



*Hac circulus nihil est amoenius.
Sermo in circulis est liberior.*

Fiction...
Poetry... Essay..
Criticism...Linguistics
News...Caricature..Culture
Dialogue...Interview...
Creativity...
Mail...

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EDITORIAL

A New Adventure!

We are very pleased to endow our Department with this new gazette, which will be a circle of all the creative, burgeoning talents and geniuses. The project of this review has been submitted to the members of the Department and discussed in October 29, 1998; an Editorial Board of seven members has been immediately formed.

For the time being, this review will attempt to deal with different fields of literature and literary creativity as well as give a range of varied elements touching a wide convex of readers: critical articles on a particular concept; questions in linguistics, literary criticism or cultural studies; poems by teachers or students, news of cultural activities in and outside our University; conference announcements, book reviews and interviews... Even though this new adventure is temporarily limited by space, it will try to cover all these activities, and more!

The circle is open to our teachers as well as our students and researchers (of all levels). It is

intended to give the opportunity for each to write in different fields of English literature and culture.

Though a particular attention will be given to Criticism and Creative writing, other options and tastes will not be depreciated. **Pen Circle** will come to full *circle* with the different and valuable suggestions and comments of everybody. Publications should either be given to the Department secretary (Miss Nadia), or sent by post or email to **Pen Circle**. (See address and Email below.)

Pen Circle.

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⇒ **Pen Circle**

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Recent Developments in Pragmatics*

What seems to be happening on many forefronts of pragmatic research today is a reconsideration of atomistic, rationalistic approaches to language, and a search for integrative, process-oriented, alternative approaches. Scholars are beginning to view language as part of a larger whole: as a system that participates in, and is influenced by, systems larger than itself. The emphasis seems to be shifting from linguistic uniformity to linguistic diversity, and from models of isolated utterances to models of broadly unified speech processes. Fifty years ago, Urban (1939) might have said that such a development is typical of periods of scepticism of the word. Today's post-modern thinkers would perhaps say that it is symptomatic of a growing scepticism of fixed reference points, or an increasing concern with the radical subjectivity of thought. I prefer to think of it as a sign of new interest in putting the pieces back together: a sign of a growing desire to integrate the study of language use back into the study of the rest of human activity, and to forge a new unified perspective in the human sciences.

In the following pages, I'll try to illustrate this trend with four examples. Together, they suggest, I think, the beginning of a shift of emphasis away from dichotomies like speech/context, speaker/hearer, thought/feeling, content/style, etc., and the emergence of a new integrative paradigm focused on interfaces between concepts that traditionally have been held apart by such dichotomies. The examples, I think, also illustrate the great influence that developments in cognitive science have had on pragmatics and its practitioners in recent years.

Is Encoding Out?

Like other branches of linguistics, pragmatics has witnessed a steady extension and refinement of cognitive approaches for about the past twenty years. From a cognitive standpoint, language use is rooted in knowledge of language, and the goal of cognitive research is to account for this knowledge and to attempt to explain the cognitive foundations of acts of speech. Early cognitive theories of language were rooted in a computational view of the mind and in a mechanical view of human communication. Following Shannon & Weaver's linear communication model, thought was regarded as information processing, and conversation was regarded as the encoding, transmission, and decoding of this information.

In early cognitive theories, perception was assumed to encode information into the mind in the form of mental representations, and cognition (on an analogy to computer software was assumed to process the encoded information according to logical rules. Language was said to recode the results of cognitive processing into verbal messages. The information came metaphorically from 'outside' the mind, was processed metaphorically 'inside' the mind, and was transmitted metaphorically back 'outside' through the conduit of language. The hearer was assumed to decode linguistic messages in more or less the same form as the speaker originally encoded them.

The advent of more sophisticated models of cognition in the early 1980's presented a challenge to this view of linguistic communication. Encoding assumptions about the transmission and decoding of information became increasingly difficult to square with the findings of empirical studies of the new models based on computer simulations. In some circles, this led to a rethinking of the nature of the coupling between the mind

(inside) and the environment (outside), and to a rethinking of various issues related to the nature, emergence, and use of linguistic knowledge. In the new models, the 'inside' was no longer a passive container of rules driven by information from 'outside'. This static, rational inside was replaced by the notion of a dynamic network of self-organizing, interactive, cognitive frames, operating in complex, goal-directed ways (cf. Bickhard & Campbell 1992).

An upshot of this shift of standpoints today is that some pragmatists have begun to question whether information in the traditional sense actually crosses 'epistemic boundaries' to begin with – either from the world to the mind via perception, or from the mind to the world via language (cf. Janney 1992). The relevant representations, it is now said, arise within the mind itself, which does not passively pick up knowledge of the world, but actively picks it out, constructing the world as it goes on the basis of its own internal goals and needs, and its interaction with the external environment. Linguistic knowledge, in this view, is no longer simply a product of perceptually encoded, cognitively processed information from 'out there'; instead, it is a complex interactive achievement in which the subject and the object, the knower and the known, the speaker and the partner, etc. are co-implicated. (cf. Varela 1990).

In recent years, such ideas have provided strong arguments against the notion of encoding in linguistic theories. They have also been used to challenge the widespread assumption that knowledge of language can be explained from a strictly internal, logical, linguistic point of view. Without reference to interaction between the mind and the different biological, cultural, psychological etc. environments in which it operates, critics say, a cognitive theory of linguistic knowledge is like a theory of one hand clapping.

(To be continued.)

* by Richard Janney, University of Cologne. (in *The European English Messenger*. Vol. II, N° 2, 1993.)

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The Poet's Corner	
<p>This corner will be dedicated to contributions and creative experiments in the field of poetic writing, criticism or even commentary on the published works.</p> <p>Attempts and writings by students, inside or outside the campus, will be cordially welcome. For practical reasons, any kind of publication must be given to the Department (Pen Circle box) before the 15th of each month. Any kind of writing is preferred to be printed, otherwise written in a handwriting as clear as possible. Attempts, either published or not, will not be given back.</p> <p>Our 'Poetry' teachers will help and guide such poets-to-be, or discuss their works.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The British Council annual Seminar will take place this year in Fes from 17 to 20 December 1998. Our Department will be represented this year by Mohssen Nachit and Mohamed Rakii; a synopsis of their contributions and an account on the seminar at large will be given in a coming issue of Pen Circle. As for the previous seminars, the Department was represented by Abdel-Azziz Boudlal and Mohamed Sghir Sayyad (Marrakech, December 1996), and Khalid Chaouch and Mustapha My Mamaoui (Marrakech, December 1997). ❖ Our English Department organized two seminars during the previous term. The first, which was a multi-topic seminar on 'British Fiction and American Drama', took place in March 10th 1998. The participants were Rakii ("The Sense of the Tragic in <i>Jude the Obscure</i>"), Mamaoui ("D. H. Lawrence: Early Influences and Orientations"), Karkaba ("Impressionism in Virginia Woolf's <i>To the Light House</i>."), and Chaouch ("A View on the American Theatre in the 20th Century"). The evening session was a theatrical performance entitled <i>Madinet al-Jamajim</i> and given by the Drama Club under the supervision of Bourima. The second seminar, on "Language and Ethnicity," took place in March 23rd 1998. It was organized with teachers from Tilburg University (Holland.) The latter is bound to Our University with a convention on cultural exchange. (We will treat this convention with more details in a coming issue.) ❖ Pen Circle is ready to cover the cultural and scientific activities in other universities, or cultural centers. (Publications, book reviews, seminars, visits, conferences, etc.) Our hope is then to receive clear and sufficient information about them from colleagues in other Universities.
Poor Critics!	
<p>"A critic is a legless man who teaches running."</p>	
<p>Channing Pollock (1880-1946) <i>The Green Book.</i></p>	
<p>"Critics are like horse-flies which prevent the horse from ploughing."</p>	
<p>Anton Pavlovitch Quoted by Anton Checkov <i>Fragments of Recollections.</i></p>	
<p>"A critic is a man who knows the way but can't drive the car."</p>	
<p>Kenneth Tynan (b. 1927)</p>	
<p>Lord Tennyson described the critic Churton Collins as: "A louse in the locks of literature."</p>	
<p>Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1894) Quoted by Edmund Gosse.</p>	
<p>"Enough is enough."</p>	
Pen Circle.	
NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS	

Creative Pens

A Slice of Notime.

In a hurry, I was taking my weekdays lunch: a sandwich of Spanish white bread stuffed with local sardines and olives, all spiced with *harissa* and Moroccan ketchup. While my lower jaw was wolfishly dissecting the reddened fishes, my eyes were swinging between the TV set and the inexorable pendulum, and my ears were commuting between the news and the awaited train outside. It was supposed to come every now and then, and I was deadly afraid to hear it before I could finish my sandwich and get all the news. I wish I could do a lot of things before the arrival of that huge iron beast. The torrid heat added to the frantic atmosphere of the moment. The untiring pendulum, which now began to move in a strangely frenzied tempo, attracted my attention and inspired me to consult my wrist watch to make sure that time was still time. I was astonished to see that the Arabic numbers of my electronic watch ceased to move. The fact that they were still apparent meant that the battery was still charged. I rolled my eyes to the hammering pendulum and found to my great astonishment that it stopped dead. Only then I realized that there was a complete silence in that popular restaurant.

To make sure that I am not dreaming, I must move from this place which becomes so strange that it deserves – to a perfection – its name: 'Unheimliche.' In my way to the door, the motionless shabby-clothed clients are as though struck by the magic wand of an enchanter. Some have their jaws wide open; others are smiling eternally; and others are crooked on their plates like hunchbacks. Outside, the great tumult of the city life gives way now to a desert silence in spite of the forest of figures and silhouettes in the street. The immobile traffic, with its different vehicles, motorbikes, bicycles and charts, reminds me of their miniatures in Madurodam. A shopkeeper is supposed to be pouring milk, which seems like a long white icicle. A horse is half-closing its eyes for fear of the brandished whip like a long scimitar over its head. Even the sun ceases to move, and consequently the shade of the rod on the mosque sundial refuses to turn. I realize now that I am not dreaming and that my wish is granted: Time has stopped just now. For the time being – rather, for the notime being – I can do as many things as I can. So seize the moment! No: seize the nomoment! Now! – but in fact there is no now because time has ceased to be time. I grow weary of these continuous corrections and philosophical investigations. But I have to do at least something before the coming back of time and motion. But nothing can be done in this part of the town. No taxis, no work, no movement, no people, no air, no moving leaves of grass, no voice, no live fountain. The series of no's makes me tenser and tenser; and the ssuffocating ssilence urges me to move to the east side of the town. But in the grade crossing, my left foot suddenly slips between two rails and is seized with a hard and immobilizing cramp. Strangely enough, everything around me recovers motion in what seems to be a resurrection scene. It is clear that time – to my great satisfaction and pleasure – has become, once

again, time. The feeling of happy delivery is however interrupted by a sound of bad auguries. The train is coming at full speed and my foot is still cased between the rails. The increasing uproar and the approaching of this huge metallic beast are bringing fatal death, while in this slice of time I find the opportunity to visualize the plot of my whole life coming to an inevitable tragic end. In front of the still growing tumult of the train, I have only one wish: that time ceased to be, and now. Alas! The inexorable wheels and the deafening sounds are killing the shade of hope I still have. The train now is coming, coming, coming, and before the final clash, a voice begins to din in my ears:

"Your train will be here in a few seconds, sir." said the young waiter of 'Al-Fussul al-Arbaa' restaurant. The first thing I made was to consult my watch, which I discovered I had forgotten on the bookshelf.

A. Mouhajir.

CROSSWORDS (Nº 1)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1										
2										
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- 1- Modern English novelist. 2- A kind of fuel - Pain. 3- One of the cardinal points. 4- It can be fine or plastic - Greek letter. 5- A verb (reversed) - Eat in the right tense! - Having to do with environment and pollution. 6- The curved part in a gateway - A Norwegian playwright. 7- An insect which lives in man's hair - Uncommon. 8- Make a dove's sound. 9- Anti-blacks organization. 0- International organization - A verb.

- A- A verb - Mark or fasten with wax - European country. B- Pronoun - Anything in the shape of a ball or a sphere (Reversed). A prefix denoting the opposite. C- Double letters - A bird that colonizes others' nests [Without the final letter!]. D- Part (Reversed). E- An English poet in the first half of the 16th century - European currency. F- That is (Reversed) - The male of the cow, used for drawing loads. G- 'Help yourself!' - Penniless. H- No Comment - Spanish table. I- The prominent English poet in the Middle Ages - General Assembly, in French. J- Double letters - A numeral - A verb.

