiotic systems accomplished through language, but also linked with situations of use. Therefore, the structure and lexico-grammar of texts can be determined. It may be inferred that Martin's (1992) definition of the genre-register relationship in terms of layering is strikingly cogent.

Martin (1992) reveals that genre subsumes and enhances the stratum of register, which comprises three "register variables" (Martin & Rose, 2003: 243): *field*, *tenor* and *mode*. The field variable plays the role of the social setting and pertains to the purpose of a text, including all the activities the interactants are involved in (Halliday & Hasan, 1985). The tenor characterises the nature of interactants, their social statuses and roles as well as the emotional issues of a speech event (Patten, 1988). The mode reveals the media employed in communication, concurrently referring to the social function a text is performing (Stockwell, 2002). This brief presentation of the three registerial variables allows us to return to Halliday's three metafunctions mentioned at the beginning of this discussion (see 1.1). As Matthiessen (2006: 39) comments, it is the field, tenor and mode that "resonate with the three metafunctions in language." Hence, the systemic functional view of grammar clarifies that the scope of field matches the ideational metafunction, reflecting our experience of reality. The scope of tenor coincides with the interpersonal

metafunction, and portrays our social relations, whereas the scope of mode with the textual metafunction, constructs semiotic reality, displaying messages as texts in different contexts.

1.2.1. Genre analysis in a job interview

Having presented the main tenets of SFL and discussed the concept of genre, it now seems fitting to put the theory into practice. The theory of genre and the three variables of register can help EFL students to successfully tease out various social meanings from texts. The students can then understand these texts as the creators meant the texts to be understood. A one-on-one job interview, serving as interesting didactic material, can be used as an example (see Appendix 1).

The recorded and then transcribed job interview selected for the purpose of this article is underpinned by McDermott's (2006) considerations of the nature of job interviews, discussed in his *Interview Excellence*: *12 Step Programme to Job Interview Success*. The transcription of this interview comes from one of the EFL schools in Warsaw, Poland. The interview was conducted in English, yet it should be clarified that only the more prestigious schools interview candidates in English. Certain details in the enclosed transcript have been changed in order to abide by the *Data Protection Act*.

According to McDermott (2006), a job interview can be divided into stages. In Figure 2, the macrogenre structure of the interview under study is presented as follows:

Figure 2. Macrogenre structure of the job interview

The schematic structure of this job interview indicates that it consists of three stages: the *Introduction Stage*, *Exploration Stage* and *Closure Stage*. All of them are discussed below.

The **Introduction Stage** (IS), as McDermott (2006) notes, functions as a short exchange of pleasantries and ice breaking (see Figure 3).

TURN	STAGE		SPEAKER		TEXT
1.	INTRODUCTION		T		(i)Good afternoon. (ii)I'm looking for Mr Smith ...
2.			P		(i)Oh, (ii)yes ... (iii)Mrs Brown? (iv)You … (v)want to teach our young learner groups, (vi)don't you? (vii)Please come in. (viii)I am the Principal … (ix)John Smith. (x)How do you do?
3.			T		(i)How do you do. … (ii)Ann Brown … (iii)Nice to meet you.
4.			P		(i)Please sit down. (ii)Tea? (iii)Coffee?
5.			T		(i)Coffee please … (ii)no sugar (iii)and no milk
6.			P		(i)Right … (ii)no sugar (iii)and no milk … (iv)OK … (leaves the office) … (comes back to the office) (v)here's your coffee …
7.			T		(i)Thank you very much.
8.			P		(i)well … (ii)since we have a limited time for this interview … (iii)we have three other interviews later on … (iv)Shall we start then?
9.			T		(i)Certainly … (ii)yes …

Figure 3. The introduction stage of the job interview

Two overlapping contexts can be seen. The first one regards greetings and the teacher asking for Mr Smith. He, in turn, calls the teacher by a title and her surname not only to indicate familiarity, but also to inform her that she has been expected. On this basis it can also be deduced that Mrs Brown has arrived on time. The second context, the more immediate context of situation, refers to when Mr Smith offers Mrs Brown a drink. This situation implies that the principal wants the teacher to feel welcome and her choice of coffee with no milk and no sugar confirms she enjoys Mr Smith's hospitality and feels fairly relaxed.

In the actual interview, Mr Smith points out that he has three other candidates to question, so they should quickly proceed with the interview. As a result, "the Setting the Scene Stage," which should deal with the purpose and goals of the interview as well as a brief presentation of the school and the vacant job position, is omitted. This, in turn, conflicts with McDermott's (2006) view concerning an excellent interview. He believes the interview proper should begin with small talk so that the interviewee has a chance to provide some personal information and relax before the stages begin. As can be seen, Mrs Brown accepts the invitation to continue, yet pauses to add "yes" to indicate she has been put on guard.

The **Exploration Stage** (ES), as McDermott (2006: 24) observes, deals with questions and answers. The purpose is to define whether the interviewee meets the employer's requirements and "match[es] the

Cultural Fit of the organization." The ES, taking the form of a personal narrative, can be divided into three sub-stages: the *Educational Background* (EB), the *Teaching Experience* (TE), and the *Teaching Preferences* (TP) respectively (see Figure 4).

TURN	STAGE		SPEAKER		TEXT
10.	**EXPLORATION**	**EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND**	**P**		**(i)Please tell me about your academic background starting with … (ii)erm … (iii)post-secondary**
11.			**T**		**(i)OK … (ii)well … (iii)at first … (iv)hmm … (v)I went to the Teacher Training College in Warsaw … (vi)I graduated with distinction … (vii)my specialisation area was ELT methodology ...**
12.			**P**		**(i)OK**
13.			**T**		**(i)Then, … (ii)erm … (iii)I went to England … (iv)had a two-year break in my education …(v)erm … (vi)I wanted to get to know the place and people better …(vii)you know …**
14.			**P**		**(i)Interesting …**
15.			**T**		**(i)While in London, (ii)I did an intensive CELTA course, (iii)then went back home … (iv)to Warsaw I mean … (v)and began an MA course at Warsaw University … (vi)which took me another two years …**
16.			**P**		**(i)Day student or extramural?**
17.			**T**		**(i)Day**
18.			**P**		**(i)All right … (ii)Was it ELT methodology again or a different specialisation?**
19.			**T**		**(i)Still the same … (ii)well, (iii)I was thinking about doing American literature, (iv)but … (v)erm … (vi)changed my mind …**
20.			**P**		**(i)Any particular reason?**
21.			**T**		**(i)Well … (ii)I wanted to teach, (iii)so obviously ELT methodology seemed to be a better option, after all.**
22.		**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**	**P**		**(i)I see. (ii)All right … (iii)How about your teaching experience? … (iv)Shall we move to this point?**
23.			**T**		**(i)Of course, … (ii)well … (iii)it was quite a while ago … (iv)all right, (v)at first … (vi)erm … (vii)I worked in a kindergarten … (viii)private one in Wola … (ix)I was there for about 3 years. (x)Then …(xi)I taught in a primary school … (xii)still the same part of Warsaw … (xiii)erm … (xiv)for another 4 years … (xv)And now … (xvi)yes … (xvii)I would like to teach here (xviii)as I have moved (xix)and your school is much closer to my new flat.**
24.		**TEACHING PREFERENCES**	**P**		**(i)Why young learners, (ii)if I may ask?**
25.			**T**		**(i)Well … (ii)there are many reasons …(iii)erm …**
26.			**P**		**(i)Three will do ... (ii)I guess …**
27.			**T**		**(i)Let me think then … (ii)OK … (iii) erm … (iv)number one … (v)I like children very much, (vi)two would be … (vii)it brings a lot of challenges (viii)and three … (ix)erm … (x)teaching kids is very rewarding …**

Figure 4. The exploration stage of the job interview

In the EB sub-stage, Mrs Brown is asked to present her educational background starting with her post-secondary education. She provides a concise answer on her prior ELT methodology training, adding that she

graduated with distinction. Then, she talks about her two-year stay in England, where she wanted to be immersed in the target language culture. In the end, Mrs Brown provides additional information about the successful completion of the Cambridge CELTA course. She explains that she returned to Poland and finished her MA as a day student.

An interesting observation is made when the principal asks the teacher whether she was a day or extramural student. This inquiry was probably supposed to lead to another question, namely: What did she do during the day if she was an extramural student? This can be related to Gillham's (2005) method of perceiving a successful interview in which questions have to be purposeful and lead to another question or interviewee characterisation. When Mrs Brown answers that she was a day student, she broke the linear sequence of the interview. As a result, the principal inquires whether she still pursued ELT methodology in order to check whether she had additional skills to add to her credibility. Mrs Brown, in turn, answers that she was thinking of studying American literature but she changed her mind. Mr Smith asks for clarification, as he probably wanted to see if the woman makes decisions based on thought out ideas or on whims.

In the TE sub-stage, Mrs Brown states her vast experience with young learners, ranging from kindergarten to primary school, always providing the length of employment. This fact shows she is a stable employee and her new address in the school's locality will probably make her stay in the school for some time, which is of great importance. Mrs Brown is open and honest in all her answers, simultaneously appealing to the employer. He does not probe the experience stage any further and goes on to the sub-stage of teaching preferences.

In the TP sub-stage, Mr Smith asks Mrs Brown why she wants to teach young learners. Such questioning shows that Mr Smith is an employer who wants to familiarise himself with his staff, their motivations and fundamental reasons for being a teacher. Mrs Brown seems to be unsure in this part of the interview and flounders by saying there are so many answers. The repeated use of the "erm" marker is an indication of her fumbling. The second reason she gives is not fully understood since she states that teaching children can be challenging. This is to her advantage, yet she should have added that she feels stimulated to work harder by being challenged. Her teaching experience

with children reveals she has never thought about what makes her want to teach them.

The purpose of the last stage, the **Closure Stage** (CS), is to express thanks to each other and exchange pleasantries and farewells (Hargie, Dickson & Tourish, 1999) (see Figure 5).

TURN	STAGE		SPEAKER		TEXT
28.	CLOSURE		P		(i)Thank you, Mrs Brown. (ii)I've already seen your documentation (iii)but as I said … (iv)erm … (v)we still have three more candidates today. (vi)Now … (vii)do you have any questions … (viii)perhaps?
29.			T		(i)Not really, (ii)definitely will have a few (iii)when I am employed … (iv)erm … (v)the timetable, (vi)course books … (vii)this kind of things …
30.			P		(i)Well … (ii)you'll be contacted about the result by our secretary tomorrow … (iii)5pm at the latest.
31.			T		(i)Thank you very much, Mr Smith.
32.			P		(i)Thank you (ii)and hope to work with you soon.
33.			T		(i)Bye.
34.			P		(i)Have a nice day … (ii)Goodbye.

Figure 5. The closure stage of the job interview

In the final stage of the interview, Mr Smith asks Mrs Brown if she has any questions. This is a good technique as interviewees are made to feel part of the interview (Hargie, Dickson & Tourish, 1999). The employer is viewed as a cordial person who respects others. However, Mrs Brown says she has no questions now, but she will have some about the course books and timetable when she is employed. This kind of behaviour can be perceived as a clever way to enquire whether she has passed her interview even though she has been formally informed that she will be contacted by the school secretary the following day.

The discussion of the schematic structure of the job interview would not be complete without mentioning the important role of questions in the marking of the functional stages. This phenomenon is extremely visible in the ES of the interview (see Figure 4), where some sub-stages begin with questions marking new functional moves. For instance, the TE sub-stage begins with *How about your teaching experience?*, whereas in the TP sub-stage the question is: *Why young learners, if I may ask?*

Having presented the schematic structure of the job interview, it is necessary to have a brief look at its language. It is important to note that,

despite being a piece of spoken discourse, the job interview, as opposed to everyday talk, is a formal conversation with traces of convention as well as educational jargon. For instance, grammatical analysis reveals that functional stages, as befits spoken discourse, are realised by phrases (e.g. *day student*) and elliptical declaratives (e.g. *definitely will have a few when I am employed*) rather than complete sentences. Nonetheless, some examples of complete sentences can be found; in most cases, they are interrogative sentences (e.g. *Shall we move to this point?*). What is more, since the interview is produced in real time, numerous pauses, as well as hesitation and repetition discourse markers (e.g. *erm, you know, well, OK*) are employed, simultaneously organising its turns (Müller, 2005) and making it more cohesive (Schiffrin, 1987). For example, the discourse markers frequently appear in question/answer pairs (e.g. *Any particular reason? Well ... I wanted to teach, so obviously ELT methodology seemed to be a better option, after all.*), introductions of new discourse topics (e.g. *Now ... do you have any questions ... perhaps?*) or as delaying tactics (e.g. *Let me think then ... OK ... erm ...*), giving the interactants time to collect their thoughts (Paltridge, 2006). According to Schiffrin (1987), from among the discourse markers we can further distinguish markers of participation (e.g. *I wanted to get to know the place and people better ... you know ...*), markers of cause and result (e.g. *Well ... I wanted to teach, so obviously ELT methodology seemed to be a better option, after all.*) and, finally, markers of transition (*Then ... I taught in a primary school ...*).

As with constructional patterns, lexical choices also contribute to the formation of functional stages of genres (Rothery, 1996). In this job interview, all three stages show different lexical realisations. They are presented in Figure 6 below.

STAGE	SUB-STAGE	LEXICAL RELATIONS
INTRODUCTION		good afternoon, how do you do?, please come in.
EXPLORATION	EDUCATION BACKGROUND	post-secondary, Teacher Training College, graduate with distinction, specialisation
	TEACHING EXPERIENCE	worked in a kindergarten, taught in a primary school
	TEACHING PREFERENCES	young learners, children
CLOSURE		thank you, goodbye

Figure 6. Lexical realisations in the job interview

1.2.2. Three variables of register: Field, tenor and mode

Texts are invariably determined by genre and register. For this reason, the theory of genre cannot be fully discussed without making at least some references to the theory of register. The final aspect of the job interview to be described is the registerial variables of field, tenor and mode. All three of the dimensions are of vital importance as they strongly affect language use. For instance, the interview's field describes what is happening during the interview; the principal offers Mrs Brown a drink. This offer is the experiential meaning to make her feel comfortable and relaxed. Throughout the interview, it can be assumed that Mrs Brown is drinking her coffee, whilst the principal conducts the interview. He is holding the teacher's portfolio and the intended list of interview questions.

The principal asks different types of questions since he wants to assess the candidate's suitability for the vacant position. At the same time, Mrs Brown is given a chance not only to discuss her skills, competencies and experience, but also to positively present herself as an efficient and meticulous future employee. In these questions and answers, the participants more often than not employ both lexical and grammatical technical terms. These terms are used to discuss and assess an already shared knowledge base. In the present interview, the technicality, one of the features of the field variable, is represented by such phrases as *ELT methodology* or *CELTA course*. As a result, job interviews as genres appear to be ritualised games in which interactants are obliged to follow various genre-specific rules so as to succeed in achieving their communicative goals.

The tenor, which describes social role relationships that interactants play in different situations, is analysed in terms of *power*, *contact* and *affective involvement* (Eggins, 2004). According to Poynton's (1985) presentation of the three dimensions, the interview in question presents a situation in which the roles played by the two interactants are described as having unequal power. The first indication of unequal power appears in the description of the interview's field above, where it is the principal, not the prospective employee, that is in the position to offer coffee. Furthermore, the relationship between the participants is decided by their roles (or occupational positions) as well as their titles and surnames. Mr Smith introduces himself as the principal of the school and refers to Mrs

Brown as the teacher who is interested in teaching young learner groups. Moreover, it is Mr Smith who is asking the questions. Mrs Brown produces the narrative, which is expected to be formed in a particular way so that her account of herself is fully coherent. As can be seen in the interview transcript, the teacher does have some questions but decides to ask them after she has been offered a contract. Such a decision can also be an indication of imbalance in the relationship between the participants. In contrast to informal situations, both the interviewer and the interviewee are not emotionally involved in the situation and use formal forms of address (e.g. *Mr Smith* or *Mrs Brown*). The conversation is fairly brief and there is no room for elements of controversy and disagreement, both of which are characteristic features of high affective involvement (Eggins, 2004). In turn, the relationship between the interactants can be described as open and honest.

Finally, the mode, covering the role language performs in the job interview, affects the formal character of the conversation with its lexico-grammatical choices controlling its textual coherence and cohesion. The type of distance in the relation between the language and the situation in the present job interview can be described as *spatial/interpersonal* (Martin, 1984). The interactants both see and hear each other, which enables them to easily provide immediate feedback. In this face-to-face interaction, with the principal's occasional references to the teacher's CV or portfolio, the language used is devoid of the spontaneity typical of spoken discourse. The entire situation of checking the suitability of the candidate for the advertised position is extremely formal. The conversation contains numerous hesitations, false starts and phrases, yet it is organised according to careful turn-by-turn sequencing of talk. During the conversation, varied standard grammatical conventions and prestigious vocabulary are used.

2. Conclusion

The preceding discussion carries a vital message for language education, making aspects of systemic-functional linguistics a necessity rather than a choice. The deliberation underscores the communicative role of language and the social context in which language is embedded. It is the situational and cultural contexts that determine the type of language people employ to create texts. It is necessary to teach how various kinds

of language are used in daily life, and second how various genres are created and utilised in different contexts. The more often students focus on organisational and stylistic characteristics of diverse genres during English lessons, the more effective the students will be in making textual predictions and contextual deductions. Students using these methods can then be ensured of success in educational as well as social contexts. Is this not what modern language education aims for?

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APPENDIX 1: JOB INTERVIEW

TURN	STAGE		SPEAKER		TEXT
1.	INTRODUCTION		T		(i)Good afternoon. (ii)I'm looking for Mr Smith ...
2.			P		(i)Oh, (ii)yes ... (iii)Mrs Brown? (iv)You … (v)want to teach our young learner groups, (vi)don't you? (vii)Please come in. (viii)I am the Principal … (ix)John Smith. (x)How do you do?
3.			T		(i)How do you do. … (ii)Ann Brown … (iii)Nice to meet you.
4.			P		(i)Please sit down. (ii)Tea? (iii)Coffee?
5.			T		(i)Coffee please … (ii)no sugar (iii)and no milk
6.			P		(i)Right … (ii)no sugar (iii)and no milk … (iv)OK … (leaves the office) … (comes back to the office) (v)here's your coffee …
7					(i)Thank you very much.
8					(i)well … (ii)since we have a limited time for this interview … (iii)we have three other interviews later on … (iv)Shall we start then?
9.			T		(i)Certainly … (ii)yes …
10.	EXPLORATION		P		(i)Please tell me about your academic background starting with … (ii)erm … (iii)post-secondary
11.			T		(i)OK … (ii)well … (iii)at first … (iv)hmm … (v)I went to the Teacher Training College in Warsaw … (vi)I graduated with distinction … (vii)my specialisation area was ELT methodology …
12.			P		(i)OK

13.			T		(i)Then, … (ii)erm … (iii)I went to England … (iv)had a two-year break in my education …(v)erm … (vi)I wanted to get to know the place and people better …(vii)you know …
14.			P		(i)Interesting …
15.			T		(i)While in London, (ii)I did an intensive CELTA course, (iii)then went back home … (iv)to Warsaw I mean … (v)and began an MA course at Warsaw University … (vi)which took me another two years ..
16.			P		(i)Day student or extramural?
17.			T		(i)Day
18.			P		(i)All right … (ii)Was it ELT methodology again or a different specialisation?
19.			T		(i)Still the same … (ii)well, (iii)I was thinking about doing American literature, (iv)but … (v)erm … (vi)changed my mind …
20.			P		(i)Any particular reason?
21.			T		(i)Well … (ii)I wanted to teach, (iii)so obviously ELT methodology seemed to be a better option, after all.
22.			P		(i)I see. (ii)All right … (iii)How about your teaching experience? … (iv)Shall we move to this point?
23.			T		(i)Of course, … (ii)well … (iii)it was quite a while ago … (iv)all right, (v)at first … (vi)erm … (vii)I worked in a kindergarten … (viii)private one in Wola … (ix)I was there for about 3 years. (x)Then …(xi)I taught in a primary school … (xii)still the same part of Warsaw … (xiii)erm … (xiv)for another 4 years … (xv)And now … (xvi)yes … (xvii)I would like to teach here (xviii)as I have moved (xix)and your school is much closer to my new flat.

24.		**TEACHING PREFERENCES**	P		(i)Why young learners, (ii)if I may ask?
25.			T		(i)Well … (ii)there are many reasons …(iii)erm …
26.			P		(i)Three will do ... (ii)I guess …
27.			T		(i)Let me think then … (ii)OK … (iii) erm … (iv)number one … (v)I like children very much, (vi)two would be … (vii)it brings a lot of challenges (viii)and three … (ix)erm … (x)teaching kids is very rewarding …
28.	**CLOSURE**		P		(i)Thank you, Mrs Brown. (ii)I've already seen your documentation (iii)but as I said … (iv)erm … (v)we still have three more candidates today. (vi)Now … (vii)do you have any questions … (viii)perhaps?
29.			T		(i)Not really, (ii)definitely will have a few (iii)when I am employed … (iv)erm … (v)the timetable, (vi)course books … (vii)this kind of things …
30.			P		(i)Well … (ii)you'll be contacted about the result by our secretary tomorrow … (iii)5pm at the latest.
31.			T		(i)Thank you very much, Mr Smith.
32.			P		(i)Thank you (ii)and hope to work with you soon.
33.			T		(i)Bye.
34.			P		(i)Have a nice day … (ii)Goodbye.

Textual reduction in translated dialogue in film versus literary fiction[1]

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Abstract
By exploring the correlation between textual reduction and length of utterance as well as surveying what grammatical elements are omitted to cause textual reduction, this paper seeks to establish what mechanisms are at play in the translation of dialogue in film vs. fiction. The need for economy of translation found in subtitling might suggest that textual reduction is more widespread in subtitles than in translated fiction.

On the basis of two small-size corpora, it is shown that the longer the utterance the greater the possibility for reductions in both modes of translation. However, and perhaps not surprisingly, there is less textual reduction in translated dialogue in fiction overall. Moreover, translated fiction seems to allow longer utterances than subtitles before reduction takes place.

With regard to the elements that are omitted, similar patterns can be found, although subtitles show a clearer tendency for interpersonal elements to be omitted.

1. Introduction and aims

This paper explores some aspects of translated dialogue; more specifically, it focuses on dialogue translated from English into Norwegian, as found in subtitles and in texts of literary fiction. The aim is to point out similarities and differences between these two distinct types of translation. They are distinct in the sense that subtitling has been referred to as translation of dynamic multimedia texts in going from the spoken to the written mode, while literary translation could be defined as translation within the same mode, that of written text.

Furthermore, "[t]he most distinctive feature of subtitling is the need for economy of translation" (Díaz Cintas & Anderman 2009: 14); subtitles have even been defined as "condensed written translations of original dialogue" (Luyken as quoted in Georgakopoulou 2009: 21). Thus, to compare subtitles and literary translation with regard to textual reduction will shed light on the extent to which reduction takes place in

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[1] I would like to thank the NJES reviewer for important and insightful comments and suggestions.

the two modes of translation, and also what elements are typically left out.

The paper has three main parts. The first part gives an introduction to subtitles and subtitling and points out some of the characteristics of this particular form of translation. The second part discusses some aspects of dialogue. The third part starts by presenting a case study of what happens when translating film dialogue. The goal is to see if it is possible to point to certain patterns, particularly as regards textual reduction in the translation of film dialogue. Finally, a comparison with dialogue in fiction will be made.

In the case study I will make use of corpus linguistics techniques to explore to what extent there is a correlation between textual reduction and length of utterance.[2] It should be mentioned that the study of reduction, or condensation, in subtitles is far from a new area of interest. However, a corpus-based comparison as the one performed here does not seem to have been fully explored before. In addition, while it has often been the case in subtitling research to refer to the reduction/condensation rate in terms of a percentage of the original dialogue,[3] this paper seeks to investigate the correlation between the length of an utterance and reduction in terms of number of linguistic items. Although this is not explicitly related to the variation in condensation rates found as a result of the intensity of the dialogue (cf. Pedersen 2011: 138), it may be inferred that the longer the utterance, the more intense the dialogue.

It has been claimed that reductions in subtitles are far from random (cf. De Linde 1995) and it is my aim to find out what grammatical elements are omitted to cause this textual reduction and compare this to what happens in dialogue in fiction. By textual reduction is meant a reduction in content or message as a result of the omission of grammatical elements in going from original film or text to subtitles or translation.[4] Some examples are given in (1) and (2):

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[2] I.e. the paper will be seen to differ methodologically from investigations traditionally carried out within the paradigm of subtitling research.

[3] Cf. e.g. Pedersen (2011: 20-21, 138-139) and references therein.

[4] The term "textual reduction" should not be seen as evaluative; thus the derogatory flavour often attributed to "reduction" in subtitling studies, where "condensation" is often used, is not intended here.

(1) Do you know what this is, *Lieutenant*? (BA4)[5]

Vet du hva dette er?

Lit.: Know you what this is?

(2) *Yeah*, you *already* said that. (FO1)

Du sa det.

Lit.: You said that.

These are both short utterances and it is fairly easy to see in what way they have been reduced; in example (1) it is the vocative *Lieutenant* that has not been translated in the subtitles, while in example (2) it is what I have called a reaction signal *yeah* and the adjunct of time *already* that have been omitted in the subtitles.

Before we go into this at a more detailed level some background to the area of subtitles is in order.

2. Subtitling

> When the decision has been taken to keep the original soundtrack and to switch from the spoken to the written mode, by adding text to the screen, the technique is known as subtitling. (Díaz Cintas & Anderman 2009: 4)

Subtitling has been around since the arrival of sound film in the late 1920s. And in Norway, where there is no long-standing tradition for dubbing – the other major method of film translation – subtitling has become the predominant practice in conveying foreign film to the Norwegian audience. According to Lomheim (1999), TV subtitles are, in fact, the kind of texts that, besides newspapers, are most widely read by the general public. In other words, subtitles play an important role in our daily encounter with text. See also Pedersen (2011: 1) for similar observations for Swedish.

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[5] The codes given in brackets refer to the film or novel where the example is taken from. Se Primary Sources for an overview of these.

The number of studies of subtitles of foreign films and programmes for the general public bear witness of a thriving field. Some examples include case studies by e.g. De Linde (1995), Taylor (1999, 2000), Hjort (2009), Mattsson (2009), all of whom have been interested in the language produced in subtitles. The fact is that the study of subtitling is now considered a part of Translation Studies in general (cf. Mattsson 2009). Indeed, “audiovisual translation has evolved to the point where, as a discipline, it is now one of the most vibrant and vigorous fields within Translation Studies” (Díaz Cintas & Anderman 2009: 8).

The fact that I will concentrate on language-related issues in subtitles is not to say that the technical and practical sides of subtitling are of no importance to the end product. On the contrary, many aspects of the process are of great importance to the subtitles we see on the screen. And it is easy to come up with examples of this; the subtitles need to fit on the screen both physically and according to the time restrictions that are laid down by the interplay between dialogue and picture. So, space as well as time in the form of time codes for when the subtitles are to appear, and for how long they are to be exposed are very important practical matters that may have an impact on the final product – both as regards wording and syntax. The two elements of space and time are constraints that really set subtitling apart from literary translation, where such restrictions are not commonly an issue. Indeed, in addition to the constraint of subtitling that Pedersen (2011: 18-19) calls “the semiotic switch from spoken to written language”, he mentions “spatial and temporal constraints and the condensation that these bring with them”. In fact, according to Pedersen (2011: 20):

> condensation […] is not a necessary property of subtitles; it is just extremely common. So common, in fact, that it is virtually impossible to discuss the process of subtitling without discussing condensation.

So far we have taken subtitling to be a form of translation without hesitation. It should be mentioned, however, that there has been some discussion as to whether subtitling really could be called translation, most notably so perhaps by Catford who said that “[t]ranslation between media is impossible (i.e. one cannot ‘translate’ from the spoken to the written form of a text or vice versa).” (1965: 53). However, although some people would claim that translation equals translation within the written mode, we cannot deny the fact that the subtitling of film has

many of the characteristics of translation, not least in that it uses a target language to convey the meaning of a source language. Also, as pointed out by Mattsson (2009: 35) "[t]oday, most translation theories and scholars view the translatability of film as quite unproblematic, and subtitling, in spite of its many difficulties and constraints, as something well worth both practicing and studying". Nevertheless, the nature of the media is such that both the source and target utterances are available to the public simultaneously, and therefore it is easy for people with knowledge of both languages to judge the success of the subtitles as translation. Often you will hear comments and jokes about the poor standard of subtitles, sometimes taking up a misinterpretation of a single word and sometimes subtitles are criticized for only giving us a shortened version of what was really said. Nonetheless, in most cases subtitles manage to convey the intended message supported by the images that are broadcast at the same time as the subtitles.

To return to the question of whether subtitling is a form of translation or not, I would argue that it most certainly is, precisely because it has an element of going from one language into another and that the message in the two languages should be the same. Obviously, there are cases that may be criticized for not being close enough to the original message, but this will also occur in literary translation. Consider examples (3) and (4), where (3) is from film and (4) is from literary fiction.

(3) Two tins of Schimmelpennincks. And *throw in* a lighter *while you're at it*. (SM1)

To esker "Schimmelpennicks" og en lighter.

Lit.: Two tins Schimmelpennicks and a lighter.

(4) The Queen said, "I am not dressed. *I cannot receive visitors* until *I am dressed*." (ST1)

"Jeg har ikke kledd meg *ennu*," sa dronningen.

Lit.: "I have not dressed myself yet," said the queen.

In example (3) it is easy to point to elements that have been omitted in the subtitles and similarly, example (4) shows literary translation where

elements have been omitted (and perhaps added?). And it could possibly be argued that in context, be it with accompanying pictures or between-the-lines information, the original meaning is somehow retained.

Both examples show what Baker (1992) has termed "translation by omission" and what Gottlieb (1994) has termed "deletion". While Baker is concerned with translation theory and strategies within translation in general, Gottlieb is concerned with strategies within subtitling. If we compare their lists of strategies it can be seen that, to a great extent, they describe the same strategies seen from different angles.

First, if we consider Baker's list (cf. Figure 1), "translation by omission" is one of her eight translation strategies connected with non-equivalence on the word level.

Translation strategies connected with non-equivalence on the word level.

a) Translation by a more general word (superordinate)
b) Translation by a more neutral/less expressive word
c) Translation by cultural substitution
d) Translation using a loan word or loan word plus explanation
e) Translation by paraphrase using a related word
f) Translation by paraphrase using an unrelated word
g) Translation by omission
h) Translation by illustration

Figure 1. Baker's translation strategies (1992: 26)

Gottlieb's list looks slightly different (cf. Figure 2) and is a list of strategies that are involved in the translation process of subtitling; he says they are different techniques used in professional interlingual subtitling:

Strategies involved in the translation process of subtitling	
Type of strategy	Character of translation
1 Expansion	Expanded expression, adequate rendering (culture-specific references)
2 Paraphrase	Altered expression, adequate rendering (non-visualized language-specific items)
3 Transfer	Full expression, adequate rendering (slow unmarked speech)
4 Imitation	Identical expression, equivalent rendering (proper nouns; international greetings)
5 Transcription	Non-standard expression, adequate rendering (dialects; intended speech defects)
6 Dislocation	Differing expression, adjusted content (musical/visualized language-specific items)
7 Condensation	Condensed expression, concise rendering (mid-tempo speech with some redundancy)
8 Decimation	Abridged expression, reduced content (fast speech; low-redundancy speech)
9 Deletion	Omitted expression, no verbal content (fast speech with high redundancy)
10 Resignation	Deviant expression, distorted content (incomprehensible or 'untranslatable' speech)

Figure 2. Gottlieb's subtitling strategies (1994: 294)

Gottlieb considers the first seven categories to be correspondent renderings of the source dialogue into the target subtitles. Strategies 8-10, on the other hand, are considered non-correspondent. This differs from Baker's view since all of her eight strategies are considered to involve non-equivalence. Nevertheless, I believe that the concepts presented by Gottlieb and Baker reflect overlapping strategies, with the exception of Gottlieb's strategy 3 – Transfer, and possibly strategy 4 – Imitation. These would be considered strategies of equivalence, however.

It could be argued that Gottlieb has a more semantic approach to both loss and reduction which implies that a direct comparison with both Baker and the present study will be difficult. However, I think there is

enough of a similarity to say that the strategies set up for subtitling do not diverge significantly from those set up for translation in general. This in turn suggests that the process is much the same for both modes of translation.

Since our main concern here is textual reduction the strategies that are at play are translation by omission and deletion, both of which may be seen to be simplifications, to use a more general term in translation theory. In this connection it will be interesting to see what type of elements undergo simplification of this kind.

Lomheim (1999) states that random tests show that we cannot determine beforehand what elements will disappear in going from film dialogue to subtitles – or what other means the subtitler will resort to. However, what such tests may reveal is that certain communicative elements are more prone to disappearing than others. According to Lomheim (ibid.), a more precise account of which specific elements are omitted is hard to give, but see e.g. De Linde (1995) and Pedersen (2011) for a discussion and some observations on the issue. Nonetheless, the focus here will be on what happens at a more detailed level: is it possible to see patterns as to what linguistic items are part of the process of reduction? The answer to this is probably 'yes', as De Linde (1995) concludes that reductions are not random, but systematic. Before this question is addressed in the case study, we will take a look at some of the characteristics of dialogue.

3. Dialogue

It has been said about film dialogue that it is "written to be spoken as if not written" (Gregory and Carroll (1978) as quoted in Taylor 1999:1). Dialogue in fiction, on the other hand, is "written to be read, usually silently" (Page 1973: 9). It seems that we are dealing with two quite distinct modes of communication, although the dialogue in both film and fiction is pre-meditated and it tries to imitate everyday spontaneous speech.

It should also be mentioned that there exists no one uniform dialogue standard that film and fiction strive to copy. There is a large range of general and specific rules as to what is included in dialogue. According to Taylor (1999: 1), conventions regarding clause structuring, turn-taking, and the presence of features such as varying intonation in making

statements, asking questions, etc. are some of the general rules we have to be aware of when trying to reproduce human oral communication. Other sets of rules are specific to individual language communities or languages, and, according to Taylor (1999: 1), include conventions about "how information is organized in clauses, at what points turn-taking is considered acceptable, the particular tones used for different purposes, etc." Moreover, the language produced in dialogue is also affected by the situation of the conversation, and in effect different speech genres, requiring different language strategies, may be resorted to according to what situation you find yourself in. With reference to Bakhtin, Taylor states that "Participants have developed co-occurrence expectations arising from previous interactive experience of such genres. Thus participants in particular situational contexts act (and speak) within prescribed and predictable limits". These situational contexts also include individual factors such as age, sex, social standing, etc. As pointed out by Taylor "it is not easy […] for a young white male to attempt to write dialogue for a group of elderly black females".

In the dialogue imitations we find in film and fiction, then, we would expect these rules and strategies to be followed. If we relate this to the point about film and fiction being two different modes of communication, we would further expect that film and fiction differ in the ways in which they deal with these rules and strategies.

According to Baños-Piñero & Chaume (2009: 1), "creating fictional dialogues that sound natural and believable is one of the main challenges of both screenwriting and audiovisual translation". Thus, "pre-fabricated orality", imitating coherent conversation, is a key concept if the aim is authentic-sounding dialogue. In our context, it could be claimed that film has the advantage of both sound and moving pictures to accompany the dialogue, while fiction has to rely on the written word only. Film, then, not only creates the dialogue but also a fixed surrounding context, with intonation, facial expressions, etc. In literary fiction this is obviously very different; as readers we are exposed to the wording of the dialogue, accompanied in most cases by punctuation. Apart from this we have to rely on our interpretation of the text to create our own reality from the written word.

The purpose of dialogue in both film and literary fiction may be seen as a means of carrying the action and the progression of the plot of either the film or the book. An additional way of unfolding the narrative in film

is of course the moving pictures themselves. It has also been said about film dialogue that “it defines narrative genres and viewers” (Piazza et al. 2011: 5). While the former may be true for literary fiction as well, the latter would have to be modified to “engage readers”.

As pointed out by Page, although dialogue (in literary fiction) “will often serve to advance the plot, and in certain writers […] will carry a large share of this function, its more customary role is to contribute to the presentation and development of character” (Page 1973: 14). This is also true of film dialogue, in the sense that the dialogue contributes to the portayal of a character. In Piazza et al.’s (2011: 5) words: “the discourse of film […] is a tool for characterisation, e.g. a way of entering the mind of a character”.

The most important features of invented dialogue, or characteristics of dialogue in fiction vs. film, are listed in Figure 3.

dialogue in fiction	dialogue in film[6]
• written to be read (Page 1973: 9)	• written to be spoken as if not written (Gregory and Carroll (1978) as quoted in Taylor 1999:1)
• invented / non-spontaneous	• invented / non-spontaneous
• written mode	• spoken mode (speech incl. phonological features)
• used for character portrayals	• used for character portrayals
• carries the story/plot	• carries the story/plot
• may define genre	• may define genre
• engages readers	• engages viewers
	• pictures accompanying speech

Figure 3. Characteristics of dialogue in fiction vs. film

[6] For more indepth analyses of the nature of the language used in film, i.e. telecinematic discourse, see Piazza et al. (eds.) (2011).

These observations about dialogue in film and fiction lead us to the not so unexpected conclusion that there is a cline with authentic speech at the one extreme and dialogue in fiction at the other, with film dialogue somewhere in between. Yet another dimension is added with subtitles and translation. Due to space restrictions, omission or reduction will be expected to take place, and "the obvious solution is to do away with redundant elements of speech" (Georgakopoulou 2009: 25).

This brief discussion of differences and similarities between dialogue in film and fiction serves as a background for the following case study.

4. Case study

In the case study, we will take a look at translated dialogue in film and fiction. We will be concerned with the following three issues:

- amount of textual reduction per utterance;
- amount of textual reduction vs. length of utterance;
- type of textual reduction.

It should be mentioned that in the field of subtitling it is "the character and not the word [that] is most often considered the basic unit" (Pedersen 2011: 19). Nevertheless, it is the word that is under scrutiny here.[7] Moreover, although it may not be a common way to measure reduction rate in subtitles per utterance, I believe it will serve the purpose of this paper in the comparison with literary fiction.

4.1. Material

The material used in this study is a small corpus of subtitles, including the original film script, and a comparable amount of fictional texts taken from the *English-Norwegian Parallel Corpus*.[8] The corpus of subtitles comprises four films and one episode of a TV series; the films have a duration of one and a half to two hours, whereas the TV episode has a

[7] See also De Linde (1995: 16), who uses units that may or may not coincide with a word, e.g. markers of interaction such as modals or expressions of the kind *tu sais quoi*.

[8] http://www.hf.uio.no/ilos/english/services/omc/enpc/

duration of half an hour – altogether a total of 8 to 9 hours of viewing. As regards genre, two of the films could be broadly characterized as drama and two as thrillers, while the series is labelled comedy. (See list of Primary Sources for details.)

It should also be added that I got hold of the scripts in various ways; some were published versions of the films in book form, others were downloaded from the Internet, and one script with subtitles was acquired courtesy of Broadcast Text. Apart from that one film, the subtitles were taken from the video (VHS) versions of the films. This is not without significance as reading speeds have been shown to differ between TV and video subtitling, i.e. the viewer is exposed to subtitles at a higher speed on video (both VHS and particularly DVD) than is normally the case on TV.[9] I do not believe that it matters much for the purpose of the present study, as the data are fairly homous in being taken mainly from the same medium, viz. the video (VHS) versions. However, it should be kept in mind that the findings with regard to reduction in subtitles are true for the present material, but may vary somewhat for subtitling in general.

With regard to subtitling norms, Mattsson (2006), in her study of the subtitling of swearwords and discourse markers, finds that public TV channels and DVD versions follow similar norms.

Further, as regards the material for the study, I chose five texts from the *English-Norwegian Parallel Corpus* that, to the best possible extent, match the genres of the films used. Not only did the literary texts have to be more or less comparable to the films as regards genre, they also had to have a certain amount of dialogue in them.

For the case study proper 100 running utterances from each film and book were extracted, resulting in a total material of 1,000 original utterances with their respective subtitles and translations – i.e. 500 utterances from film and 500 from fiction. Even with these attempts at matching the two modes, there are obvious catches with the material that have to be taken into account when assessing the results. For instance,

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[9] See e.g. Díaz Cintas & Remael (2007) and Pedersen (2011) for observations regarding reading speeds. Furthermore, Díaz Cintas & Remael (2007: 96) note that the reason why “subtitles ought to be kept on the television screen longer than in the cinema or the DVD […] is that the television has to address a wider spectrum of viewers who are usually at home, as opposed to the cinema or DVD which imply an active approach”.

none of the literary texts had 100 consecutive utterances. Moreover, in fiction there is often an element of reporting direct speech, as can be seen in example (4): *The Queen said…* This is a feature that is not present in film dialogue, and as a consequence such reporting clauses were disregarded in the analysis. These are but two diverging aspects that have to be kept in mind.

4.2. Amount of textual reduction vs. length of utterance

First of all I was interested in the amount of reduction that really existed in the film material. This was measured by looking at how many reductions there are per utterance, i.e. how many lexical items have clearly been left out in the subtitles. By utterance I mean a stretch of speech usually corresponding to a turn, and, as already mentioned, textual reduction is a reduction in content or message in going from original to translated utterance. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Number of utterances in subtitles containing 0 - ≥10 reductions

	Film					
	SM1	MA1	SP1	FO1	BA4	Total
0 reduction	20	71	33	27	24	175
1 reduction	14	18	20	25	19	96
2 reductions	25	6	14	17	13	75
3 reductions	13	4	8	13	18	56
4 reductions	8	1	14	5	12	40
5-9 reductions	15	0	10	11	14	50
≥10 reductions	5	0	1	2	0	8
						500

Table 1 shows that there appears to be a cline here and most commonly we find 0 reduction, more exactly in 175 out of 500 utterances, followed by 1 reduction per utterance in 96 cases; 2 reductions per utterance in 75 cases, 3 reductions in 56 cases etc. The numbers show, to a large extent, what we would expect, i.e. there are more instances of 1 reduction per utterance than 3 reductions, for instance.

Let us take a look at some examples of 0, 1, 2, 3, etc. reductions per utterance. First, then, a case where no reduction has taken place is found in example (5).

(5) Is everything in place? (MA1)

Er alt på plass?

Lit.: Is everything in place?

In example (6) we find an instance of a one-word reduction; the vocative *dear* has been left out in the subtitles.

(6) Gentle women do not compare people to animals, *dear*. (SP1)

Pene damer sammenligner ikke folk med dyr.

Lit.: Nice women compare not people to animals.

In example (7), three elements have been omitted, the interjection *Ah*, the time adjunct *today*, and the discourse marker *I think*, which has been counted as one item.

(7) *Ah*, excellent – short back and sides *today*, *I think*, please. (BA4)

Glimrende. Kort bak og på sidene, takk.

Lit.: Excellent. Short back and on the sides, thanks.

The most complex kind of reduction is found in utterances like the one in (8), where we have an instance of more than ten reductions.

(8) *It's all set*. My guy in Miami *said he*'d have them within the next few weeks. *Are you sure* you don't want to go in with *me*? Five thousand dollars outlay, a *guaranteed* ten-thousand-dollar return. *A consortium of* Court Street lawyers and judges. *They*'re *just* drooling to get their lips around some Cuban cigars. (SM1)

Ja, min mellommann i Miami leverer dem om et par uker. Vil du ikke være med? Vi investerer 5000 og får 10.000 tilbake. Advokatene og dommerne står i kø for å få tak i dem.

> Lit.: Yes, my middleman in Miami delivers them in a couple of weeks. Will you not take part? We invest 5,000 and get 10,000 back. The lawyers and judges are queuing up to get hold of them.

In utterances such as (8), one problem of the reduction issue is brought to the fore, in that it illustrates that some translation shifts are hard to quantify. It is not always easy to point exactly to what textual reduction has taken place; nonetheless I have italicized the elements I believe have been left out in the subtitles, although there may be said to be some sort of semantic compensation, for instance with *Ja* for *It's all set*. *Intersemiotic redundancy*, i.e. "positive feedback from visuals and soundtrack" (Gottlieb 2005: 19), is a key concept in this respect, advocating the possibility of loss of elements without loss of meaning.[10] Even if reduction of this kind may prove hard to quantify, an attempt is made in the following sections.

4.3. Amount of textual reduction vs. length of utterance

Next I will test the hypothesis formulated in the introduction that the longer the utterance is the more reductions there will be. Table 2 shows the mean length of each utterance in relation to number of reductions per utterance. The mean length is given in characters including spaces and punctuation.

Table 2 Mean length of original utterance in subtitles (in characters)

	mean length
1 reduction	36
2 reductions	66
3 reductions	84
4 reductions	90
5-9 reductions	178
≥10 reductions	294

[10] According to Gottlieb (2005: 19) "the intersemiotic redundancy […] in subtitling often secures that audiences miss less of the film content than a merely linguistic analysis might indicate".

Quite clearly a pattern emerges as regards mean length of utterance in relation to number of reductions; as hypothesized, then: the longer the utterance the more reductions. This is perhaps what we would expect given the time restrictions a subtitler has to deal with. Although time restrictions may have some impact, the numbers shown in Table 2 may also imply that the more textual content per utterance the easier it is to simplify through textual reduction and still retain the essential message, albeit not all the textual items. Let us consider example (9).

(9) Permission to write home immediately, *sir* - *this is* the first brilliant plan a Baldrick has *ever* had. For centuries we've tried, and they've always turned out to be *total* pigswill. *My* mother will be as pleased as Punch. (BA4)

Tillatelse til å skrive hjem straks! Den første lysende plan en Baldrick har hatt! Vi har prøvd i århundrer, og det har bare blitt skvip. Mamma blir glad som en lerke!

Lit.: Permission to write home immediately! The first brilliant plan a Baldrick has had! We have tried for centuries, and it has only become hogwash. Mum becomes happy as a lark!

In example (9) five textual reductions (italicized) were found in an utterance containing 218 characters. Thus, this particular utterance was slightly longer than the average for five to nine reductions.

4.4. Type of textual reduction in subtitles

The next step is to identify which types of items are omitted in going from film dialogue to subtitles. And to specify a bit more, when I say reductions this is meant to reflect omissions on the semantic or syntactic level that are not rooted in the restrictions laid down by the languages involved, i.e., as Øverås puts it, "shifts based on rule governed differences between the two languages, where identity would violate target rules" (Øverås 1996: 45). An example to illustrate this is given in (10), where the immediately preceding utterance is included:

(10) (Looks like someone forgot a camera.) Yeah, I did. (SM1)

(Noen har visst glemt kameraet sitt.) Ja, det har jeg.

Lit.: (Someone has apparently left their camera.) Yes, that have I.

To translate this directly into "Ja, jeg gjorde" (lit.: *Yes, I did*) would violate target rules, although we could possibly say "Ja, jeg har" (lit.: *Yes, I have*). Such shifts were not counted among the changes. An example of a kind of change that was recorded is given in example (11).

(11) *I'm carving* "Baldrick", sir. (BA4)

Baldrick, sir.

Here there are no syntactic restrictions in Norwegian that require an omission of the subject and verb, even if it is the progressive aspect that has been used in English (where no corresponding verb form exists in Norwegian). A semantically similar, and grammatically sound, utterance in Norwegian would be: "Jeg risser (inn) Baldrick, sir" (Lit.: *I carve (in) Baldrick, sir*).

These and similar changes differ from Gottlieb's (1994) categories of reduction and loss in that the changes include elements that would not be counted as loss in the ideational sense, i.e. loss of content that is rooted in "our interpretation of all that goes on around us" (Halliday & Matthiessen 1999: 511).

To get a notion of what elements are typically omitted, consider Table 3, which gives an overview of the ten most common types of omissions in the subtitle material; they are omissions that have been recorded in all five films. The number of utterances in each text where no omission has taken place, i.e. the Ø occurrences, have also been added. This is to say that, in the case of the film SM1, for instance, the omissions that were found are distributed across 80 utterances (i.e. 100 minus the 20 utterances where no reduction takes place).

Table 3. Elements omitted in subtitles

text / syntactic element omitted	SM1	MA1	SP1	FO1	BA4	Total
S + V	51	7	21	38	27	144
A	48	4	14	37	14	127
V	25	5	14	10	15	69
conjunction	12	4	19	9	7	51
vocative	9	1	10	8	22	50
reaction signal	5	5	4	23	13	50
initiator	2	1	15	12	11	41
dO	13	2	10	7	5	37
interjection	6	3	13	3	6	31
S	9	3	6	7	5	30
Ø	20	71	33	26	25	175

As regards the most common type of omission, it can be seen from Table 3 that subject + verb were omitted 144 times in the material; an example of this type of omission has already been given in example (11). Another common category is that of adverbial, and an example is found in (2), where there is no trace of *already* in the subtitles.

The overview in Table 3 suggests that elements with a typically interpersonal function, such as vocatives, reaction signals, and initiators, together account for quite a large portion of the omissions. This tallies well with what Taylor states about the language of subtitles in general: "in the Hallidayan terms of ideational, interpersonal and textual functions of language, subtitles favour the ideational – they are informative, whereas in dialogue, it is often the interpersonal that is important" (Taylor 2000: 9). And, as pointed out by Lomheim, it is often elements that have a particular communicative function that disappear (1999: 70). Similarly, Gottlieb points to the fact that the elements that are typically omitted include "redundant" or oral features such as pragmatic particles, repetitions and false starts (Gottlieb 2005: 19 and Gottlieb as referred to in Pedersen 2011: 21). Also, the type of subject that is omitted reflects the fact that the interpersonal function is under attack in subtitles, since

most of these are first and second personal pronouns, which according to Halliday & Matthiessen are typical elements in interpersonal communication: "if the ideational metafunction is language in its 'third person' guise, the interpersonal is language in its 'first and second person' guise; the interaction of a 'me' and 'you'" (Halliday & Matthiessen 1999: 525).

The verbs that are omitted in going from film dialogue to subtitles are either typically conversational verbs which are part of discourse markers, such as *mean* in example (12), or, by far the most common verb to omit, *be*, as shown in example (13).

(12) Amazing. I'm not sure I get it, though. *I mean*, what was it that gave you the idea to do this ... this project? (SM1)

Utrolig ... Men jeg vet ikke om jeg forstår det helt. Hvordan fikk du ideen til dette?

Lit.: Amazing … But I know not if I understand it completely. How got you the idea for this?

(13) *You're* Jerry Lundegaard? (FO1)

Jerry Lundegaard?

Both (12) and (13) are typical examples in that it is a combination of subject pronoun + verb that has been left out in the subtitles.

More surprisingly, perhaps, items of more semantic content are also shown to be reduced. A case in point is example (14), where the direct object *the ransom* has been omitted.

(14) Okay, it's - see, it's not me payin' *the ransom*. The thing is, my wife, she's wealthy - her dad, he's real well off. Now, I'm in a bit of trouble – (FO1)

Det er ikke jeg som betaler. Kona mi er velstående. Faren hennes er rik. Men jeg sitter litt hardt i det.

Lit.: It is not I who pay. My wife is well-off. Her father is rich. But I am a bit hard up.

But if we look at some more context this is not so surprising after all since the discussion is about paying a ransom. An additional fact is that quite a few of the direct objects that have been omitted are not typical content words; many are pronouns, as in (15).

(15) Freeze! Police! Hands behind your head! Do it! Do *it* now! (MA1)

Ikke rør deg! Politi! Hendene over hodet! Gjør det! Med en gang!

Lit.: Do not move yourself! Police! Hands over the head! Do it! At once!

On the other hand, adverbials realised by content words, in particular time and place adjuncts, disappear relatively often, e.g. (16).

(16) Well, call me Old Mr Unadventurous, but I think I'll give it a miss *this once* … (BA4)

Kall meg gjerne kjedelig, men jeg står over.

Lit.: Call me by all means boring, but I pass.

To sum up so far, we have found, on the basis of the subtitle material used here, that on average textual reduction occurs in about 65% of all utterances. Further, as regards the number of reductions per utterance, it was found, not unexpectedly, that there is a cline where we find a preference for zero reductions and relatively few occurrences of more than ten reductions per utterance.

We have also established that there seems to be a connection between the number of reductions per utterance and the length of the utterance – the longer the utterance the stronger the possibility of more reductions.

Finally, we had a look at what specific elements commonly disappear in going from original film dialogue to subtitles. That it was typically interpersonal elements that were left out was not unexpected. These are finding that have also been noted elsewhere, e.g. De Linde (1995) and Díaz Cintas & Remael (2007). However, the fact that items such as adverbials and direct objects, which may be seen to carry more of the ideational content, were reduced to the extent they were came more

as a surprise, although in some cases their content can be inferred from the context.

Let us now move on to a comparison with what happens in dialogue in literary fiction.

5. Comparison with literary fiction

First, if we take a look at Table 4 we can immediately observe a clear difference between the two modes of translation. We only find omissions in 99 of the 500 utterances in translated fiction, which amounts to about 20% compared to the 65% we found in the subtitles. Although the books also vary quite a lot, with AH1 containing only 44 utterances where no omission occurs, they appear as a more homogeneous group, where the majority of the books seem to allow only a small amount of reductions.

Table 4. Number of utterances in fiction containing 0 - ≥10 reductions

	Number of reductions per utterance per text					
	AH1	BC1	RDO1	ST1	DL2	Total
0 reduction	44	87	95	89	86	401
1 reduction	35	12	3	9	10	69
2 reductions	15	1	2	1	4	23
3 reductions	5	0	0	1	0	6
4 reductions	1	0	0	0	0	1
5-9 reductions	0	0	0	0	0	0
≥10 reductions	0	0	0	0	0	0
						500

If we now take a look at the amount of textual reduction vs. length of utterance in Table 5, we see a clear similarity between translated film and fiction; here too there seems to be a connection between textual reduction and length of utterance: the longer the utterance the greater the possibility for more reductions. The fact that the pattern does not seem to fit with regard to four reductions should be put down to the small number of utterances in this category – the one utterance with four reductions happened to have only 92 characters in it, and could be disregarded.

Table 5 Mean length of original utterance in fiction (in characters)

	mean length
1 reduction	78
2 reductions	150
3 reductions	183
4 reductions	92

At the same time as we find this similarity between the two modes, they also quite clearly diverge with respect to length of utterance. While in the subtitles the mean length of the utterances with one reduction was 36 characters, the fiction translations had 78. We see the same tendency in the case of both two and three reductions, where we have 66 vs. 150 characters and 84 vs. 183 characters, respectively. These figures show that not only do we find less textual reduction in translated dialogue in fiction, but also the utterances are on average longer in translated fiction than in subtitles before reduction takes place.

Finally, let us compare the actual items that have been omitted in the two modes. Table 6 shows the same categories that were listed as the most common ones in Table 3.

Table 6 Elements omitted in translated dialogue in fiction

text / syntactic element ommitted	AH1	BC1	RDO1	ST1	DL2	Total
S + V	7	3	0	1	0	**11**
A	10	2	3	1	2	**18**
V	0	0	0	0	1	1
conjunction	3	2	1	0	2	**8**
vocative	15	0	0	1	0	**16**
reaction signal	1	0	0	0	0	1
initiator	4	0	0	2	0	**6**
dO	4	0	1	1	0	**6**
interjection	2	0	0	1	1	4
S	4	1	1	1	1	**8**
Ø	44	87	95	89	86	401

Interestingly there is an overlap of seven categories, i.e. seven of the most common types of element subject to reduction in the subtitles are found as the most common ones also in literary fiction (figures in bold face in Table 6). An example including the two most common types of reduction in fiction is given in (17), where the vocative *Miss de Grey* and the adjunct *when you came in here* have been left out in the translation.

(17) Look, I know you mean well, *Miss de Grey*, and I'm sorry about the way I spoke *when you came in here*. But the unfortunate fact is, it's too late…(AH1)

Hør her! Jeg vet De mener det godt, og jeg beklager oppførselen min. Men det er dessverre for sent nå…

Lit.: Listen here! I know you mean it well, and I am sorry about my behaviour. But it is unfortunately too late now...

However, as can be seen from Table 6 it is very much this particular text that contributes to the total and although it is tempting to say that the same elements are subject to reduction in both subtitles and translated fiction, I would rather conclude that there is less of a pattern as to what items are omitted in fiction than was the case in the subtitles. There is a more even distribution in fiction so to speak.

One factor that may influence this result is that dialogue in fiction probably incorporates fewer interpersonal elements than film dialogue to start with. Since these are the elements that first and foremost are reduced in the subtitles, we could speculate that it is rather the nature of the original film script and fiction text that is different than the translation of the two modes. It should also be borne in mind that, although the time and space restrictions that hold for subtitling have not been under study here, they are crucial factors that inevitably lead to more reduction in subtitles overall (cf. Díaz Cintas & Remael 2007).

6. Concluding remarks

This study has shown that there is a very strong correlation between length of utterance and number of textual reductions, not only in subtitles but also in translated fiction. The study has also shown that there is a tendency for the same types of elements to be omitted in both subtitles

and translated fiction. The elements that are omitted are in some way felt to be redundant; however, they may be so for different reasons as subtitles accompany actual images (cf. Gottlieb's 2005 *intrasemiotic redundancy*), while fictional dialogue accompany imaginary images.

The fact that it is typically interpersonal elements that disappear in subtitles could be seen as the main factor contributing to subtitles going from a spoken to a written style. This discrepancy is not noted to the same extent for literary fiction. Interestingly, in an article on audiovisual translation, Chaume (2004) studies the translation, or indeed non-translation, of a selection of interpersonal features, viz. discourse markers. His conclusion is that the loss of discourse markers "does not seriously affect the target text in terms of semantic meaning – whereas it does in terms of interpersonal meaning" (ibid.: 854).

To conclude, at a more general level, we could say that, although there may be more reduction in subtitles than in translated fiction, similar processes are at work in both translation modes.

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On spelling behavio(u)r: A corpus-based study of advanced EFL learners' preferred variety of English

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Abstract
The present study investigates variation in spelling based on British versus American English norms in the writing of university students in Sweden, Bulgaria and Italy. It also examines to what extent the students are consistent in their choice of variety. The corpus material on which the study is based allows for investigation of possible changes over time, across student levels and across nations. Contrary to findings of previous studies, the results reveal a clear preference for British English spelling for all the investigated subcorpora. The students are generally consistent in their use of one variety.

1. Introduction

In the European context, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners are, for both historical and geographical reasons, more influenced by British English and American English than by any other variety of English (Hoffmann, 2000: 7). However, the general opinion regarding which variety is preferred has changed over the years. While British English traditionally has been perceived to be the standard variety of English in Europe (Trudgill & Hannah, 1994: 1), Europe is now described as being involved in a process of "Americanization" and the acceptance of other varieties of English is gradually increasing (Modiano, 2002: 14). Several studies investigating students' attitudes and use of different varieties of English in a Swedish context have pointed to such a shift from a preference for British English to an increasing preference for American English (e.g. Alftberg, 2009; Mobärg, 1999; Modiano & Söderlund, 2002; Westergren Axelsson, 2002). Previous studies on students' actual linguistic performance have, however, mainly focused on vocabulary or pronunciation, and spelling has been largely neglected. Then, in order to further investigate this alleged shift in foreign language behavior, the present study carries out a large-scale investigation of which variety of English – British English or American English – Swedish university students adhere to with regard to spelling, and also whether the students are consistent in their choice of one variety. The Swedish results are subsequently compared to the results

from two other European countries: Italy and Bulgaria, in order to gain a broader perspective.

1.1. British and American English in an educational setting

Although it is, of course, important to keep in mind that there are more similarities than differences between British English (BrE) and American English (AmE), differences do still exist and are of interest in particular from a teaching perspective since they bring up the question of which variety – or varieties – ought to be the target in EFL teaching. In the Swedish context, this question has been brought to the fore as, although British and American English are now said to have equal status (Altenberg, 2002: 143), several studies have pointed out that teachers still generally seem to prefer British English over American English, (e.g. Modiano, 1993; Westergren Axelsson, 2002), even to the point that it is, according to Modiano & Söderlund (2002: 147), not uncommon for teachers to "let it be known, in one way or another, that AmE [is] less valued in comparison to BrE." However, considering the number of different Standard varieties of Englishes that are used around the world, maintaining the traditional view of British English as presenting the only model for what is considered to be incorrect and correct use of English might then result in what can be described as a fairly limited view of English in an EFL setting (cf., e.g., Brown, 1995, 2002 for a more detailed discussion).

Despite the fact that Swedish teachers of English have been found to generally prefer British English, studies investigating Swedish students' attitudes towards and actual preference for different varieties of English have indicated a shift from a preference for British English to an increasing preference for American English. Modiano & Söderlund (2002) found a clear preference for American English (including American English spelling) among the upper secondary school students that took part in their 1999 study. Comparing their results to a previous study conducted at university level in 1992 (Modiano, 1993), in which a majority of students showed a clear preference for British English, the authors concluded that "it would seem that the 1990s will be remembered as the decade when the Swedes abandoned their preference for BrE" (Modiano & Söderlund, 2002: 149). Swedish students' increasing preference for American English has also been confirmed in

other studies carried out in compulsory and upper secondary school (Alftberg, 2009; Mobärg, 1999) and, according to Modiano & Söderlund (2002: 149), there is “a great likelihood that this Americanization process will continue.” Nonetheless, a preference for British English among university students was still found in Westergren Axelsson’s (2002) study carried out in 2000. The preference was, however, less prominent compared to a similar study carried out in 1992, which was reported to serve as evidence that the preference for the two varieties is increasingly becoming more balanced (Westergren Axelsson, 2002: 143).

There are two main factors that have been reported to influence the preference for one variety of English over another in an EFL context: general norms and traditions of teaching a certain variety on the one hand, and media influence and exposure on the other hand. Since the teachers in Sweden have been found to generally show a higher preference for British English, the increasing preference for American English shown among Swedish students can seemingly not be explained solely by virtue of it being the variety of English that is most commonly taught at school; instead, media influence and exposure appears to be an important factor (cf. Mobärg, 1999). However, the extent to which students get exposed to English through the media differs slightly across different European countries. While people in Sweden receive (mainly American) English input from the media as movies and TV programmes are not dubbed, the Italians generally get less exposure to English as next to all Italian movies and TV programmes are dubbed (cf., e.g., Pulcini, 1997 for more detailed discussion of English in Italy). This, taken together with the fact that British English is reported to remain “the most widespread model among secondary school teachers and students because of geographical proximity and tradition” (Prat Zagrebelsky, 2002: 110), would then be likely to result in a higher preference for British English among Italian students. In Bulgaria, on the other hand, British English and American English have, for political reasons, both been influential in EFL teaching and today, American English is used mainly in the fields of business and technology, while British English is considered to be the primary language of education and literature (cf. e.g., O’Reilly, 1998 for more detailed discussion of English in Bulgaria). Furthermore, movies and TV programmes are not dubbed, which means that people in Bulgaria get exposed to English through the media as well (Blagoeva, 2002; Griffin, 2001).

Another related issue of interest in this context is the extent to which students are consistently using only one variety of English. In previous studies carried out in a Swedish setting, a tendency for inconsistent use of the varieties has been found. Although Modiano & Söderlund (2002) do not draw any explicit conclusions based on their findings in terms of degree of consistency, a relatively high occurrence of inconsistent use of British English and American English spelling conventions can be discerned from their results. One study targeting university students' preferred variety with regard to pronunciation that specifically comments on consistency reports that "many students are aware of their lack of consistency and regret that they cannot reach their ideal, a pure, unmixed national accent" (Westergren Axelsson 2002: 133). Teachers are, furthermore, said to typically prefer their students to be consistent (Westergren Axelsson, 2002: 142).

1.2 Overview of the present study

The present cross-sectional study aims to investigate i) which variety – British or American English – Swedish university students adhere to with regard to spelling, and ii) to what extent the students are consistent in their use of British or American English spelling. Rather than investigating students' attitudinal preference for one variety of English over another, which has been the focus of several previous more small-scale studies, the present corpus-based study allows for a large-scale investigation of their actual preference. The results are analyzed to detect possible variation across the student levels (first through fourth term of studies) and to detect possible changes over time. Finally, although the main focus of the study is on the Swedish context, the results from the two Swedish national subcorpora will also be compared to the national subcorpora from two other European countries – Bulgaria and Italy – in order to contrast the results and gain a broader perspective of the use of English in an EFL context.

2. Spelling differences between British English and American English

Although the vast majority of the words are spelled in the same way in British English and American English, there are certain noteworthy differences between the varieties. Most of these differences are due to

Noah Webster's *Spelling Book* published in 1783, in which he aimed to standardize American spelling and thereby avoid dependence on the linguistic model of the UK (Tottie, 2002: 8-10). Today, there are both rule-bound and irregular differences between the spelling variants of British English and American English; however, the focus of this study is on systematic differences. The following systematic differences are found when comparing British English spelling to American English spelling (Tottie, 2002: 10-11):

Suffixes

- *-our* (BrE) and *-or* (AmE); as in *colour/color* and *humour/humor*
- *-re* (BrE) and *-er* (AmE); as in *centre/center* and *litre/liter*
- *-logue* (BrE) and *-log* (AmE); as in *dialogue/dialog* and *prologue/prolog*
- *-ence* (BrE) and *-ense* (AmE); as in *defence/defense* and *licence/license* (the alteration between *s* and *c* is, however, reversed in certain words such as in BrE *practise*, and AmE *practice*)
- *-amme* (BrE) and *-am* (AmE, sometimes also in BrE); as in *programme/program*
- *-exion* (BrE) and *-ection* (AmE, sometimes also in BrE); as in *connexion/connection*
- *-ise* (BrE) and *-ize* (AmE, sometimes also in BrE); verb-ending, as in *organise/organize*
- *-yse* (BrE) and *-yze* (AmE, sometimes also in BrE); verb-ending, as in *analyse/analyze*

Doubling of -l

- Verb-final *-l* is doubled before the endings *-ed* and *-ing* in BrE, but not in AmE; in words such as *travelled* or *cancelling* (BrE), and *traveled* or *canceling* (AmE)
- In a few other cases, *-l* is doubled at the end of certain words or in the middle of other words in AmE, but not in BrE; in words such as *fulfil* or *skilful* (BrE), and *fulfill* or *skillful* (AmE)

Loanwords

- Greek or Latin loanwords have simplified spellings with *e* instead of *ae* or *oe* in AmE, but usually not in BrE; in words such as *aesthetic* or *foetus* (BrE), and *esthetic* or *fetus* (AmE)

3. The investigation

3.1 The corpus material

The material used for the present study was culled from two large corpora: the *International Corpus of Learner English* (ICLE) and the *Stockholm University Student English Corpus* (SUSEC). The full ICLE corpus comprises 3,640 essays and over 2.5 million words divided into eleven national subcorpora, three of which – the Swedish, Italian and Bulgarian subcorpora – were chosen for this study. The corpus-material was collected from EFL students at university level and includes mainly argumentative essays. The Swedish subcorpus (SWICLE), comprises 363 essays and 206,015 words; the Italian subcorpus (IT) comprises 397 essays and 229,412 words; and the Bulgarian subcorpus (BG) contains 302 essays and 203,077 words, as is shown in Table 1. All essays were collected during the 1990s from students in their third or fourth term of study.

The complete SUSEC corpus comprises 368 texts and more than one million words of academic essays written by non-native speakers of English studying at the English Department of Stockholm University in Sweden, as well as of native speakers from King's College in the UK. The material was collected in 2007 from university students studying general linguistics, English linguistics and English literature. Since the focus of the present study is on the EFL context, only the Swedish essays were chosen for further investigation. The Swedish subcorpus (henceforth referred to as the SUSEC) comprises a total of 910,324 words and 286 essays from students in their first, second, third and fourth term of study. An overview of the SUSEC subcorpora included in the present study is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 1. Overview of the ICLE subcorpora included in the present study

Component	Number of essays	Number of word tokens
Swedish subcorpus (SWICLE)	363	206,015
Bulgarian subcorpus (BG)	302	203,077
Italian subcorpus (IT)	397	229,412
Total	**1,062**	**638,504**

Table 2. Overview of the SUSEC subcorpora included in the present study

Component	Number of essays	Number of word tokens
First-term essays	117	117,175
Second-term essays	90	182,829
Third-term essays	62	417,772
Fourth-term essays	17	192,548
Total	**286**	**910,324**

3.2 Method

Since the present study is corpus-based, an investigation of a large number of authentic texts was made possible. A total of 1,348 student essays were investigated and all instances of British or American English

spelling in the present study are found in an authentic context (i.e. as part of an essay rather than a survey), which allows for a focus on actual language use.

The list of spelling variants chosen for investigation in the present study is based on Tottie's (2002: 10-12) overview of different categories of standard spelling that traditionally differs between British English and American English. Non-systematic spelling differences and categories that are not exclusively used in British English and American English were excluded. In addition, both the doubling of the letter *-l* before the endings *-ed* and *-ing* in words used in British English spelling, as well as the doubling of the letter *-l* in certain words, such as *fulfill* and *skillful* used in American English, were excluded from the study. The four categories of spelling differences selected for further investigation were then: *-our*/*-or*, *-logue*/*-log*, *-tre*/*-ter*, and *-ence*/*-ense*. The next step was to select words to represent each category. For the *-our*/*-or* category, which contained the most commonly occurring words, as well as for the category including *-logue*/*-log*, complete coverage of the words spelled in accordance with British English spelling was achieved. These words were subsequently matched with the equivalent words spelled in accordance with American English standards. In order to ensure that this procedure did not result in a list of words that were biased in favor of British English spelling, a random sample of 40 essays (ten from each national subcorpus) were gone through manually to search for any occurrences of words belonging to the *-our*/*-or* or *-logue*/*-log* categories spelled in accordance with American English spelling. No additional words were, however, found and the list was therefore concluded to be representative of both varieties. For the remaining two categories in which words including very frequently occurring clusters of letters were contained (*-tre* vs. *-ter* and *-ence* vs. *-ense*), a selection of three sample words for each category was made based on Tottie's list (2002: 10-11). Relevant inflectional and derivational forms of all words were also included; however, words such as *humorous*, where adding a derivational suffix to the word stem entails that the spelling does no longer differ between British English and American English, were excluded.

In total, 30 words were included in the study and are listed below:

- *-our* (BrE) and *-or* (AmE):
  Ardour/ardor, armour/armor, behaviour/behavior, colour/color, clamour/clamor, demeanour/demeanor, endeavour/endeavor, favour/favor, flavour/flavor, harbour/harbor, honour/honor, humour/humor, labour/labor, neighbour/neighbor, odour/odor, rumour/rumor, vigour/vigor, vapour/vapor, savour/savor, tumour/tumor
- *-logue* (BrE) and *-log* (AmE):
  catalogue/catalog, dialogue/dialog, monologue/monolog, prologue/prologue
- *-re* (BrE) and *-er* (AmE):
  theatre/theater, centre/center, metre/meter
- *-ence* (BrE) and *-ense* (AmE):
  defence/defense, offence/offense, licence/license

The rate of occurrence of each word was investigated using the AntConc concordancer software (Anthony, 2012). A manual examination of each word was, however, necessary in order to eliminate "noise" hidden within the results such as irrelevant words including the targeted cluster of letters (for example *your, our, of course*, which all include the letters of the targeted category of *-our*). Furthermore, names of places, buildings and parties etc. (for example *World Trade Center, Globe Theatre* and *Labour Party*) were excluded. In addition, all words within quotation marks and all references were excluded in order to be able to detect spelling choices made by the author him/herself. For the SUSEC, the stripped version, i.e. the version in which the list of references and all quotations had been removed, was used; for the remaining subcorpora, references and quotes were, when included, removed manually. The degree of consistency was examined by searching those essays marked for American English spelling in AntConc for any occurrences of the examined words spelled according to British English spelling conventions.

The overall frequency and degree of consistency were calculated for all subcorpora separately. In order to ensure that potentially high frequencies in a small number of essays would not affect the results unduly, both the number of the investigated word tokens and the number

of essays in which British English or American English spelling conventions were used consistently were investigated. Since the subcorpora differ in size, the overall frequency was normalized per 100,000 words, and the number of essays was normalized per 10 essays. The results were furthermore tested for statistical significance[1] using the chi-square contingency test to test differences in relative frequencies, or the chi-square test for goodness-of-fit to test differences in absolute frequencies.

4. Findings

In this section, the results of the present study are presented. In section 4.1, the findings of the investigation of the Swedish data are presented, first with regard to preferred variety and, second, in terms of degree of consistency. The results from the Swedish national subcorpora are subsequently compared to the Bulgarian and Italian national subcorpora in section 4.2. An overview of the results from all the investigated subcorpora showing the distribution of the word tokens spelled in accordance with British or American English standards, as well as the number of essays in which British or American English was used consistently can be found in Appendix A. An overview of the distribution of the inconsistent and consistent essays is presented in Appendix B.

4.1. The Swedish context

4.1.1. Preferred variety: an investigation of possible differences across four student levels

The results show a clear and statistically significant predominance of British English spelling in all of the four subcorpora of the SUSEC. In

[1] Chi-square tests are used to investigate whether the null-hypothesis, which states that there is no difference between the frequencies subjected to the test, can be rejected. If it can be rejected, the frequency differences for a certain set of data is statistically significant (Johannesson, 1986: 91). As is customary for linguistic investigations, the frequency difference was taken to be statistically significant for error probability value (*p*) lower than 0.05 and chi-square value higher than 3.84 (cf. e.g. Johannesson (1986: 91-99) for a more thorough description of chi-square tests).

total, 78% of the investigated words were spelled according to British English conventions, and 22% according to American English standards, which can be broken down to first-term essays (70% BrE, 30% AmE), second-term essays (63% BrE, 37% AmE), third-term essays (87% BrE, 13% AmE), and fourth-term essays (82% BrE, 18% AmE), as shown in Figure 1. The greatest difference between the spelling varieties was found in the third-term data where almost 90% of the investigated words were spelled in accordance with British English conventions, to be compared to the second-term data, where 63% of the words were spelled using the British English standard. All differences found between the SUSEC subcorpora were statistically significant except for the differences between the first-term and second-term essays, and the third-term and fourth-term essays.

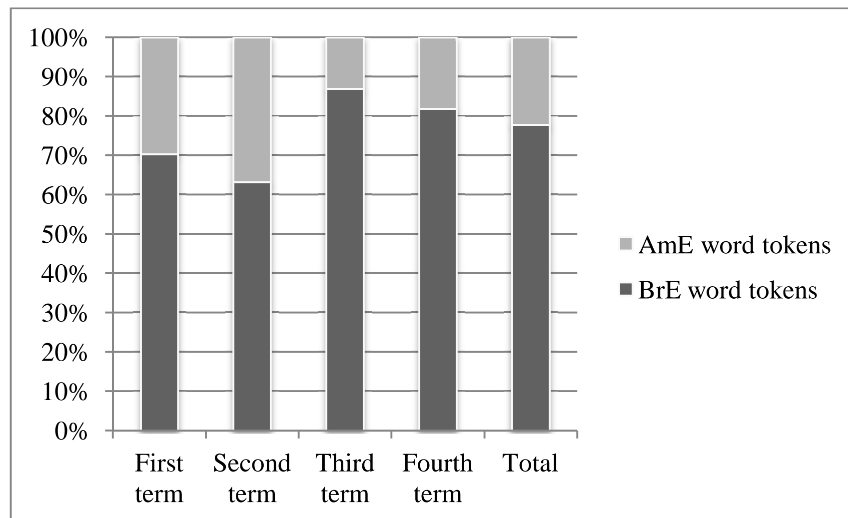

Figure 1. Relative frequency of British English and American English word tokens

The same pattern can be discerned from the investigation of the relative frequency for the number of essays in which British English or American English spelling conventions were used consistently, as shown in Figure 2. In total, out of all the consistent essays, 77% included words spelled in accordance with British English standards, while 23% included words spelled in accordance with American English standards. In terms of usage across the different student levels, the results showed a slightly

more leveled-out pattern. Again, the greatest preference for American English spelling was found in the second-term essays (70% BrE, 30% AmE), whereas the rest of the SUSEC subcorpora showed a comparably stronger preference for British English spelling: 79% BrE and 21% AmE in the first-term essays, 81% BrE and 19% AmE in the third-term essays, and 82% BrE, and 18% AmE in the fourth-term essays. However, although the differences between the preference for British English or American English spelling were statistically significant at all levels, none of the differences between the levels were statistically significant (in some cases, the numbers were too low to test for statistical significance).

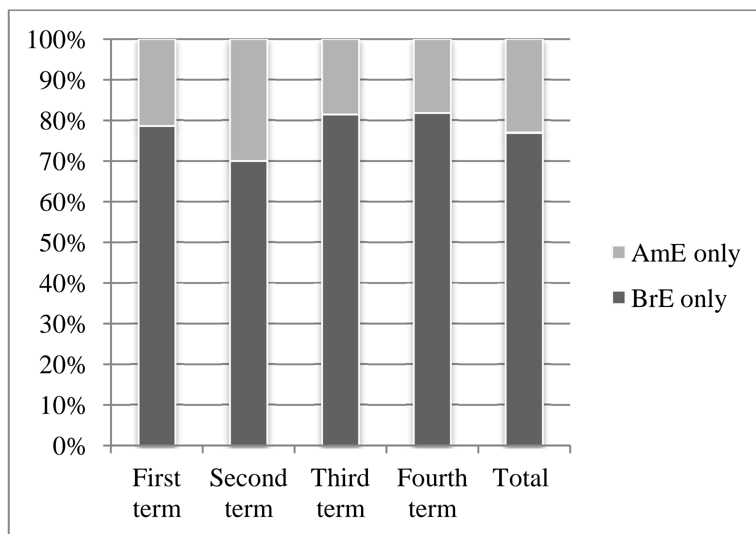

Figure 2. Relative frequency of the essays in which British English or American English spelling is used consistently

There does, thus, not appear to be a gradual increase of preference for either variety from one level to the next, which would suggest that EFL studies at a higher level in a Swedish context do not necessarily entail an increasing preference for either British English or American English. However, the fact that there is a very strong preference for British English across all student levels taken together with a slightly stronger preference among students in their third and fourth term of studies may indicate that British English is perceived to be more formal than

American English (cf. Mobärg, 2002), which could be connected to the history of predominance of British English in Sweden.

4.1.2. Preferred variety: an investigation of possible changes over time
The predominance of British English spelling does not appear to have undergone any considerable change over the years separating SWICLE (compiled in the 1990s) from SUSEC (compiled in 2007), as the slight increase in use of American English spelling was not statistically significant. Out of the investigated words, the results for SWICLE show that 82% of the words were spelled in accordance with British English conventions, while 18% of the words were spelled according to American English standards. This can be compared to SUSEC where 78% used British English spelling and 22% used American English standards, as is shown in Figure 3.

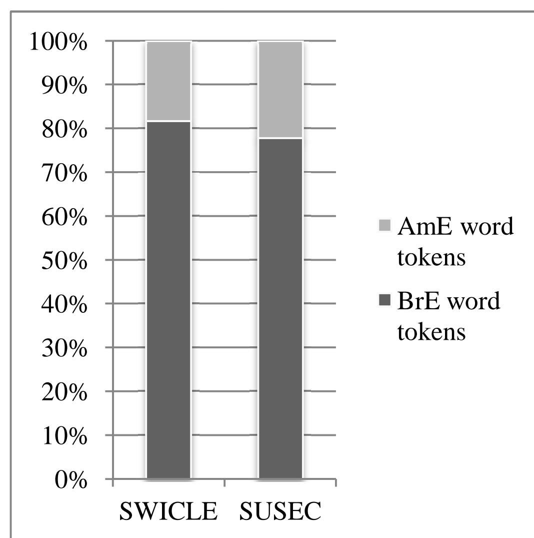

Figure 3. Relative frequency of British English and American English word tokens

A slightly larger, albeit still not statistically significant, difference can be discerned when investigating the relative frequency of the number of essays in which only British English or American English spelling is used. While 83% of the essays only comprised words spelled according

to British English standards and 17% only comprised words spelled in accordance with American English conventions in the SWICLE, 77% of the students used only British English spelling and 23% of the students used only American English spelling in SUSEC, as can be seen in Figure 4.

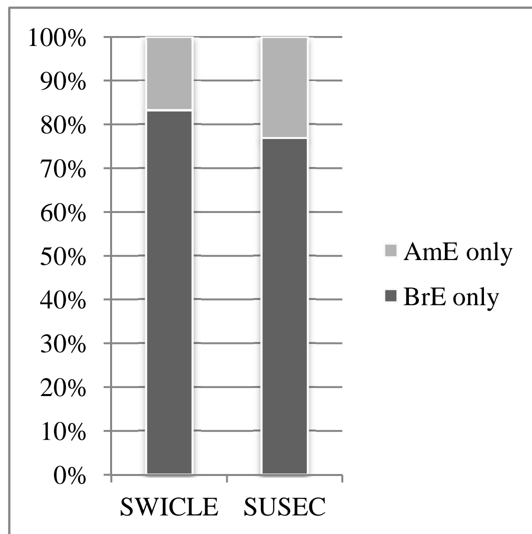

Figure 4. Relative frequency of the essays in which British English or American English spelling is used consistently

The fact that there was no statistically significant difference between the two Swedish national subcorpora suggests that despite the Americanization process allegedly taking place all over Europe (Modiano, 2002: 14), the preference for British English spelling has remained next to unchanged at university level for the years separating SWICLE and SUSEC. However, the slight, albeit not statistically significant, increase in preference for American English spelling over the years might still indicate that the preference for British English and American English is increasingly becoming more balanced, as was also reported in Westergren Axelsson (2002).

Furthermore, since there is a clear and statistically significant preference for British English spelling in both SWICLE and the SUSEC, these findings then seem to contradict findings of previous studies

targeted at younger students where a clear preference for American English spelling was found (e.g. Alftberg, 2009; Modiano & Söderlund, 2002). One possible explanation to the diverging results could be the difference in educational level of the students. Given that British English is still generally perceived to be higher in style compared to American English (cf. Mobärg, 2002), studies at a higher level might then result in a preference for the variety considered to be highest in style.

4.1.3. Degree of consistency: an investigation of possible differences across four student levels

The results for the SUSEC show that the students were generally consistent in their use of one spelling variety, as shown in Figure 3. In total, the results show that 88% of the students were consistent, while 12% were inconsistent. This can be broken down to the first-term essays (95% consistent, 5% inconsistent), the second-term essays (91% consistent, 9% inconsistent), the third-term essays (84% consistent, 16% inconsistent), and the fourth-term essays (65% consistent, 35% inconsistent), as is shown in Figure 5. The differences found between the levels are, however, not statistically significant (in certain cases the numbers were, again, too low to test for statistical significance).

Since the differences found between the different student levels lacked statistical significance, no general conclusions can be drawn from these findings. It is, nevertheless, interesting to note that an unexpectedly high incidence of inconsistent essays can be found among the fourth-term essays despite the fact that the fourth-term students can be expected to have better knowledge of English than the first-term students. As many as 6 essays out of 17 (35%) included inconsistent use of British English and American English spelling, to be compared to the first-term essays where only 3 essays out of 59 (5%) included inconsistent use of the varieties. One possible explanation to these findings could be linked to the average length of the essays, as the fourth-term essays were approximately 11,000 words long, while the first-term essays were approximately 1,000 words long. Given that this is the case, it seems that a longer essay would result in a higher likelihood of inconsistent use of the varieties. Despite thorough revision and the possible use of spell-checkers, these students then appear to be influenced by both varieties of English to the extent that they either are not aware of the differences

between the varieties, or they choose not to focus on them. This observation is, of course, based on a small number of essays and would need to be investigated further; nonetheless, it gives rise to the question of whether EFL teachers in Sweden can – or should – demand consistent use of one variety from their students (cf., e.g., Modiano, 2002).

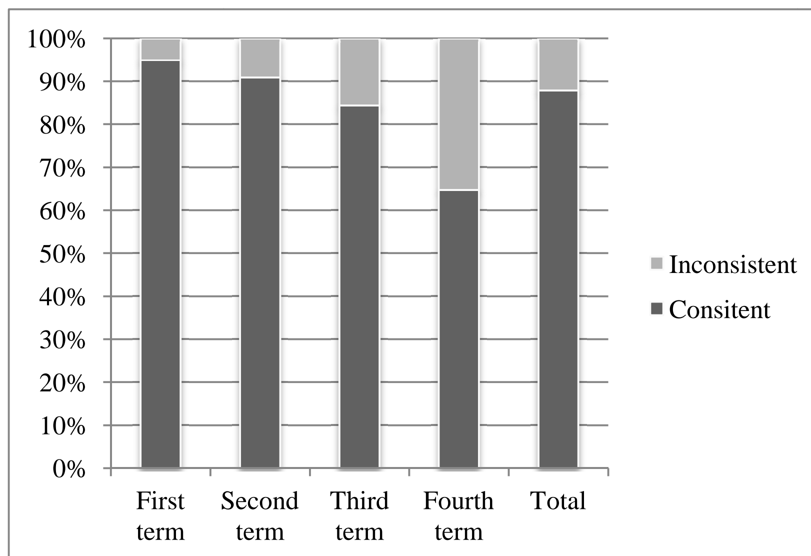

Figure 5. Relative frequency of inconsistent and consistent essays

4.1.4. Degree of consistency: an investigation of possible changes over time

The results show that there has been a slight, albeit not statistically significant, decrease in consistency over the years separating the SWICLE from the SUSEC, as shown in Figure 6. In the SWICLE, 94% of the essays were consistent, while 6% were inconsistent. In the SUSEC, 88% of the students were consistent, while 12% were inconsistent.

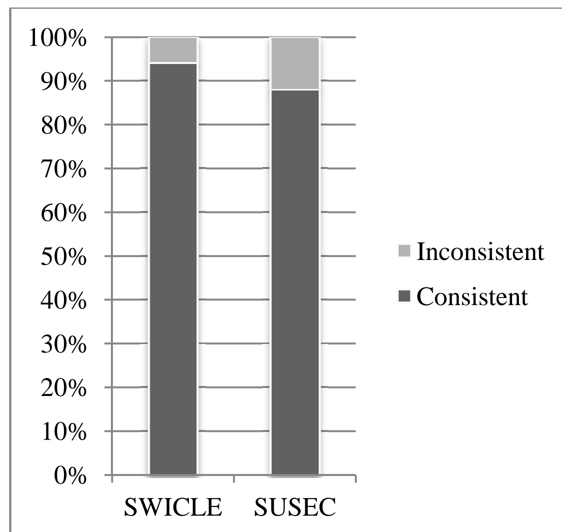

Figure 6. Relative frequency of inconsistent and consistent essays

The students were then generally found to be consistent in their use of one variety and only approximately one student out of ten is inconsistent in his or her use of British English and American English spelling conventions. These findings differ from Modiano & Söderlund's (2002) study, as their results indicated a slightly higher tendency of inconsistent use of spelling conventions. One possible explanation for the lower incidence of inconsistency in this study might be that university students of English are generally likely to be more aware of the differences in spelling between the two varieties than students at upper secondary school level and would therefore be able to consciously be more consistent. The diverging results could also be explained by a possible correlation between an increasing preference for an alternative variety (in this case American English) in a context where British English has a history of predominance on the one hand, and a higher degree of inconsistent use of the varieties on the other hand. Then, since the students in Modiano & Söderlund's (2002) study used American English spelling to a larger extent, these students would be more inclined to be less consistent compared to the present study, which also proved to be the case.

When comparing the results from the two Swedish national subcorpora, we find no statistically significant difference, and the degree of consistency does then not appear to have changed notably in the year separating the SWICLE and the SUSEC. Given that an increase in preference for an alternative variety would result in a decrease in consistency, the slight, albeit not statistically significant, increase in inconsistency found in SUSEC could then be explained by the slight, but again not statistically significant, increase in preference for American English spelling found in SUSEC. The slight differences found when comparing the SWICLE data and the SUSEC data might, however, also be explained by the varying length of the essays in the two corpora. Nevertheless, the alleged Americanization of Swedish society taking place during the last decades does not appear to have notably affected either the preference for British English or the degree of consistency of the university students included in the study.

4.2. The larger European context

4.2.1. Preferred variety: an investigation of possible differences across nations

In the Bulgarian and Italian national subcorpora, as well as in the two Swedish national subcorpora, a statistically significant predominance of British English spelling was found, as shown in Figure 7. The greatest preference for British English spelling can be found in the Italian subcorpus. Of the investigated words chosen for this study, 97% of the words were spelled in accordance with British English conventions, while only 3% of the words were spelled according to American English standards; the difference was highly statistically significant (significance level $p<0.001$). This can be compared to the Bulgarian subcorpus (87% BrE spelling, 13% AmE spelling), to SWICLE (82% BrE, 18 % AmE) and to SUSEC (78% BrE, 22% AmE). However, although the preference for British English spelling was statistically significant within each national subcorpus, the differences found between the four national subcorpora were not all statistically significant. This is the case for the difference between SWICLE and the Bulgarian subcorpus and, as mentioned earlier, between SUSEC and SWICLE; the rest proved to be statistically significant.

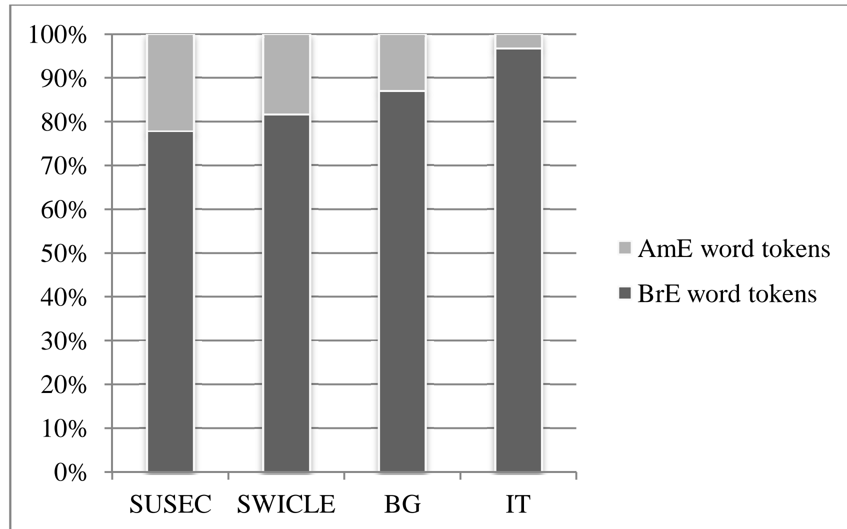

Figure 7. Relative frequency of British English and American English word tokens

In terms of relative frequency of the number of essays in which only British English or American English spelling was used, the Italian subcorpus still showed the largest predominance of British English spelling in percentage as 96% out of the students used British English spelling, whereas 4% of the students used American English spelling. This can be compared to the Bulgarian subcorpus (86% BrE, 14% AmE), to SWICLE (83% BrE, 17% AmE, and to SUSEC (77% BrE, 23% AmE), as shown in Figure 8. There was no statistically significant difference between the Swedish national subcorpora and the Bulgarian subcorpus.

Common for the data from all four national subcorpora is that there is a clear, statistically significant preference for British English spelling, both in terms of number of word tokens and number of essays in which British English or American English spelling is used consistently. When comparing the national subcorpora, we find the most prominent preference for British English in the Italian subcorpus. The connection between media preferences (and thereby exposure to a language variety) and positive attitudes towards that variety reported in the literature (Mobärg, 1999: 68) could serve as one explanation as to why the Italian subcorpus stands out. Since there is a strong predominance of British

English in the Italian school system, in addition to the fact that next to all TV shows are dubbed (Pulcini, 1997: 81), the Italian students are less likely to be exposed to American English compared to the Bulgarian and Swedish students, and British English would then be the obvious choice of variety.

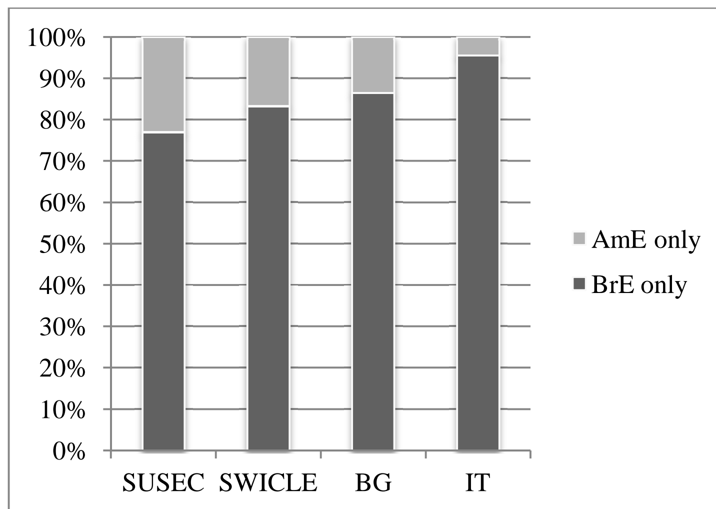

Figure 8. Relative frequency of the essays in which British English or American English spelling is used consistently

Apart from the more frequent occurrence of American English word tokens in SUSEC compared to the Bulgarian subcorpus, no statistically significant differences are found between the Swedish national subcorpora and the Bulgarian national subcorpus. Thus, there is seemingly no considerable difference between the Swedish and Bulgarian national subcorpora, which might be explained by similarities between the countries with respect to media influence and a recent history of British English predominance in education (cf., e.g., Altenberg, 2002 and Blagoeva, 2002; for an overview of EFL teaching in Sweden and Bulgaria respectively).

4.2.2. Degree of consistency: an investigation of possible differences across nations

The only statistically significant difference found was between the subcorpus including the most consistent essays (Italy) and the subcorpus including the highest occurrence of inconsistent essays (SUSEC). For the SUSEC, results show that 88% of the student essays were consistent, while 12% were inconsistent, which can be compared to the Italian subcorpus where 98% were consistent, and 2% inconsistent, as shown in Figure 9. For the SWICLE, 94% of the essays were consistent and 6% were inconsistent and for the Bulgarian subcorpus of ICLE, 95% were consistent, and 5% inconsistent.

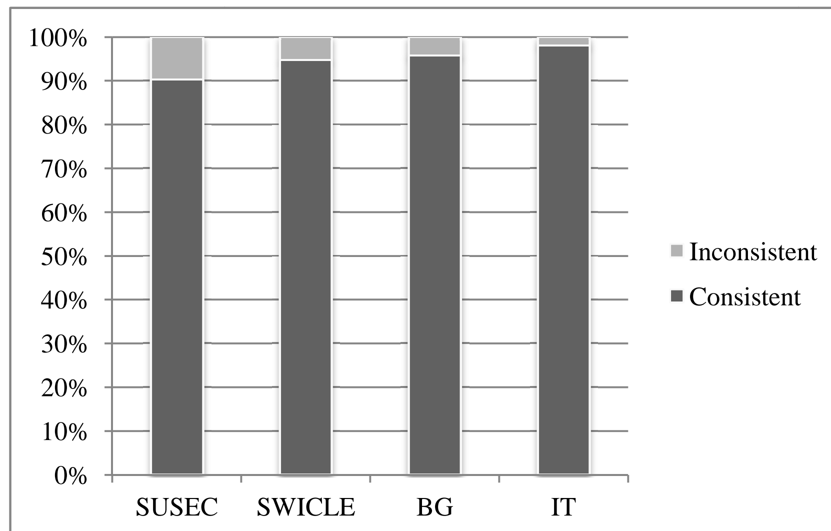

Figure 9. Relative frequency of inconsistent and consistent essays

Again, there appears to be a correlation between a greater preference for an alternative variety (in this case American English) and a higher tendency for inconsistent use of the varieties. Consequently, a lower preference for an alternative spelling variety (American English) would then entail a higher degree of consistency, which was true for the Italian essays. The Swedish essays showed a higher preference for American English and would therefore be expected to be less consistent, as proved to be the case. This correlation would then also serve as an explanation as to why there was no statistically significant difference between the

Swedish national subcorpora and the Bulgarian national subcorpus with regard to the frequency of occurrence of the number of (in)consistent essays.

5. Conclusion

The results of the present study show that British English is the preferred variety in terms of spelling; this was the case for all the investigated student levels and the preference had not changed significantly over time. Hence, although almost 20 years have passed since Modiano (1993) concluded that Swedish university students of English show an attitudinal preference for British English, the actual preference of this variety does not seem to have changed notably over the years separating SWICLE from SUSEC. When comparing the result from the Swedish national subcorpora to the Bulgarian and Italian national subcorpora, an even stronger preference for British English spelling was found in the Italian subcorpus, while the results from the Bulgarian subcorpus did not prove to differ significantly from the Swedish results. The findings could possibly be explained by the traditional preference for British English found in all three countries, and the greater predominance of British English found in the Italian essays might be explained by the lack of American influence from the media in Italy.

In terms of degree of consistency, the students were generally consistent in their choice of one variety. Nonetheless, the lower number of inconsistent essays and the lower preference for American English spelling found in the Italian subcorpus compared to the higher number of inconsistent essays and the higher preference for American English spelling found in SUSEC could point to a possible correlation between an increasing preference for an alternative variety (American English) and an increasing tendency for inconsistent use of the varieties. It is, however, important to bear in mind that the results cannot be generalizable to the full subcorpora of the countries, other than for the words selected to represent the investigated categories; moreover, since the study does not investigate attitudinal preference, the conclusions drawn do not take into account that words could be misspelled or not deliberately chosen.

Apart from adding to our knowledge of how English is used by advanced EFL students, these findings also have implications for EFL

teaching. Since there appears to be a strong preference for British English among university students – many of whom are prospective EFL teachers – in a context where British English is no longer the only accepted variety, it would seem important for EFL teachers and teacher educators to be aware of this strong preference. A conscious effort would then be needed to allow for a more tolerant view with respect to what is considered to be incorrect and correct use of English in an EFL context by also acknowledging the existence of other varieties of English.

In order to gain more knowledge of how non-native speakers of English use the language, both quantitative and qualitative studies are needed. Such studies could, for example, further investigate to what extent EFL students tend to (consistently) adhere to British or American English standards when it comes to grammar and vocabulary, and whether these possible preferences can be found to correlate with students' spelling preferences. Finally, since non-native speakers of English now outnumber native speakers of English (McArthur, 2006: 465), a few questions remain: to whom does the English language really belong, does it matter, and will it matter in the future?

Acknowledgements

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Appendix A
Rate of occurrence of word tokens spelled in accordance with British English or American English conventions for all the investigated subcorpora, followed by rate of occurrence for the essays in which British English or American English spelling conventions are used consistently.

SUSEC subcorpora	Total number of word tokens	Number of BrE word tokens	BrE word tokens per 100,000 words	Number of AmE word tokens	AmE word tokens per 100,000 words
First term	117,175	85	73	36	31
Second term	182,829	94	51	55	30
Third term	417,772	245	59	37	9
Fourth term	192,548	103	53	23	12
Total	**910,324**	**527**	**58**	**151**	**17**

National subcorpora	Total number of word tokens	Number of BrE word tokens	BrE word tokens per 100,000 words	Number of AmE word tokens	AmE word tokens per 100,000 words
SUSEC	910,324	527	58	151	17
SWICLE	206,015	209	101	47	23
BG	203,077	153	75	23	11
IT	229,412	469	204	16	7

Total	**1,548,828**	**1,358**	**88**	**237**	**15**

SUSEC subcorpora	Total number of essays	Number of essays with BrE spelling only	BrE essays per 10 essays	Number of essays with AmE spelling only	AmE essays per 10 essays
First term	117	44	3.8	12	1.0
Second term	90	35	3.9	15	1.7
Third term	62	35	5.6	8	1.3
Fourth term	17	9	5.3	2	1.2
Total	**286**	**123**	**4.3**	**37**	**1.3**

National subcorpora	Total number of essays	Number of essays with BrE spelling only	BrE essays per 10 essays	Number of essays with AmE spelling only	AmE essays per 10 essays
SUSEC	286	123	4.3	37	1.3
SWICLE	363	119	3.3	24	0.7
BG	302	89	2.9	14	0.5
IT	397	189	4.8	9	0.2
Total	**1,348**	**520**	**3.9**	**84**	**0.6**

Appendix B

Rate of occurrence of inconsistent and consistent essays for all the investigated subcorpora.

SUSEC subcorpora	Total number of essays	Number of consistent essays	Consistent essays per 10 essays	Number of inconsistent essays	Inconsistent essays per 10 essays
First term	59	56	9.5	3	0.5
Second term	55	50	9.1	5	0.9
Third term	51	43	8.4	8	1.6
Fourth term	17	11	6.5	6	3.5
Total	**182**	**160**	**8.8**	**22**	**1.2**

National subcorpora	Total number of essays	Number of consistent essays	Consistent essays per 10 essays	Number of inconsistent essays	Inconsistent essays per 10 essays
SUSEC	182	160	8.8	22	1.2
SWICLE	152	143	9.4	9	0.6
BG	108	103	9.5	5	0.5
IT	202	198	9.8	4	0.2
Total	**644**	**604**	**9.4**	**40**	**0.6**

Combining intuition with corpus linguistic analysis: A study of marked lexical chunks in four Chinese students' undergraduate assignments

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Abstract
In the literature on lexical chunks, a dichotomy is frequently implied between intuition-based methods of finding language 'formulaic' and frequency-based means of extracting 'n-grams'. In this paper, a case study of four Chinese students' undergraduate assignments is described in terms of marked or atypical lexical chunks revealed through close reading and those found through keyword analysis, when compared with a reference corpus of similar writing by British undergraduates. The paper discusses the benefits of combining the two approaches, arguing that this gives clearer insights into the personal phraseological profiles of the students' writing than either can offer alone.

1. Introduction

More and more Chinese people are choosing to study abroad, with 284,700 doing so in 2010 (British Council, 2012); this study is increasingly taking place at degree level in English-speaking countries. Despite this growth, comparatively little research has been carried out on Chinese students' assessed undergraduate writing, with most studies exploring either short texts or longer, Master's level theses (e.g. Chuang and Nesi, 2006; Hyland, 2008). This study takes a case study approach in focusing on the writing of four Chinese students in UK Higher Education; their assignments are compared with texts in the same disciplines, and also with larger corpora of L1 (first language) Chinese and L1 English student texts[1] to uncover features of the language which are particular to the individual, the discipline, and the L1. It should be noted that the L1 English writing is not intended to be normative. Both the L1 Chinese and L1 English texts used in the study are successful assignments and were awarded a IIi or I in the UK system (equivalent to 'merit' or 'distinction'). Moreover, it is recognized that L1 English undergraduate students are also novices in learning the conventions of

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[1] Note that 'assignment' and 'text' are used interchangeably in this paper.

academic writing within their discipline and as such are not necessarily 'better' academic writers.

The comparisons are carried out in terms of the nature of the 'lexical chunks' or 'chunks' used in the writing; chunks are used here as an umbrella term to cover frequently-occurring sequences of words and collocations or words which 'predict one another, in the sense that where we find one, we can expect to find the other' (Durrant, 2008: 5). Research into the contribution made by lexical chunks to academic writing has proliferated in recent years as these are widely regarded as indicators of competent language use (e.g. Ädel and Erman, 2012; Biber and Barbieri, 2007; Cortes, 2004; Hyland, 2008). Using preferred, conventionalized ways of expressing meaning is easier for the writer since ideas can be expressed using prefabricated units rather than being constructed anew. It is also easier for the reader since existing phrases are more easily recognized than novel ones (cf. Wray and Perkins, 2000). Learning to write in academia can thus be viewed as using chunks which the reader recognizes as particular to the discipline and which therefore help to establish the writer's membership within the disciplinary community (e.g. Li and Schmitt, 2009).

This study examines those chunks which are marked or atypical in four Chinese students' writing when compared with a larger corpus of writing in the same discipline or with a corpus of L1 English student writing. The term 'marked' is employed here in the sense that the chunks appear unusual in the context of academic writing, perhaps due to their informality or to their idiosyncratic nature. The study is thus different to the majority of corpus studies which concentrate on high frequency items meeting a minimum dispersion level across individuals and texts and which remove any idiosyncratic chunks (e.g. as in Chen and Baker's, 2010, study of four-word lexical chunks in Chinese students' writing). In this study, on the other hand, rare chunks are of interest since these can reveal unusual and hence noticeable aspects of individual student writing. In this, the paper draws on corpus stylistics work on exploring the work of individual writers in order to raise awareness of distinctive features of the writing (e.g. Coniam, 2004; Lee and Swales, 2006).

This paper reports on findings from the study's two objectives: the first of these is to describe features of Chinese students' written English assignments; the second aim is to contrast two approaches to identifying lexical chunks and compare what is revealed through each method. In the

first method, each student's assignments are read by the author in order to identify salient lexical chunks, that is, those which appear to be marked or atypical in some way and which may be idiosyncratic to the individual or L1 group. Using WordSmith Tools (v. 5; Scott, 2011), the number of occurrences of each identified chunk is then found within all texts by the same student, and is compared with the number found in reference corpora of L1 English assignments from the same discipline and also from a larger corpus of L1 Chinese undergraduate assignments. The second method begins from corpora, using WordSmith Tools to identify keywords in each student's writing using the same reference corpora as the first method. The co-text of the chunks uncovered through each method is then explored and the chunks are grouped into categories. Discussion in the paper centres on the benefits of using reader intuition and corpus tools as the means of initially identifying lexical chunks which are marked in an individual's writing, or salient in a discipline or L1 grouping.

Section 2 describes the two methods more fully. This is followed by a description of the data (section 3), findings and discussion from each method (section 4) and conclusions.

2. Two methods of identifying and extracting lexical chunks

Wray (2008: 93) discusses an inherent circularity in identifying lexical chunks, since 'you cannot reliably identify something unless you can define it', yet in order to define it, you must have some examples to study. A theorist's underlying view of chunks is therefore bound up with the choice of identification method; for example defining chunks by how many times they occur leads to a computational method of identification, excepting very small samples where counts can be manual (see Wray, 2002, for discussion of different methods of identification and extraction). In this paper I suggest that a major division between types of lexical chunk hinges on semantic unity, as this points to the divide between chunks as intuitively-determined, psychologically 'complete' linguistic items, and chunks as frequently-occurring, well-dispersed phenomena. For example, a lexical chunk occurring just once in a corpus (a hapax legomenon) may be semantically 'whole' but would not be captured through a frequency-based search. Conversely, a chunk can occur frequently but not feel semantically 'complete' (e.g. *that there is*

a). The criterion of frequency is the primary defining feature of chunks known variously as 'clusters' (e.g. Scott, 2011), 'n-grams' (e.g. Milton, 1999), and 'lexical bundles' (e.g. Biber et al., 1999); these require parameters to be set for the length of the chunk, threshold for minimum frequency, and the minimum number of texts for dispersion in order to avoid idiosyncrasies and also repetitions due to localized topics. For example, for Biber et al. (1999) four-word lexical bundles must occur ten or more times in a corpus and across a minimum of five texts per register to qualify as bundles. A way of verifying the holistic validity of chunks retrieved through frequency is to apply a statistical measure of collocation such as the Mutual Information (MI) test.[2] This test measures the extent to which the observed frequency of co-occurrence differs from what might be (statistically) expected, that is, the strength of association between words. MI works less well with very low frequencies, however, and in these cases the t-score is a more reliable measure since this takes raw frequencies of occurrence into account.

Within the umbrella concept of a 'lexical chunk', I adopt two commonly-used terms. 'Formulaic sequence' is now widely-used to refer to the intuitively identified chunk, defined by Wray (2002: 9) as 'a sequence, continuous or discontinuous, of words or other meaning elements, which is, or appears to be, prefabricated'. The 'n-gram' (and thus '3-gram', '4-gram') is a chunk defined by frequency of occurrence and which therefore may or may not be semantically whole.

Figure 1 illustrates how these labels fit within other commonly-used terms in the literature. The left-hand circle represents formulaic sequences and the right-hand one shows n-grams. Within the overlap of the two circles are examples of chunks which are both frequently-occurring and semantically-whole, such as frequent connectors (e.g. *on the other hand*). In the left-hand circle but overlapping slightly with the right-hand one are Moon's (1998) Fixed Expressions and Idioms (FEIs) (e.g. *kith and kin*); these can be frequent or infrequent, but are all contained within the circle of semantically-unified formulaic sequences.

[2] See discussion of MI and t-score tests on the Collins Wordbank site here: http://wordbanks.harpercollins.co.uk/Docs/Help/statistics.html.

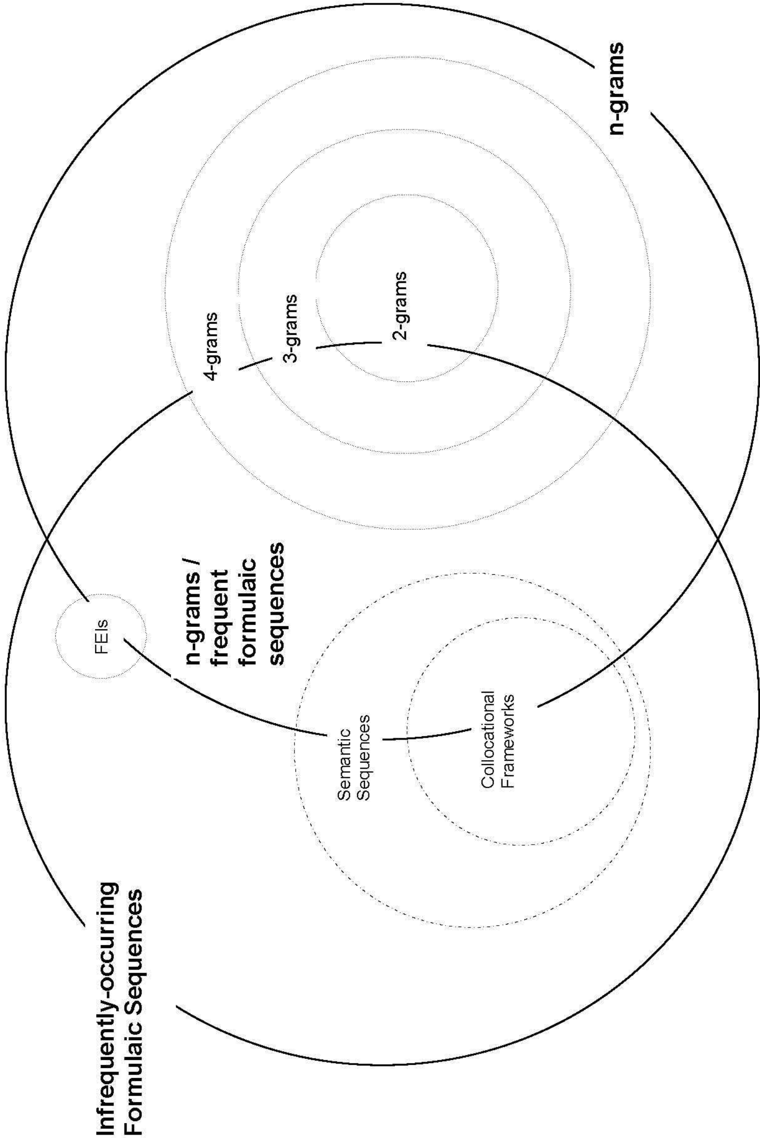

Figure 1. Lexical chunks

Also within the left-hand circle and overlapping with n-grams are semantic sequences (Hunston, 2008), shown here within a dotted circle to indicate the abstracted and thereby permeable nature of these chunks. Semantic sequences are incomplete structures, requiring lexis to instantiate each example and subsume the category of collocational frameworks (Renouf and Sinclair, 1991) for example '*a* + noun-classifier + *of* + noun-category' instantiated as *a kind of* experiment. The subsumed collocational framework in this case is *a* * of, giving rise to *a kind of, a form of*.

In the right-hand circle of Figure 1 but overlapping with formulaic language are categories of frequently-found n-grams as these may or may not be semantically whole units; here, 2-grams are shown as contained within 3-grams, and so on (e.g. *on the* within *on the other* which is in turn within *on the other hand*). Solely in the n-gram circle are those chunks which are frequently occurring but which are not semantically whole units (e.g. *the other hand the*).

The next two subsections describe the methods used in the study to find lexical chunks.

2.1. Finding formulaic sequences through intuitive reading

The use of intuition to manually extract formulaic sequences from the writing of others entails consideration of issues such as inter-rater reliability, within-rater consistency, and decisions as to where to place sequence boundaries. Moreover where the rater has a different L1, they may be unable to determine chunks which are valid for the writer/speaker (Foster, 2001). Thus, the formulaic sequences identified may vary significantly in quality and quantity if raters are linguistically-aware discipline specialists possessing familiarity with the writer's L1, compared to raters without this knowledge. However, providing specific guidelines as to the boundaries of chunks would reduce the freedom of an individual's intuition and impose the researcher's views. Despite the inherent difficulties in the intuitive identification of chunks, many studies rely on intuition at some level, whether for the initial extraction of chunks or to refine a computationally-produced list of chunks (e.g. Baigent, 2005; Leedham, 2006; Li and Schmitt, 2009; Nesselhauf, 2005; Schmitt et al., 2004; Wray and Namba, 2003).

Some of the issues discussed above are avoided if, rather than multiple raters, a single rater is used to identify chunks (cf. studies using single raters carried out by Baigent, 2005; Nesselhauf, 2005). Moreover, the rater-analyst is likely to spend far longer on the laborious task of reading and rereading texts in order to identify sequences. For this study, the overall size of contributions from the case study students meant that it was not viable to ask other people to identify sequences (the texts total over 48,000 words from L1 Chinese students alone). Instead I employed my intuition as an applied linguistics researcher with 20 years' experience of teaching English for Academic Purposes and particular familiarity with Chinese students' writing styles. This experience gives me some insight into common features of the writing of this group of students, though may also mean I fail to observe language which may be salient to other readers. Checks were made to ensure the identified chunks were in fact marked by asking two similarly-experienced English language tutors to confirm the sequences as unusual in academic writing.

I first carefully read all assignments by each case study student in conjunction with assignments from L1 English students in the same discipline. Formulaic sequences were identified which were salient because of their apparent atypicality within academic writing, or because they appeared to be favoured by the particular student (cf. Wray and Namba's, 2003, list of possible criteria for pinning down intuitive judgements). Following this, I used WordSmith Tools to determine the frequency of each identified sequence within all assignments from the same student, and also searched reference corpora of texts in the same discipline and from each L1 group. Log likelihood tests were carried out where there were sufficient raw examples. These searches enabled me to establish in each case whether, based on the (albeit limited) data, the chunk appears to be idiosyncratic within the writing of a single student, or is frequent within the particular discipline or L1 grouping. I achieved a measure of reliability through carrying out the process twice, with an interval of six months in between. The second close reading of the assignments revealed additional idiosyncratic sequences, suggesting that the more time spent on this task the greater the number of sequences found (cf Leedham, 2006).

2.2. Finding keywords though WordSmith Tools

Unlike intuitive reading, n-grams searches do not rely on knowledge of the discipline content of texts or familiarity with the writing of the student group. However, the use of corpus linguistic tools still involves human decisions as to the search parameters used (the length of the chunk, the minimum frequency of occurrence, and the dispersion of texts it must be found in). These essentially arbitrary judgments are often carried out according to the pragmatic measure of how many chunks are generated under a particular group of settings. Too few chunks would result in insufficient data to analyze, too many may overwhelm the researcher and make it hard to assess the results (Schmitt et al., 2004).

In this study, each student's texts comprise a small corpus while the L1 English texts from the same discipline area form a corresponding reference corpus. N-grams were extracted based on keyness (using the log likelihood test) in line with many previous studies of lexical chunks in written language (e.g. Biber et al., 1999; Hyland, 2008; Schmitt et al., 2004). 'Key' items are those which occur statistically more often in a small corpus than a larger reference corpus, relative to the total number of words in each corpus, meaning that keyness is thus a 'matter of being statistically unusual relative to some norm' (Culpeper, 2009: 34). Using WordSmith Tools (with the setting p=0.00001), I searched for all keywords of two words or longer. The log likelihood test was selected to determine keyness, following Dunning's (1993) argument that chi square and mutual information tests are less valid than the log likelihood (G^2) test where counts are low. Any keywords subsumed within longer ones were removed.

2.3. Comparison of methods

Table 1 summarizes the pros and cons of human intuition versus corpus tools as methods for finding lexical chunks.

3. The data

This section contains an overview of the four students and their individual contributions to the corpus, then gives details of the reference corpora.

Table 1. Comparing the use of human intuition and corpus tools to find chunks

	Using human intuition to find formulaic sequences	Using corpus tools to extract n-grams
Characteristics	• Sequences do not cross clausal boundaries. • Sequences are psychologically real and stored as wholes in the mental lexicon (Schmitt et al., 2004).	• Ngrams frequently occur across clausal groups. • There is evidence to suggest that not all bundles are stored as wholes in the mental lexicon (Scott, 2011).
Pros	• Chunks found will feel 'whole'. • They are thus 'teachable'. • Single instances of a chunk can be identified.	• Large quantities of data can be analyzed quickly and accurately (as far as tagging and software allow). • Findings are easily replicable. • Patterns that are not salient to the human reader are revealed.
Cons	• Only relatively small quantities of data can be analyzed. • Very timeconsuming. • Inconsistent results – the longer you look, the more chunks you find (Leedham, 2006). • Tendency to find what you expect to occur in the data. • Different people have different intuitions, depending on their linguistic exposure (Hoey, 2005). E.g. a NS may not notice L2 English students' chunks in English. • Discrepancies within one individual's categorizations. (Foster, 2001). • Hard to replicate findings.	• Representativeness is only as good as the corpus compilation • Ngrams cross clausal boundaries and may feel unnatural. • Many ngrams may not be readily usable within teaching materials. • Chunks occurring once only in the corpus are missed. • Corpus tools cannot distinguish between language used in a formulaic way and the same language which is built up e.g. keep your hair on can be metaphorical or literal (do not remove your wig) (Wray, 2002: 31).

3.1. The students

The data in this study was taken from the British Academic Written English (BAWE) corpus; this reflects the situation within the UK as a whole in that Chinese students are the largest L2 English student group (British Council, 2012) (see Nesi and Gardner, 2012, for details of BAWE corpus compilation). Four student contributors fulfilled the criteria set for this case study; these were having Chinese (Mandarin or Cantonese) as an L1, undertaking all secondary education in their home country, and submitting assignments to the corpus from years 1/2 and year 3 of undergraduate study. All four students, two males and two females, were in their early 20s during their (full-time) degree courses. Pseudonyms are used throughout. In total, there are 29 assignments comprising 48,367 words from the four students in this study (Table 2).

Table 2. Wordcounts and number of texts per student

Student (gender) (BAWE ID)	Degree discipline	No. words in year 1[3]	No. words in year 2	No. words in year 3	Totals
Wei (m) (0254)	Engineering	3,084 (3)	6,347 (4)	3,348 (3)	12,779 (10)
Feng (f) (6008)	Food Science	(none)	4,513 (5)	9,170 (5)	13,683 (10)
Mei-Xie (f) (3018)	HLTM*	4,462 (2)	5,047 (2)	3,859 (1)	13,368 (5)
Hong (m) (3085)	HLTM	3,143 (1)	2,581 (1)	2,813 (2)	8,537 (4)
	Totals	10,689 (6)	18,488 (12)	19,190 (11)	48,367 (29)

*HLTM = Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism Management

Further texts from L1 Chinese students and from L1 English Engineering; Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism Management (HLTM) and Food Science and from a similar range of genres (such as essays, laboratory reports and case studies) are used as reference corpora in this study. These total 279,695 for the Chinese reference corpus and 1,335,676 words for the English one (Table 3). The discipline subcorpora

[3] Information within parentheses refers to number of texts.

(e.g. English-Engineering) are a subset of the texts within the L1 English reference corpus (Eng123).

Table 3. Wordcounts and number of texts for reference corpora

Corpus name (L1 + discipline)	No. of Texts	Word counts
English-Engineering	97	203,379
English-Food	28	73,402
English-HLTM	55	64,563
Chi123	146	279,695
Eng123	611	1,335,676

4. Findings and discussion

This section discusses the findings from each of the two methods of extracting lexical chunks.

4.1. Findings from intuitive reading plus corpus searches

In this section normalized figures per one million words (pmw) are given to facilitate comparison between differently-sized corpora. Findings are discussed under thematic headings.

Idiosyncratic sequences

Sequences in this group are those which were marked on reading through an individual's assignments, yet were found through concordance searches to occur *in*frequently in the larger corpora of the same discipline or L1 groupings, that is, they are idiosyncratic to the individual concerned. It should also be noted here that this investigation begins from the writing of four individual L1 Chinese students; if four L1

English students were taken as case studies, then equally idiosyncratic chunks particular to these individuals might be found.

The chunk *in light of this* appeared marked on reading Mei-Xie's texts, and a corpus search showed this linking chunk occurs just 3 times in a single assignment from Mei-Xie and only once more in Chi123, for example:

(1) …the stock market is at or near a temporary peak. *In light of this*, it can be suggested that…
(2) …is room for market capitalisation growth of IHG. *In light of this*, it is recommended that buying IHG…
(Mei-Xie)

There were only 5 occurrences of this sequence in Eng123 (1.3 million words), all in clause-initial position and demarcated by a comma, though a similar chunk, *in the light of* (followed by a noun phrase), was more prevalent in this L1 English corpus with 11 occurrences (2 in Chi123).

Similarly, the sequence *in one word* is noticeable in assignments written by Wei, an Engineering student. This chunk is used twice, in both cases to summarize a previous section:

(3) …one again originally. *In one word* computer based tools contribute…
(4) …placement sensors. *In one word* the overall system can be described…
(Wei)

A search in Chi123 reveals just three additional instances of this sequence; there are no occurrences in Eng123.

A further sentence-initial connecting chunk is used by two of the case study students yet is still infrequent in the reference corpora. Feng and Mei-Xie use the sequence *that is why* to signal an explanation of a phenomenon. Two other L1 Chinese students together account for three uses of this chunk, making a total of seven occurrences in Chi123

(Figure 2, lines 1-7) and just five in Eng123 (Figure 2, lines 8-12) giving a significance figure of p =.01[4].

N	Concordance
1	price compared with a perfectly competitive industry. That is why monopoly is less efficient. Monopoly is a
2	has a noticeable effect on the viscosity of the liquid. That is why cream (38% fat) is thicker than milk
3	are neglected which leads to poor service quality. That is why Visser (1991) suggests formality is a
4	real way, and the authenticities are very harmonious. That is why Errol Morris' works are almost received
5	immigrators is the best way of solving the problems. That is why I think the racism will be disappeared in
6	3 & 5 didn't take effects of pre-tilt into account. That is why the relationship of Equation 5 should be
7	issue for deciding which food products to purchase. That is why sensory analysis is vital to evaluate and
8	and put on the shelf it can be less than a week. That is why people are starting to prefer the
9	is ever changing and no two jobs are ever the same. That is why it is of high importance that I review my
10	and the other who could have committed the crime. That is why in many situations the statements of
11	to admit, reacting to basic needs and stimuli. Maybe that is why it was conceived as a science and the
12	is the fact that no cost information is displayed. That is why it is important to calculated measures

Figure 2. that is why in Chi123 and Eng123

Many of the idiosyncratic sequences identified seem a little incongruous with the generally formal style of the assignments. For example, Hong and Mei-Xie's writing includes the only three nominalized instances of *must* in Chi123; there are just two occurrences in Eng123:

(5) … but simply writing a responsible tourism policy is no longer enough. It is *a must* to show practical action, so that the tourism destinations can… (Hong)

(6) Besides enjoying the benefits the designation offer, it is *a must* for Marriott Liverpool City Centre Hotel to bear the responsibility… (Hong)

(7) On the contrary, prior similar industry experience is not *a must* since training will be provided. (Mei-Xie)

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[4] Using Rayson's log likelihood calculator (http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/llwizard.html)
* p < 0.05; critical value = 3.84; ** p < 0.01; critical value = 6.63
***p < 0.001; critical value = 10.83; **** p < 0.0001; critical value = 15.13

This chunk has perhaps been acquired through these Hospitality students reading tourism brochures or job adverts and then appropriating the item within their academic writing. The similarly informal chunk *get rid of* is salient in Hong's writing, yet occurs just twice in Chi123 overall:

(8) ...a winning city, the authorities of Liverpool have to rebuild its image to *get rid of* the negative picture. (Hong)
(9) To have more accurate results, methods to *get rid of* RNase should be included. (Biology, Chinese student)

The final sequence discussed in this section is not salient due to any mismatch of formality, but is simply an unusual adaptation. It occurs just once in the corpora in Hong's HLTM writing in the context of a report on how the Scottish tourist board can improve their tourism figures:

(10) …and boost its marketing campaigns in order to *catch the world's eyes* on Scotland. (Hong)

This creative adaptation of the idiom *to catch someone's eye* can be viewed as taking ownership of the language, rather than merely using whole idioms in their original form. Creativity in language, argues Hoey (2005: 53), comes from 'the way we select from a lexical item's primings and from our ability to ignore some (though rarely all) of these primings'. L2 English writers may have what Hoey terms 'incomplete primings' in comparison with L1 English writers since they lack the colligational and collocational knowledge which comes from sufficient quantity of input. However this should not exclude the majority of the world's English speakers from creatively manipulating language (cf. Prodromou's, 2007, argument for wider acceptance of L2 English writers' and speakers' innovations or *creative idiomaticities*).

The fact that the examples in this section are salient to this reader, yet infrequently used, illustrates the usefulness of corpus searches as a checking mechanism. A writing tutor or other reader may notice unusual uses of language and form the impression that particular chunks are widespread in the writing of an individual or an L1 group. Sequences in the following sections, in contrast, were found to occur more widely than in the four case study students' writing; thus the case study examples provide a way in to wider analysis.

Vague and informal sequences

While a degree of vagueness can be appropriate as it avoids the stiltedness of over-specification (Channell, 1994), the expressions considered in this section seem to be employed out of context as they are more commonly associated with speech. 'Informal' is used here to refer to chunks which appear less appropriate in the context of academic writing. All chunks were checked in Biber et al. (1999) and also with the two additional raters to confirm that they were more informal than might be expected in academic writing.

The first sequence to be considered is *more or less,* found initially in Hong's writing:

(11) In catering services, restaurants in Oxford and Bath are *more or less* the same. (Hong)

On checking the corpora, I found nine instances of this chunk in Chi123 (Figure 3, lines 1-9) and six instances in Eng123 (lines 10-15), a significant difference at p=.001.

N	Concordance		
1	0.2, 0.5, 0.8 were chosen to test the situations when	**more or less**	than half population size dispersed, as well as
2	that the ascorbate concentration of the urine sample is	**more or less**	above 60 µg/ml. This is ensured according to Fig.
3	catering services, restaurants in Oxford and Bath are	**more or less**	the same. Since both destinations are the famous
4	a similar product in the future, a high customer margin will	**more or less**	discourage them. This is because if the size of
5	will converge quicker... this means all the individuals will	**more or less**	all be the same."[7] Because of the contribution
6	the mutually incompatibility, or be used because of (	**more or less)**	legally binding contracts and documents.
7	role of paying out short term cash flows. They are	**more or less**	equivalent way of paying out retained earning,
8	the prior year. The Group has a higher gearing level yet it is	**more or less**	than its key competitors within the UK hospitality
9	gearing level is relatively higher than the industry average, it is	**more or less**	than its key competitors. The decreased total
10	issue of control/ownership of the company since dilution is	**more or less**	inevitable. There is an attractive advantage of
11	tube. This again can be manually opened and closed to allow	**more or less**	air through. As you close the valve, pressure in
12	local people instead of Lonely Planet, the sites visited were	**more-or-less the**	same. It would seem then that motivations are
13	to the control treatment to make any elements significantly	**more or less**	available (Figure 3.2). By the end of the trial, and
14	and air resistance, the actual arm will rotate very slightly	**more or less**	than 60 degrees. As this difference is likely to be
15	instances there is disagreement about whether fortification is	**more or less**	beneficial overall in the long term. In concluding

Figure 3. more or less in Chi23 and Eng123

While one sense of *more or less* in Figure 3 can be unpacked to mean *more X or less X* (e.g. line 11 allowing more air or less air through), most lines use *more or less* as a whole chunk meaning 'approximately' and appear incongruent with the otherwise formal text. The use of *than* following *more or less* is hard to process (more or less than what?), even viewed with greater context.

The vague sequence *a little bit* was observed in three of the case study students' writing, for example:

(12) At that time, I found that this hotel is *a little bit* out of my expectation. (Hong)

Lines 1-8 in Figure 4 show all occurrences of *a little bit* in Chi123, and lines 9-10 the only 2 occurrences in Eng123 (significant to *p*=.0001).

N	Concordance		
1	values were not match with them, and only the ductility was	**a littlebit**	similar as the Appendix 1. So, the experiment was
2	of the denaturation of the serum proteins of the milk. It shows	**a littlebit**	of browning because of Mailard reaction. There is
3	City Centre Hotel. At that time, I found that this hotel is	**a littlebit**	out of my expectation. There are three weaknesses
4	It was a great idea, but the title of our documentary will be	**a littlebit**	long. "D'oeuvres" comes from France, it means
5	the connection between GSM100T and PIC 18F452 is	**a littlebit**	different. Because the serial port of modem is 15-pin
6	one, and the probability of acceptance during sampling is	**a littlebit**	higher than that of tightened inspection. By contrast,
7	the USL) is slightly greater, so it seems that the process has	**a littlebit**	more risk to produce products over the LSL than to
8	to those of the IBT and the conferences; however, there is	**a littlebit**	different in the rate structure of the ILT. Since there
9	home grown and hence that person does not mind paying	**a littlebit**	extra for this. There is also the public perception that
10	Continuous improvement - this is the approach of changing	**a littlebit**	constantly rather large scale changes infrequently.

Figure 4. a little bit in Chi123 and Eng123

A search for *bit* in both Chi123 and Eng123 (with the removal of references to a computer *bit*) produced 21 and 23 instances respectively from a wide range of disciplines and genre families (significantly more frequent in Chi123, *p*=.0001). A collocate search suggests that the most common chunk for both student groups is *a bit* followed by an adjective e.g. *a bit extreme/high/more difficult/technical/wetter*. The L1 English students also use the pattern *a bit of a + N, e.g. a bit of a victim, a bit of an issue, a bit of a dog's breakfast* (though the intriguing final example is a newspaper quotation, cited in a Law essay). This pattern occurs mainly in reflective sections of assignments, where informal language seems more acceptable. For example:

(13) The conclusion was also *a bit of a victim* in my editings, bringing it down to one small sentence for each of the areas of discussion. (L1 English, Cybernetics)

Thus, the L1 Chinese students make greater use of *bit* and use this across more more formally-written texts. The conversational nature of *bit* is confirmed by Simpson-Vlach and Ellis' (2010) extraction of 'academic

formulas' in which *little bit about* and *talk a little bit* feature in the list of *spoken* academic formulas but not in the written list.

The examples presented in this section provide a limited level of evidence to suggest that the Chinese students make use of certain vague and informal chunks in their assignments, in line with the learner corpus literature (e.g. Lee and Chen, 2009; Paquot, 2010). From the examples reported here, it seems that for the Chinese students, and to a lesser extent the English students, an awareness of the appropriacy of chunks within different genres of writing is still developing.

Connectors

The term 'connectors' is used here to refer to lexical items which have a broadly textual function in connecting parts of the writing (termed 'linking adverbials' in Biber et al., 1999: 875). While some linking chunks were noted earlier as idiosyncratic to the case study students (*in one word, that is why*), the data also contains connectors which are salient on reading all four students' writing due to their relatively high occurrence and which were subsequently found to be used across Chi123; for example:

(14) This can create a positive image for Scotland; *on the other hand,* by referring to the previous experiences. (Mei-Xie)
(15) …in order to create a centre of attention to the tourists. *As a consequence,* it can attract many travelers visiting Liverpool (Hong)
(16) …*On the contrary,* the predominance of SMEs largely carry out on an informal. (Mei-Xie)

Corpus searches revealed these three connectors to be prevalent across Chi123 in comparison with Eng123, and to occur across most disciplines (Figure 5).

On the other hand has been discussed in studies of L2 English student writing as a particularly highly-used sequence (e.g. Milton, 1999). This chunk is the most frequent connector in Chi123 (56 occurrences), and is widely dispersed across texts, individuals and disciplines. For Chinese students, the 4-gram *on the other hand* may be

frequently used as it is often viewed as a translation equivalent to a Mandarin expression meaning 'two sides of a coin'.

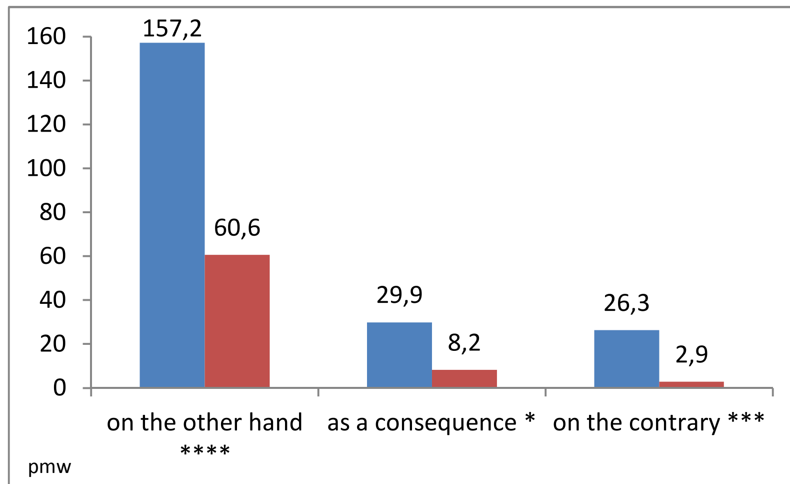

Figure 5. Selected connectors in the L1 corpora (counts are per million words). (Significance levels shown as * $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.001$; **** $p < 0.0001$)

The literature on NNS writing suggests that NNSs generally, and Chinese students in particular, favour particular connectors and that they use these repeatedly (e.g. Gilquin, 2010; Hyland, 2008; Lee and Chen, 2009; Milton, 1999), particularly in sentence-initial position (Milton, 1999). In English language textbooks in China, lists of connectors together with translation equivalents are often provided without information as to the different registers they may be used in (see Leedham and Cai, under review). Since this lack of register differentiation also occurs in the model texts provided by examination boards, reproduced in exam preparation textbooks and subsequently memorized by secondary school students, it is unsurprising that a similar lack of distinction occurs at undergraduate level by Chinese students.

Data references

Both the case study students and students overall in Chi123 used the same formulaic sequences multiple times to refer the reader to tables, appendices or figures, e.g. *as illustrated in table + NUMBER* (Mei-Xie x

2), *as shown in table* (Wei x 2, Mei-Xie x 2), *according to* (Wei x 4). Figure 6 illustrates this final example, showing that common first and second right collocates for *according to* are *equation*, *table* or similar. The sequence *according to* occurs significantly more frequently in Chi123 than in Eng123 (*p*=.0001; raw counts of 141 and 242 respectively).

N	Concordance
1	the mass of the brake disc is 9kg, according to centrifugal force formula
2	been measured. FORMULA FORMULA According to Eq.3, therefore FORMULA ,
3	Bending Stresses</heading><picture/>According to equation: FORMULA =
4	suitable gear ratio has to be found out. According to equations: FORMULA
5	oscilloscope (Graph 1 and Graph 2). According to graph 1, the peak voltage
6	FORMULA = FORMULA = FORMULA According to maximum-shear-stress
7	achieve another table of data. <table/>According to Table 2, we could plot a
8	with Gears Program. After that, according to the calculated gear teeth
9	loading force allowed for the system. According to the fundamental
10	in deflection is proportional to the load. According to the equation 1.1 in the
11	can be derives, which is FORMULA (5) According to the Figure 1, sensitivity of

Figure 6. according to in Chi123

The prevalence of formulaic sequences referring to tables, equations or other visual features suggests that the L1 Chinese students make greater use of these elements in their assignments than the L1 English students; this finding is confirmed in research reported in Leedham (2012).

4.2. Findings from keyword analysis

In this second procedure, keywords from the four Chinese students' writing were first extracted by comparing each student's texts with those in the equivalent discipline corpus of L1 English students' writing. The resulting four lists of keywords are given in Appendix One. Examining the lists of keywords within the wider co-text of sentence and paragraph, and the context of student assignment-writing gave rise to a number of themes, some of which overlap with the groupings given in 4.1.

Localized n-grams

This category includes examples considered to be *idiosyncratic* since they are specific to one of the four case study students, as well as *topic-specific* n-grams occurring in one assignment and *discipline-specific* n-grams occurring within a single discipline. Often, it is hard to distinguish between these subcategories; for example, Mei-Xie's keywords in Figure 7 occur only within her writing within a single text in HLTM.

N	Concordance
1	the new level of net profit,£559.5, is 62.17% higher than *the original figure of* £345, which is a significant growth. g)
2	The new level of net profit,£609, is 76.52% higher than *the original figure of* £345. Business decision 8 Promotion
3	The new level of net profit,£545, is 57.97% higher than *the original figure of* £345. Business decision 7The other
4	new level of net profit is£477, which is 38.33% higher than *the original figure of* £345. Business decision 6There is a la
5	The new level of net profit,£513, is 48.70% higher than *the original figure of* £345. Business decision 5It is clearly
6	The new level of net profit,£541, is 56.81% higher than *the original figure of* £345. Business decision 4By
7	The new level of net profit,£527, is 52.75% higher than *the original figure of* £345. Business decision 3Since the
8	The new level of net profit,£625, is 81.16% higher than *the original figure of* £345. Business decision 2Since the

Figure 7. Concordance lines - Mei-Xie

Reading the original assignment reveals that the eight concordance lines in Figure 7 occur at the ends of each of eight sections within a single Business assignment. Long chunks of this kind were also apparent in Eng123 within single assignments as students repeat similar information multiple times; in one case the entire abstract and conclusion were identical.

In Wei's (Engineering) list of keywords, several key chunks are part of longer metalanguage statements; e.g. *aim of the, of the assignment is to design, to develop an understanding of*; all of these chunks occur in assignment introductions in the following pattern:

(the)	*aim*	*of the assignment*	*is to design*
	object		*is to develop an understanding of*

These chunks appear to be Wei's preferred way of setting out the aim of an assignment. While they occur in other texts within Chi123 and Eng123, the n-grams are key in Wei's writing when compared to the larger corpus of English-Engineering texts.

More topic-specific n-grams are those occurring in a particular subject-area within a discipline, and usually within single texts. For example, in Mei-Xie's HLTM writing, the chunk *IHG annual report* is concerns a company report, and occurs five times within an assignment entitled 'Executive Summary: InterContinental Hotels Group Plc (IHG)'. Similarly, many of Hong's n-grams are topic-specific and found in single texts e.g. *Marriott Liverpool city centre* (x 17) and *the Liverpool tourism industry* (x 6). All four of Feng's keywords are topic-specific, with three occurring in a single text. In fact, the absence of non-localized keywords in the list for Feng suggests there is little difference between her writing and that of the reference corpus in terms of the shared 'aboutness' of the writing.

The two HLTM students, Hong and Mei-Xie, use n-grams relating to the whole discipline or vocational area more than the L1 English HLTM corpus; for example, *the tourism industry* (Hong), *the hospitality industry* (Mei-Xie), *recruitment and selection* (Mei-Xie) and *in the hospitality industry* (Mei-Xie). It could be the case that these two students make greater reference to the whole area of hospitality management, or perhaps in English-HLTM a wider range of n-grams is used to discuss the whole discipline, though this was not apparent from the keyword analysis. Studies of lexical chunks extracted from different disciplines provide useful comparisons here (e.g. Simpson-Vlach and Ellis, 2010; Cortes, 2004) though little has been done in the Hospitality area.

Connectors

In contrast to the multiple connectors highlighted in method one, the only keyword with a primary connecting function to be revealed through keyword analysis is *on the other hand*. This chunk is key in Mei-Xie's writing and, while present in the other three students' texts, is not a keyword.

Data references

The keyword lists for Wei and Mei-Xie each include directives to data given in assignment appendices (e.g. *in the appendix, with reference to appendix*). While Wei's chunks are spread throughout the ten assignments, most of Mei-Xie's occur in a year 2 text and are part of

directives guiding the reader to multiple appendices (the same proposal text as discussed under *localized n-grams* above). Since many students did not include appendices with their BAWE submissions, it is not possible to calculate whether Chinese students are more likely to use multiple and/or longer appendices, or whether they simply reference these more frequently using particular chunks.

Wei's keywords also include references to equations (or *eq*) and tables (e.g. *were recorded as below*, *was calculated with eq*) and several keywords contain a formula[5]. A keyword search in Chinese-Engineering reveals that references to visual features are key to all L1 Chinese Engineering students, suggesting that these are used or at least referred to more prevalently than in English-Engineering (see also Leedham, 2012).

Passives

Two of the keyword lists contain some passive statements, e.g. *be worked out* (Wei), *can be calculated* (Wei) and *it is believed that* (Mei-Xie). Here, the latter was investigated further in her writing using the WordSmith concordancer to search for the string *it is * that* with the asterisked item limited to verbs (Figure 8).

N	Concordance
1	their fault. Through experience and practices, it is believed that a perfect service is delivered and
2	the beverage price can improve the current profit. It is believed that customers are willing to pay as
3	range of HR policies and practices. However, it is believed that the "best practice" approach is
4	a precise definition (Worsfold, 1999). However, it is believed that the traditional ways which just
5	taken to a basis of 12 months in this report, yet it is believed that there are deviations with the true
6	the results are more realistic and reliable. It is believed that this 'best practice' of ASDA has
7	avian flu epidemic in Europe nowadays, it is blamed that the over-reaction by the media
8	self-interested motives should be predominating, it is noted that a truly hospitable person should
9	a friendship between the employee and the guest, it is probably believes that the employee will treat
10	capitalisation growth of IHG. In light of this, it is recommended that buying IHG shares at
11	prediction of two billion users by the end of 2005, it is reported that there is continual decline in hotel
12	capitalisation growth of IHG. In light of this, it is suggested that buying IHG shares at current

Figure 8. Mei-Xie: Concordance lines with *it is * that*

[5] Note that all mathematical formulae are replaced in BAWE by the capitalized *FORMULA*.

The same search in English-HLTM resulted in eight chunks, equating to just one seventh of Mei-Xie's use of *it is * that* after normalization. Anticipatory *it* clauses seem to be Mei-Xie's preferred way of expressing her views, perhaps since these are less overt than employing personal pronouns (Hewings and Hewings, 2002; see also Groom, 2006; Römer, 2009). An additional reason for Chinese students' avoidance of the individual voice presented through *I* and a preference for the collective *we* is the influence of a collectivist culture in which the individual view is subsumed within the group (e.g. Snively 1999).

5. Conclusions

The two methods for identifying lexical chunks in the case study students' writing uncover some common categories. Both reading the texts for salient chunks and using keyword searches suggest that these students, and in some cases Chinese students more generally, employ particular connectors (though only *on the other hand* is a keyword), and make greater reference to data contained in appendices, tables, or figures. Idiosyncratic chunks such as *in one word* and *catch the world's eyes* were found through the intuitive reading of the first method as these sequences are infrequently-used, yet may have a disproportionate impact on the reader's view of the writing. Close reading of the texts additionally suggests that the Chinese students use some vague and informal chunks (e.g. *more or less*), though the data here is limited. Items occurring sufficiently frequently in a single student's writing to be extracted as keywords were usually topic-specific (e.g. *IHG annual* report); the extraction of keywords across the four students' writing highlights repeated chunks across texts which may be useful for pedagogic purposes (e.g. *the aim of the assignment is to design*).

Both methods for identifying marked lexical chunks provide starting points in exploring features of the four students' texts, all of which have been judged by discipline specialists to be *proficient* undergraduate assignments. Notably, each method benefits from the additional checks provided by the other: salient formulaic sequences can be searched for using corpora to confirm the extent of use, while keywords benefit from exploration within the context of whole texts. Viewing texts as complete Word documents gives a sense of the whole assignment as it was read by the discipline lecturer, and highlights features such as tables, chart and

lists since these are visually different from continuous running prose. In this sense a corpus investigation is reductive since multimodal features such as the layout of text and visuals on the page are downplayed or lost.

Reading the assignments to intuitively select formulaic sequences was difficult in unfamiliar disciplines; in such cases the analyst could make use of subject specialists and a reference corpus or academic formulas list (e.g. Simpson-Vlach and Ellis, 2010). For example, Wei's Engineering writing was difficult for the non-Engineer to determine whether specialized terms are discipline-specific sequences or whether they have been coined by one student (and are perhaps formulaic sequences for that student). Appendix Two shows an attempt to categorize contiguous formulaic sequences in a 250-word introduction. This difficulty in recognising sequences has pedagogical implications since writing tutors seldom have the same disciplinary background as their students. While it is likely that language users within a discourse community such as Engineering academics agree on a large number of shared core sequences there are also many peripheral sequences which are particular to subsets or to individuals within the group. It is unsurprising, then, that individuals often identify different sequences and set sequence boundaries differently (e.g. Foster, 2001; Leedham, 2006) since each individual experiences different language 'primings' according to their previous linguistic exposure (Hoey, 2005).

In contrast, beginning with a keyword search is quick, easily replicable and does not rely on discipline-specific knowledge from the analyst. However, subjective choices must still be made: the linguist must select or compile a representative corpus and perhaps a reference corpus, choose software and set parameters within the software, as well as limiting the searches to a manageable amount of data. While corpus analysts have always explained their data using intuition (Borsley and Ingham, 2002), the corpus itself is rarely *read* and the cohesion of individual texts is lost. Whereas all concordance lines are treated equally, when reading an assignment a single, marked chunk may have a disproportionate impact on the reader.

One fruitful direction for individuals is the exploration of a corpus of their own writing. For example, the use of passive constructions (e.g. *it is believed that*) points to a potential difference in the expression of stance in Mei-Xie's writing when compared to the reference corpus. The use of data-driven learning is explored in Lee and Swales (2006) in their

description of a course entitled 'exploring your own discourse world' in which students compiled corpora of their own writing and compared this to reference corpora of research articles in their discipline. Similarly, Coniam (2004) built a corpus of his own writing, describing the process as 'technology-enhanced rhetorical consciousness-raising' (p.72). While writing or discipline tutors are unlikely to have the time to check their intuitive reading in a corpus of student writing, classes featuring data-driven learning can enhance student recognition of their own writing style.

Recursivity of method, such as corpus searches followed by reading and more corpus searches has been described by Matthiessen (2006: 110) as a 'two-pronged approach' and combines some of the benefits of each method. Knowing exactly what is in the corpus, in what proportions, and being able to read whole texts is important in providing insights for further corpus exploration, and at the very least, reminds the user that they are looking at real language taken out of its original context. While the small-scale nature of this study enabled the assignments to be individually read, the benefits of this method can be applied to larger corpora by reading a selection of the texts in order to complement corpus analysis. This paper argues that a multi-method approach allows more to be discovered and justified, as illustrated by Hunston's comment that corpora 'are invaluable for doing what they do, and what they do not do must be done in another way' (2002: 20).

Note: The British Academic Written English (BAWE) corpus is a collaboration between the universities of Warwick, Reading and Oxford Brookes. It was collected as part of the project, 'An Investigation of Genres of Assessed Writing in British Higher Education' funded by the ESRC (2004-2007 RES-000-23-0800).

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Appendix One: Keywords in the 4 students' texts

Wei: Engineering

Wei: Engineering

Rank	Cluster	Wei Freq.	Wei Texts	L1Eng Engin Freq.	L1Eng Engin Texts	Keyness
1	in the appendix	14	4	10	6	48
2	the one with	8	2	1	1	45
3	FORMULA FORMULA FORMULA	47	4	197	25	42
4	was calculated with eq.	6	2	0	0	34
5	is shown as	7	5	2	1	30
6	the other one	5	2	0	0	28
7	briefing sheet in appendix	5	2	0	0	28
8	in steps of	5	2	1	1	28
9	aim of the	6	6	2	2	25
10	than the one with	4	1	1	1	23
11	to develop an understanding of	4	2	1	1	23
12	can be calculated respectively	4	2	0	0	23
13	of the assignment is to design	4	2	0	0	23
14	in this design, the	4	3	0	0	23
15	could be worked out	4	2	0	0	23
16	tables of data	4	2	0	0	23
17	were recorded as below	4	3	0	0	23
18	as below FORMULA	4	2	0	0	23
20	FORMULA FORMULA FORMULA applying equation	4	1	1	1	23
21	the change of	4	2	0	0	23
22	therefore, the bending	4	2	0	0	23
23	of these two	4	3	0	0	23
24	has to be	9	5	14	11	22
25	be worked out	5	3	2	2	20
26	in this laboratory	5	4	2	2	20

Mei-Xie: HLTM

Rank	Cluster	Ping Freq.	Ping Texts	L1Eng HLTM Freq.	L1Eng HLTM Texts	Keyness
1	the hospitality industry	16	3	42	12	60
2	recruitment and selection	15	1	0	0	56
3	in the hospitality industry	10	2	20	9	37
4	please see appendix	10	1	0	0	37
5	with reference to appendix	8	1	0	0	30
6	higher than the original figure of	8	1	0	0	30
7	the new level of net profit	8	1	0	0	30
8	quality of service	8	3	0	0	30
9	the cost of	7	5	0	0	26
10	to the guests	7	2	5	3	26
11	it is believed that	6	2	2	2	22
12	of the employees	6	1	0	0	22
13	there will be	8	2	3	3	21
14	of the group	8	1	1	1	21
15	to reach the break even point	5	1	0	0	19
16	on the other hand	5	3	2	1	19
17	will be a	5	2	3	3	19
18	high quality of service	5	2	0	0	19
19	cost of sales	5	2	0	0	19
20	the nature of	5	2	2	2	19
21	Watson and Head	5	1	0	0	19
22	IHG annual report	5	1	0	0	19
23	a higher contribution	5	1	0	0	19
24	Atrill and McLaney	5	1	0	0	19
25	P E ratio	5	1	0	0	19
25	served to the	5	1	0	0	19

Hong: HLTM

Rank	Cluster	Hong Freq.	Hong Texts	L1Eng HLTM Freq.	L1Eng HLTM Texts	Keyness
1	Liverpool city centre	17	1	1	1	73
2	Marriott Liverpool city centre	16	1	0	0	64
3	city centre hotel	14	1	0	0	60
4	Liverpool city centre hotel	12	1	0	0	52
5	Marriott Liverpool city centre hotel	12	1	0	0	47
6	Oxford and Bath	13	1	0	0	47
7	European capital of	13	2	3	1	37
8	North East Somerset	7	1	0	0	30
9	European capital of culture	10	2	3	1	26
10	Burgess and Bryant	6	1	0	0	26
11	Dunn and Brooks	6	1	0	0	26
12	Liverpool tourism industry	6	1	0	0	26
13	night stays arriving	6	1	0	0	26
14	North East Somerset council	6	1	0	0	26
15	the European capital of	6	1	0	0	26
16	the Liverpool tourism industry	6	1	0	0	26
17	in the city centre	6	2	0	0	26
18	the city centre	10	2	6	3	23
19	park and ride	5	1	0	0	21
20	in terms of the	5	3	1	1	21
21	in the Liverpool tourism industry	5	1	0	0	21
22	and Bath are	5	1	0	0	21
23	bargaining power of	5	1	0	0	21
24	city centre is	5	2	0	0	21
25	the tourism industry	13	3	16	5	20

Feng: Food Science

Rank	Cluster	Feng Freq.	Feng Texts	L1Eng Food Freq.	L1Eng Food Texts	Keyness
1	of coliform bacteria	7	1	0	0	26
2	Wang et.al.	6	1	0	0	22
3	the recommended RNI	6	2	0	0	22
4	the air bubbles	6	1	0	0	22

Appendix Two: Chunked paragraphs from Wei's writing

Note: The **emboldened** words indicate formulaic sequences.

Introduction

A **design methodology** for a gearbox **is presented in this report**. **The input horse power**, **the input speed** and **net reductions** in the gearbox are the parameters **to be specified**. A gearbox takes an input shaft rotating and converts it via **a gear train** into up to three outputs, **the process of** designing a gearbox is **to figure out** which ratios are needed and to implement those ratios **in the form of** positioning various sizes of connected gears. **The specification of the gearbox** depends on its **area of application**.

In this report, a gearbox is designed for a commercial **meat slicer** which has its final shaft rotating at between 80 and 100 rev/min. The input of **the meat slicer** is a **constant speed** AC motor running at 1800 rev/min and delivering 1.2 kW. **A few points** have to be considered on this system, **the size of the gearbox** is severe restricted, since it **has to go onto a work surface** where there is severe **competition for space**. And the motor may be in-line or **at right angles to** the grinder. Furthermore, the duty **is expected to be up to** 6 hours **per day**.

In this design, firstly, the gear ration was decided, and **a specimen manual calculation** was taken to check bending and **surface stress**, the result was compared with Gears Program. **After that**, **according to the** calculated **gear teeth loads**, the design of shaft and bearings were discussed. Finally, the designed gearbox was drawn in Solidworks.

Pulmonic ingressive speech in the Shetland Isles: Some observations on a potential Nordic relic feature

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Abstract
This paper provides a commentary on and discussion of pulmonic ingressive speech in the Shetland Isles. The aim is to contribute towards a further understanding of the current distribution of ingressive speech in the Shetland community and some of the situational factors governing its usage. Observations are also discussed which may provide clues to the mechanisms for and constraints on the transference of ingressives and may therefore be relevant for establishing the origin of ingressives in Shetland. The observations discussed were made by the author in Shetland and Sweden and by previous researchers in Norway, the USA and elsewhere.

1. Introduction

Pulmonic ingressive speech is defined on the basis of its initiation, or airstream mechanism[1]. In order to produce an audible speech sound some form of initiation is required, which sets up an airflow somewhere in the vocal tract (Catford 1988). For pulmonic ingressive speech, the airstream is achieved by drawing air into the lungs (hence the terms 'pulmonic' and 'ingressive'), in contrast to the more commonly used pulmonic egressive (outward) airstream.

Pulmonic ingressive speech is a feature which will be familiar to readers from the Nordic countries, and possibly northern Europe more generally. It commonly occurs in Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, and Finnish, and has also been reported for Faroese, Icelandic, German, Austrian, Dutch, Estonian, and Latvian (Pitschmann 1987; Clarke & Melchers 2005). It typically occurs on discourse particles representing 'yes' and 'no' responses, given as feedback within a conversation. The example in (1), from the Göteborg Spoken Language Corpus, cited in

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[1]Although it is sometimes loosely referred to as "ingressive articulation" (Clarke & Melchers 2005: 51) or "ingressive phonation" (Eklund 2008: 235), it is in fact an airstream mechanism or form of initiation. It also follows from this that ingressives may in principle be either voiced or voiceless, that is, produced with or without vocal fold vibration.

Clarke & Melchers (2005: 52), illustrates a typical occurrence in Swedish:

(1) Speaker 1: ja(g) tror de 'I think so'
Speaker 2: ja de e dom 'Yes, they are'
Speaker 1: ja (*ingressive*) 'Yes'

What is less well known, however, is the fact that it also occurs in various regional forms of English. Its existence is well documented in Maritime Canada and coastal New England (Peters 1981; Steinbergs 1993; Shorrocks 2003; Clarke & Melchers 2005). Although the documentation is substantially weaker, it may also be found in the British Isles, including Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and some parts of Northern England (Peters 1981; Clarke & Melchers 2005; Shorrocks 2003).

Assuming that pulmonic ingressive speech is restricted to, or at least particularly common in, these locations, its regional distribution lends itself to a contact-based explanation. Clarke and Melchers (2005) put forward the idea that ingressive speech was transmitted from Scandinavia to Britain and Ireland via Viking settlers and invaders, and at a later stage was further transported to North America by British and Irish migrants (see Figure 1). Furthermore, several parallels are reportedly to be found regarding the usage of ingressive speech within this North Atlantic/Baltic Zone: it occurs on brief discourse particles for 'yes' and 'no', it signals a level of affiliation or intimacy between interlocutors, and it is supposedly used more frequently by women (Clarke & Melchers 2005). In Clarke and Melchers' view, this provides further support for the idea that ingressive speech constitutes the 'same' phenomenon throughout this region and for the transmission hypothesis.

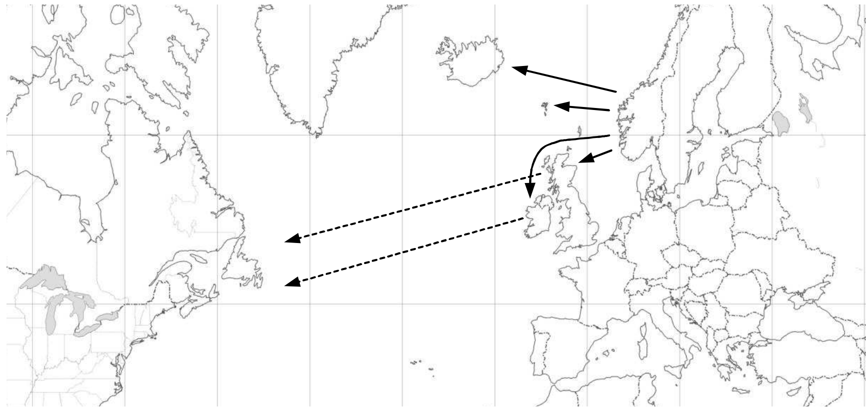

Figure 1. Westward spread of ingressives within the North Atlantic/Baltic Zone (based on Clarke & Melchers 2005)
Solid lines: first wave of spread (by Vikings); dashed lines: second wave(s) of spread (by British and Irish migrants)

More recent research, however, presents a more complex picture. While not denying that ingressives seem to be particularly common within the North Atlantic Zone, Eklund (2008) provides an extensive survey of documented and reported occurrences of ingressives across the world. The results suggest that they are more common than previously thought and even found across languages for which a contact explanation may not reasonably be forwarded. Furthermore, his research points to parallels between non-related languages concerning the discourse function of ingressives and also casts some doubts on the suggestion that ingressive speech, where it occurs, is typically more common for females. Further research into these matters is clearly required.

For Britain and Ireland, there is very little objective evidence for ingressive speech based on audio recordings. In fact the only locality where thus far enough tokens have been elicited to enable a corpus study is Shetland (Sundkvist, in press). Based on the contact-induced explanation forwarded by Clarke and Melchers (2005), it would seem plausible for Shetland to have special status with regard to ingressive speech within the British Isles.

2. The Shetland Isles

The Shetland Isles are located in the North Sea, and constitute the northernmost part of the British Isles (see Figure 2). The current population is 21,988, of whom 6,830 live in Shetland's main town, Lerwick (General Register Office for Scotland 2010). The population's main sources of income are fishing, fish farming, oil, natural gas, and tourism. In addition many people are employed in public sector jobs, such as ferry services and transportation, and education, medical and social services.

Figure 2. The Shetland Isles and the North Sea region

Beginning around 800 AD, the isles were settled by Vikings, who probably came from southwest Norway. In 1469, however, Shetland was ceded by Denmark to Scotland as part of a dowry. This gradually led to increasing influence from Scotland in Shetland. While land ownership previously has been governed by Udal law, Scottish lairds now took possession of the land. The handover also had a significant impact linguistically. Viking settlers had brought Old Norse, from which a local form, Norn, subsequently developed. As a result of Scottish rule, however, Norn was replaced by Lowland Scots. The nature and timing of this language shift is being debated to this day (Rendboe 1987; Millar 2008; Knooihuizen 2009; Barnes 2010). What is less controversial, however, is the fact that the traditional dialect that may currently be heard in Shetland–'Shetland dialect'–constitutes a form of Lowland Scots rather than a Nordic language, such as Norn.

Shetland's substantial and unique Scandinavian heritage opens up various possibilities regarding ingressives. Unlike elsewhere in Britain, a Scandinavian language constituted the dominant language for about 700-800 years. In addition, native speakers of a Scandinavian language could be found more recently than elsewhere, perhaps as late as the 18th or even early 19th century (Barnes 1998). Thus, based on the explanation by Clarke and Melchers (2005), it would not be unreasonable to suspect that Shetland may constitute a potential 'hot spot' for ingressives within the British Isles.

Recent results are consistent with such predictions. Based on a corpus of 40+ hours of interviews recorded between 1980 and 1985, Sundkvist (in press) was able to provide firm attestations for ingressive speech in Shetland. Within a set of 96 speakers, 27% of males and 32% of females were found to display at least one occurrence of ingressive speech. Women, however, contributed significantly more tokens, although potential gender differences concerning the overall use of feedback items and the total amount of speech could not be controlled for. Ingressive speech was found to occur on brief discourse particles representing 'yes' and 'no' responses, such as 'yeah', 'aye', 'mm', and 'no'. Looking at the phonetic detail, men displayed a preference for voiceless ingressives whereas women tended to use voiced ones most frequently.

3. Method

The observational method, in somewhat varying form and with various modifications, has been utilized in a number of notable studies within the fields of dialectology and sociolinguistics, including the *Survey of English Dialects*. The method (sometimes referred to as the 'notebook' method) has been used by several scholars in their quest to document ingressive speech. Peters (1981), for instance, applied it extensively in Norway and the island community of Vinalhaven, Maine. Using this method, the researcher tries to observe members of a community, typically while engaging in daily matters and in natural conversations, and notes down occurrences of ingressive speech along with such details as the discourse particle on which it occurred and its discourse context.

In some instances the method has primarily been used out of necessity. Ingressive speech is often restricted to natural conversations and relatively intimate settings, and it has thus proved difficult to elicit a sufficient number of examples in interviews, especially if audio recorded. Furthermore, the use of ingressive speech may also be unevenly distributed among the members of a community, with some constituting "ingressive users" and other "non-users" (Hill & Zepeda 1999). In such instances it would of course be hard to select informants to interview before one has gained familiarity with the community and its members.

The notebook method has a number of limitations. Since typically only one observer is engaged, it is not possible to assess how high the inter-observer reliability may be. As there is no permanent record of the data, apart from the field notes, it is also not possible to evaluate the intra-observer reliability, or to subject the data to repeated analysis. In addition, acoustic phonetic methods cannot be used to further support the auditory analysis. In the study of ingressives, several co-occurring aspects of the speech event must be observed simultaneously – such as the speaker, the discourse particle, the context, and phonetic detail – which quite possibly reduces the reliability of the observations.

However, the method also has a number of benefits. It allows the researcher to study a greater proportion of a community than may normally be recruited for interviews. If the researcher is able to spend a significant amount of time in relatively small communities, and especially if over several periods, it may be possible to identify those members within the community that are ingressive users, and approach

them for further study. This approach has proved useful for the project 'Scandinavian features in Shetland phonology'. Finally, the notebook method also allows us to study individuals in a wider range of situations, and in natural conversations.

The discussion of ingressive speech which follows is based on observations which were made in Shetland and documented by means of the notebook method, during two three-month periods (autumn 2010 and spring 2011), while fieldwork was conducted for the project 'Scandinavian features in Shetland phonology'. The aim of the project, which is funded by *Riksbankens Jubileumsfond*, is to provide a phonological analysis of the vowel system and the segmental quantity system of Shetland dialect, in order to establish its position in relation to Scandinavian languages and Scots. A wide section of the Shetland community has been observed, as a result of the project's design and the researchers' wide network of contacts and friends throughout the isles. In addition to the Shetland data, informal observations from Swedish society, which were noted and dated, are also discussed, as are results from previous research. In the following discussion, the author will take the liberty of extracting points from the observational data which pertain to specific matters of interest. The author is fully aware that this approach does not involve the level of rigour that is attainable for instance in corpus studies, such as Sundkvist (in press). It is however used here primarily to enable a discussion of matters for which more reliable sources of information are not yet available, and it is also hoped that the issues brought up may inspire further research.

4. Some observations on ingressive speech, in Shetland and elsewhere

4.1. Current decline within the Shetland community

Sundkvist (in press) was able to provide firm attestations of ingressive speech in Shetland: a sizeable proportion (32% women, 27% men) of the speakers interviewed between 1980 and 1985 displayed at least one instance of ingressive speech. Recent observations, however, suggest that ingressive speech is in decline. Based on experience from fieldwork throughout the archipelago between 2009 and 2011, the figures of 32% and 27% would seem to overestimate the current overall proportion of ingressive users in the Shetland community. Furthermore, most

ingressive users that may currently be found are above the age of 50-55. The youngest person from whom an ingressive was recently noted is a woman in her late thirties or early forties:

> (2) 5 April 2011; female, approximately 40 years of age; Walls, Shetland
> During our first conversation in person, four tokens of ingressive *mm* for 'yes' were used. This is most probably the youngest person in Shetland from whom I have heard an ingressive.

In the absence of more recently collected corpus data, these observations point towards a feature in decline; this is also in line with Thom's (2005) suggestion for Scotland as a whole.

4.2. The significance of 'affiliation'

Clarke and Melchers (2005: 66) suggest that the use of ingressive speech implies a sharing of opinion and contextual or situational knowledge between the participants in a conversation. They go on to propose that:

> […] ingressives are characterized by a feature which we will term [+affiliative], that is, a presupposition or presumption of shared or affiliative orientation on part of discourse interactants. These are particles the most usual pragmatic meaning of which is to establish and maintain interactional solidarity and harmony, particularly in informal conversational settings.' (Clarke & Melchers 2005: 67)

One observation that has been made repeatedly is that ingressives may appear at a very early stage, in the first-ever interaction with an individual. Several informants displayed them during our first meeting:

> (3) 23 May 2011; male; Fair Isle, Shetland
> During the first meeting with [name], he used several ingressive tokens of yeah for 'yes'.

In some instances, they occurred at the very beginning of the first encounter:

> (4) 29 June 2011; male; Yell, Shetland
> I had never met [name] prior to this occasion. He used an ingressive in the second sentence he ever said to me: yeah for 'yes'.

(5) 30 June 2011; female; Yell, Shetland
I had never met this person before. She used an ingressive very soon after meeting me for the first time, probably in the first 5-10 sentences. The ingressive occurred on yeah for ‘yes’.

Some speakers even used ingressives during our first telephone conversation, before we had ever met in person:

(6) 15 August 2010; female; Out Skerries, Shetland
Phone call to [name] in Out Skerries. I had never spoken to or met her before; this was the first time we ever spoke. Two ingressives occurred during the conversations, on affirmative particles.

(7) 15 March 2011; male; Foula, Shetland
Telephone call to [name] in Foula. I had never spoken to [name] before or met him in person; this was the first time I ever spoke to him. Two ingressives occurred during the conversation

There are of course several alternative interpretations of such observations. While it is unlikely that much affiliation already existed in these cases, perhaps the speakers were simply particularly eager to establish it early in the encounter. Alternately, however, the use of a feature [+affiliative] is somewhat too radical. Although affiliation most probably increases the likelihood of occurrence, perhaps it is not a strict necessity, as implied by the featural formalization “+affiliative”. As to a further possibility, Peters (1981) suggested that the use of ingressives often reflects a submissive speaker role or personality. The author’s impression, however, does not support that interpretation for these particular individuals. While there certainly are discourse and interpersonal conditions which have to be met for ingressives to occur (cf. e.g. Eklund 2002), the author’s impression is that some Shetlanders are relatively ‘robust’ ingressive users, in that they tend to use them across a wide range of contexts, as part of their normal speech repertoire.

4.3. Acquisition and transference

Clarke and Melchers’ (2005) explanation for the occurrence of ingressives within the North Atlantic Zone is based on waves of migration: in the first instance they were transported by Vikings to the British Isles, and at a second step, or rather steps, transmitted to North

America by British and Irish migrants. One prediction that would seem to follow from this hypothesis is that, when found in a certain locality within this overall region, ingressive speech probably reflects and reveals earlier settlement patterns for the locality in question (cf. e.g. Shorrocks 2003). This suggestion is made by Thom for Scotland:

> Ingressive speech in Scotland is, at least for now, a living reminder of our shared ancestors and the way they expressed themselves. It's a bit like a really good story that gets passed from one generation to the next. All those who now know the story are linked to the group of people who originally met the storyteller. What is different is that ingressive speech has travelled through time like a gene, completely unintentionally. (2005, Yule: 17)

For Shetland the presence of ingressive speech is most naturally taken to reflect Viking settlements, as its Scandinavian heritage is substantial and any Gaelic influence mostly considered negligible.

At present there is no evidence to refute this 'longevity' explanation. There are, however, a number of aspects that ought to be considered simultaneously, and in conjunction with it, when attempting to explain the occurrence of ingressive speech within any English-speaking locality. As a general point, ingressives may not be as unique to the North Atlantic Zone as previously thought; and the apparent discourse parallels found within the region may also reflect more general principles and constraints governing the use of ingressives (Eklund 2008). Yet another set of issues concern the acquisition and transference of ingressive speech. Since there is unfortunately no published research specifically devoted to such matters, we have to begin by examining a range of reported observations which may provide hints to the acquisition and transference processes. Such observations are available from Sweden, Norway, and the USA.

Several observations suggest that the acquisition of ingressives is not restricted to childhood, but may occur during adolescence or even adulthood, in a second or foreign language. Peters reported that long-term residents in Norway usually pick up ingressives (1981: 242). He furthermore suggested that the process may be rapid: foreigners in Norway apparently adopted it "soon after their arrival" (1981: 29), and one South American exchange student in Vinalhaven, Maine, began using ingressives 'sometime in his second month on the island' (1981: 147). Peters also remarked that the adoption of ingressives by no means

was restricted to native speakers of closely related languages. In Norway it was observed for people who spoke English (various dialects), Romance languages, and non-Indo-European languages spoken in India, Sri Lanka, and Ethiopia (1981: 30). In Sweden, ingressive speech has been observed in SFI[2] classes among Chinese and Vietnamese females who have resided in the country for a couple of years. Conversely, Peters also presents evidence that ingressives may be lost or suppressed at the adolescent stage. Most children in Vinalhaven, Maine, apparently displayed ingressives, but during their high school years boys who were orientated towards maritime occupations stopped using them (Peters 1981: 148ff.).

There is also observational evidence that ingressive speech may cross language barriers, at least within the speech of an individual. Peters, for instance, remarked that long-term residents in Norway began using ingressive speech in their first language, at least in conversations with Norwegians (1981: 130). Furthermore, he presented anecdotal evidence that it may enter into the speakers' first language on a more long-term basis: one American woman who had acquired ingressives while living in Norway continued using it upon her return to the US, for which she was apparently ridiculed (1981: 252).

A number of observations supporting the possibility of cross-linguistic transference (within the individual) have been made in Sweden. As an example, a French academic residing in Sweden has been observed frequently using ingressives when speaking English. In addition the following two observations pertain to the same question:

(8) 12 February 2011; Falun, Sweden
An adult Vietnamese woman who has resided in Sweden for approximately one year was observed using ingressive *yeah* 2-3 times, while speaking English.

(9) 5 December 2011; Stockholm, Sweden
On a Stockholm underground train, an adult female thought to be of North African descent was observed using ingressive *yeah* 4-5 times while speaking an unidentified African language; no code-switching to Swedish or English was observed.

While one cannot perhaps completely rule out the possibility that ingressive speech simply exists independently in French, Vietnamese and

[2] *Swedish For Immigrants*; Swedish proficiency courses for immigrants and refugees.

the unidentified (African) language in question, the frequent use of ingressives in Swedish would seem to offer a more likely explanation. If so, pulmonic ingressive speech has been transferred from one language into another, within the speech of an individual. Speculating further, it is also possible that the ingressive mechanism has been transferred across lexical items. Although the French and Vietnamese women may well have heard ingressive speech on the English discourse particles that they themselves used ('yeah')–especially before becoming proficient enough in Swedish to use it in daily encounters–in terms of frequency they have probably had more exposure to ingressive speech on Swedish discourse particles. In that case ingressive speech for them would, strictly speaking, not constitute a 'lexically transmitted' feature, as suggested by Clarke and Melchers (2005) for the North Atlantic Zone.

Again, it cannot be emphasized strongly enough that the set of observations brought up in no way level the diachronic or 'longevity' account for ingressive speech within the North Atlantic Zone, or are used here to intimate that an alternative one is more plausible. However, given the present lack of research into the acquisition and transference of ingressives, they provide some hints regarding matters that may need to be taken into account when attempting to explain the occurrence of ingressives in a specific locality. Perhaps what these observations amount to is a general possibility that pulmonic ingressive speech, partly attributable to its status of a paralinguistic feature, may have a relatively higher degree of freedom of transference than do the types of (linguistic) features more commonly investigated in historical and contact linguistics. If that is the case, it would leave the effect of contact, at any point during the history of a language or locality, as a particularly potent factor for the subsequent establishment of ingressive speech within the community or language variety.

5. Conclusion

This paper has dealt with a phenomenon which is severely understudied within varieties of English, namely pulmonic ingressive speech. Based on extracted points of observation, made during fieldwork for the project 'Scandinavian features in Shetland phonology', further detail about its currency in the Shetland community was provided; at present ingressives appear to be in decline in Shetland and are primarily found among older

speakers. One proposed condition for its usage was also called into question; while interpersonal affiliation probably increases the chances that ingressives will be used, a formalized requirement of "+affiliative" would appear to be somewhat too strict. In addition, based on observations made in Sweden, Norway, and the USA, a number of matters regarding the acquisition and transference of ingressives were brought up for discussion. One significant question for further research concerns the possibly greater freedom and ease of transference for ingressives, as it may have an impact upon proposed explanations for the occurrence of ingressives within certain localities and regional dialects.

Additional research is urgently needed to shed further light on the issues brought up in this paper. One desirable line of inquiry concerns the cross-linguistic currency of ingressive speech; in addition, where encountered, more detailed studies of its discourse functions are needed to better understand the degree of cross-linguistic 'sameness' for the phenomenon. As to varieties of English, ingressive speech is, by most accounts, currently in decline. It is thus hoped that archival recordings and already existing data sets will be examined, and indeed reexamined as ingressives may previously have been overlooked. As a complement observational studies should also be undertaken in communities where it is still possible. Such efforts may be the only way to seize the soon vanishing opportunity to gain further insight into an often overlooked, potential Nordic relic feature in regional Englishes.

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