

# ELOPE (Vol. 3)

## LITERARY CRITICISM AS METACOMMUNITY: A FESTSCHRIFT FOR META GROSMAN

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### **Words in Sheep's Clothing**

The paper focuses on various types of dictionary words, i.e. infrequent and rather uncommon words often listed in comprehensive monolingual English dictionaries but virtually nonexistent in actual usage. These are typically learned derivatives of Greek or Latin origin that are given as unlabeled synonyms of everyday vocabulary items. Their inclusion seems to stem from the application of two different bits of lexicographic philosophy: great respect for matters classical and the principle of comprehensiveness. Seen from this perspective, descriptive corpus-based lexicography is still too weak.

While in large native-speaker-oriented dictionaries of English such entries do not seem to cause any harm, they can be positively dangerous in EFL/ESL environments, because using them can easily lead to strange or downright incomprehensible lexical items. Learners are advised to be careful and check the status of such "dubious" items also in English monolingual learners' dictionaries, in which dictionary words are virtually nonexistent.

**Gašper Ilc**

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### **Unnaturalness of Negation – an Old Wives' Tale Retold**

Negation has a very long history of study. In the realm of logic, negation is seen as a simple operation that turns an affirmative to a negative. This assumption strongly affected the linguistic study of negation, and led to some misconceptions. For example, negation in natural languages is seen as something unnatural, artificial and syntactically as well as semantically dependant on affirmation. It is perceived as a logical/mathematical operation that turns affirmatives into negatives by way of syntactic transformation and semantic cancellation of multiple negatives. To refute some of these misconceptions, the paper investigates the nature of negation as a linguistic phenomenon, and shows that negation in logic and linguistics should not and cannot be treated in the same fashion. Special attention is paid to the problems of structural complexity, the syntactic notion of multiple negation and its different semantic interpretations. With regard to the semantic interpretation of multiple negation, languages, by and large, allow for two possibilities: negative concord and double negation. Negative concord, which interprets two negatives as a single negation, seems to represent the natural course of language development, while double negation, which allows the cancellation of two negatives resulting in affirmation, was introduced into languages under the influence of logic in the 17th and 18th centuries.

**Allan James**

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### **Exploring the Generic Nature of International English**

The article investigates the nature of English as an International Language (EIL) from a sociolinguistic and sociocultural point via the notion of 'genre'. Genre, it is claimed, plays a central role in an understanding of the internal hybridity of EIL in that it represents the 'using'

as opposed to 'use' (register) or 'user' (dialect) dimension of language realization. While all three dimensions as linguistic resources for different subjectivities can shape an ensuing EIL discourse (such mixes constituting the 'interdiscursivity' of (a) text), it is genre that expresses the actional (inter- and transactional) properties of EIL. Drawing also on other linguistic models of genre, the article concludes by interpreting EIL within the discourses of postmodernity, poststructuralism and postcolonialism and pointing to the possibility of developing a new 'postlinguistics' for the new millennium.

**Smiljana Komar**

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### **Listened To Any Good Books Lately? The Prosodic Analysis of Audio Book Narration**

The popularity of audio books is increasing. In the USA fewer people are reading books but many more are listening to them on tapes, CD's and in MP3 format. The phenomenon is redefining the notion of reading. The purpose of the paper is to present some pros and cons of listening to books instead of reading them. The conclusions have been reached on the basis of a linguistic analysis of parts of two audio books belonging to two different literary genres: a crime novel (Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code*) and a comic one (Helen Fielding, *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*).

**Frančiška Lipovšek**

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### **Misconceptions about Article Use in English**

The paper addresses some major misconceptions about article use in English, proceeding from purely syntactic issues to those relating directly to pragmatics. It is based on authentic, perfectly acceptable examples of article use that many Slovenian students of English would describe as 'odd' or 'not in accordance with the rules'. The students' explanations as to why the examples in question should be ruled out confirm the hypothesis that misconceptions about article use are largely ascribable to an insufficient understanding of grammatical rules. The rules governing article use are often misunderstood due to inaccurate interpretations of the terms *defining/restrictive*, *definite*, *identifying*, *specifying*, *classifying*, etc. The commonest mistake is equating *defining* with *definite*, and *defining/restrictive* with *identifying*, the consequence being the overuse of the definite article. Another important point made in the paper is that article use is a matter of pragmatics. The choice between the definite and indefinite articles reflects the speaker's decision to present a piece of information as hearer-old or hearer-new respectively.

**Dora Maček,**

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### **Some Observations on Poetic YOU**

One of the difficulties that may arise in translating poetry is the schematic character of personal pronouns. For this reason the identities of the speaker and addressee can be ambiguous, which is a problem in translating into languages that grammaticalize more semantic features than the source language. The article analyzes some ambiguous texts in some English and Danish poetry and suggests some translation strategies used.

**Mary Snell-Hornby**

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### **Patient or Vehicle? Semantic roles in German and English descriptive verbs (revisited)**

The paper investigates the problem of semantic roles within the concept of verb-descriptivity (Snell-Hornby 1983). Descriptive verbs are semantically complex lexical items, where the

modifying components are more focal than the verbal action itself (as in *bustle* or *strut*), and where the participants, the background situation and the attitude of the speaker emerge as distinctive elements (as in *grovel* and *waft*). As against orthodox views in early case grammar, a distinction is made here between the Patient as “sufferer” of the verbal action and the Vehicle as its “conveyer”. It is argued that this differentiation is essential for the understanding, the analysis and the translation of descriptive verbs, as the semantic roles are by no means identical when compared in various languages (here English and German). This is illustrated by the comparison of lexemes in the semantic field of verbs expressing anger. The aim of the paper is to sharpen awareness of such fine distinctions, particularly in their relevance for translation.

**Lester E. Barber**

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### **Alice Munro: The Stories of *Runaway***

This essay will analyze and explicate the stories in Munro’s latest collection, *Runaway*, in order to present the reader with a description of her artistic interests, motifs and techniques in this work. The author finds remarkable similarities among the stories, even as they explore very different female characters and situations. The author notes the delicacy and precision with which Munro tracks the progress of her characters’ thoughts and feelings, often in a kind of interior dialogue with themselves. Love, or its absence, is the usual subject matter in the stories – most often between a woman and a man, but sometimes between parent and child – and the author shows how Munro’s characters deal with the “old confusions or obligations” engendered by this emotion. Finally, the author cites several examples in describing Munro’s style of presenting her characters, one typified by colloquial and self-deprecating dialogue, but punctuated at times by language of great poetic and emotional power.

**Robin R. Bates**

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### **Using *Oroonoko* to Teach the Corrosive Effects of Racism**

Aphra Behn’s *Oroonoko* offers the reader a rich set of examples illustrating the complexities of interracial relationships. Throughout the work, the imperatives of slave society clash with the human desire for friendship, resulting in a series of untenable contradictions for the characters involved. When people, even those of good will, are participants in and beneficiaries of systems that victimize others, they find their friendships complicated and compromised. The work is a powerful text for teaching the conflicting dynamics of race relations in our own times. By having students order the characters in power ranking, plot a power grid of shifting alliances, and carefully examine moral dilemmas faced by the characters, the teacher can get them to see the contortions caused by prejudice and clashing economic interests. Teaching *Oroonoko* in the safe confines of a literature classroom can also give students training and practice in how to have conversations about race, a skill which they can put to good use when they enter broader society.

**Michelle Gadpaille**

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### **Emigration Gothic: A Scotswoman’s Contribution to the New World**

Ellen Ross (1816?–1892) emigrated from Scotland to Montreal at mid-century and wrote two Gothic novels, in one of which – *Violet Keith, An Autobiography* (1868) – she used the Canadian setting as a fantastic Gothic locale in which to explore areas of social and sexual transgression. Drawing on earlier traditions of European Gothic, including Sir Walter Scott’s mythologized Scottish landscape, and on an emerging North American genre of convent exposés, Ross’s writing accommodates female protest, distances it from reality and allows its dissipation in conventional denouements. If female Gothic can be read as an analogue of realistic women’s problems, then perhaps this analogy can be extended to encompass emigration and immigrant life. The paper analyzes Ross’s motifs of loss, imprisonment, solitude, surveillance and deliverance and considers the possibility that Gothic motifs in her work both conceal and express features of the immigrant’s psychic battle with the transition to the New World.

**Stipe Grgas**

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**Maritime Regionalism: A Reading of John Casey's Novel *Spartina***

The theoretical framework within which the author reads John Casey's novel *Spartina* is the renewed interest in the notion of the regional. The choice of the novel is additionally dictated by the fact it deals with the sea. As such it allows the author to discuss the sea both as it is positioned within the American cultural imaginary and the way that it is represented in works of literature. The article delineates how these two themes are thematized in the novel and what kind of insights they can provide about certain aspects of the American polity.

**Victor Kennedy**

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**An Exploration of Canadian Identity in Recent Literary Narratives of the Franklin Expeditions**

Sir John Franklin's three expeditions to the high Arctic in 1819, 1825, and 1845 have become the stuff of Canadian legend, enshrined in history books, songs, short stories, novels, and web sites. Franklin set out in 1845 to discover the Northwest Passage with the most advanced technology the British Empire could muster, and disappeared forever. Many rescue explorations found only scant evidence of the Expedition, and the mystery was finally solved only recently. This paper will explore four recent fictional works on Franklin's expeditions, Stan Rogers' song "Northwest Passage", Margaret Atwood's short story "The Age of Lead", Rudy Wiebe's *A Discovery of Strangers*, and John Wilson's *North with Franklin: the Lost Journals of James Fitzjames*, to see how Franklin's ghost has haunted the hopes and values of nineteenth-century, as well as modern, Canada.

**Uroš Mozetič**

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**E. E. Cummings: From Parenthesis to Personality (Part I)**

The paper presents the unique oeuvre of E.E. Cummings, who claims an outstanding position in the heritage of American poetry, as a case of *Bildungsdichtung*. This status is largely due to his highly innovative and iconoclastic approach to poetic composition, starting from his early rebellious endeavours drawing on an astounding variety of non-standard and downright shocking potentialities of the English language (including such peculiar linguistic and stylistic idiosyncracies as drastic changes of the syntactic English word order, shifts at the morphology and word-formation level, unorthodox use of punctuation, extravagant typography and spacing or arrangement of space between the lines, a diversity of meters and rhymes, as well as seemingly eccentric imagery), to his later and invariably maturer poetic diction – the diction of one who has apparently come to terms with the world and his fellow-beings, realising that genuine wisdom resides in the understanding and forgiveness of the inherently fallible human nature rather than in its continuous sardonic scrutiny.

**Roger D. Sell**

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**Gadamer, Habermas and a Re-humanized Literary Scholarship**

This paper speaks of an ongoing re-humanization of literary studies to which the work of Gadamer and Habermas can valuably contribute. True, these two thinkers themselves run the risk becoming the focus of commentaries that are aridly scholastic. True, too, they themselves tend to think of literature as an aesthetic heterocosm that is quite distinct from human communication in general. Yet human communication in general is something they certainly understand, and their profound insights into it can actually be applied to literature, in ways which they themselves have not envisaged. Especially relevant in Gadamer is his sense of the changes which can be brought about by communication, and

his rehabilitation of common sense. In both Gadamer and Habermas, there is also a clear recognition of communicational dialogicality, and of communication's sheer possibility, even between human beings who are very differently placed. To this can be added Habermas's central insistence on ethical considerations – on human equality, on truthfulness, on trust, on fairness, on cooperativeness – as an integral dimension of communication at its most genuine. These insights can facilitate the discussion as illustrated with the writings of Dickens and T.S. Eliot.

**Adi Wimmer**

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**'Objectifying' the War. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial as a Secular Message Board.**

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. has become one of the most important cultural signifiers of the nation. Only what it signifies is far from clear. 'A place of healing' is a frequently applied epithet, in conjunction with partial memory loss; but 'healing' does not work without prior analysis of the wound. In postmodern fashion, anyone can read into it what they want. Evidence for its enduring popularity are the roughly 90 000 objects that have since its inception in 1982 been deposited at 'the Wall'. These depositions represent an uncensored and hard to control alternative discourse on Vietnam; they are collected daily and stored at a huge warehouse. The 'Wall' is not only a sacred site, a locus of grief and contemplation, and a locus of re-uniting the nation, it has also become a prominent place where cultural battles are waged. Since 1995 there has been a permanent exhibition of a selected "Offerings at the Wall" at the Smithsonian Institute. They collectively represent a discourse refusing to be co-opted into a national strategy to re-interpret the Vietnam War as "in truth a noble cause" and an event in which American soldiers acted honourably.

**Werner Delanoy**

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**Anglistics as a Dialogic Discipline**

In my article, dialogue is suggested as a basic direction for Anglistics. Such a perspective results from a normative notion of dialogue based on a set of particular criteria. In general terms, a case is made for (self)-critical and respectful confrontation with other viewpoints within and beyond Anglistics to further develop existing positions and to create new forms of co-operation. While in the first two sections this concept is introduced and applied to the discipline of Anglistics, the final section is focussed on an area of major conflict in contemporary ELT debates. In fact, a dialogic approach will be suggested for dealing with two opposite tendencies, one aiming for standardization and the other for a humanistic form of education.

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**Alliteration as a Means of Characterization of Dramatic Personae: A Translation Issue**

Alliteration is usually defined as a repetition of the same initial consonant in consecutive or neighbouring words. Despite its importance for dramatic construction, alliteration is rarely preserved in Slovene translations of dramatic texts. Detailed research into this phenomenon in several British and American plays and their Slovene translations showed that the survival of alliterations in the translation process is mostly random. On the rare occasions when alliteration is preserved, no proof could be found of a clear translation strategy focusing on this linguistic element. Since alliteration in most cases appears not as an isolated language element but rather as one of many important text features, the translator should devise priorities. The purpose of this article is not to urge translators to give alliteration the highest priority, but merely to suggest its inclusion among the features considered. This paper also includes examples of non-preservation of alliteration in translated text illustrating the loss for the text and its implications.

**Simon Zupan**

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### **Repetition and Translation Shifts**

Repetition manifests itself in different ways and at different levels of the text. The first basic type of repetition involves complete recurrences, in which a particular textual feature repeats in its entirety. The second type involves partial recurrences, in which the second repetition of the same textual feature includes certain modifications to the first occurrence.

In the article, repetitive patterns in Edgar Allan Poe's short story "The Fall of the House of Usher" and its Slovene translation, "Konec Usherjeve hiše", are compared. The author examines different kinds of repetitive patterns. Repetitions are compared at both the micro- and macrostructural levels. As detailed analyses have shown, considerable microstructural translation shifts occur in certain types of repetitive patterns. Since these are not only occasional, sporadic phenomena, but are of a relatively high frequency, they reduce the translated text's potential for achieving some of the gothic effects. The macrostructural textual property particularly affected by these shifts is the narrator's experience as described by the narrative, which suffers a reduction in intensity.