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Not Only to Be Read: Aural and Visual Aspects of Samuel Beckett's *Ill Seen Ill Said*

Galina Kiryushina

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Abstract

This paper offers an examination of aural and visual features of Samuel Beckett's novel Ill Seen Ill Said. The main focus is on the methods by which these features appear within a prose text, and on their role as stimuli for a perception-driven approach to narrative construction. The motif of voice is established as crucial for Beckett's work, and oral expression is discussed in terms of its characteristic properties. The text's visual quality is approached from a cinematic perspective and investigated in parallel to Eisensteinian montage. The interaction between the two types of perception is considered in relation to Iser's reader-response criticism.

Keywords: voice, reader-response theory, montage, cinematography, perception

The Parable of Nutrition in Margaret Atwood's *The Year of the Flood*

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Abstract

*One of the most important effects of the "gene revolution" is the possibility of manipulating foodstuffs, in particular agricultural crops like soybeans, wheat and corn. While the development of agricultural technology accelerates the process of growth and provides solutions to age-old problems such as poverty and hunger, there are serious concerns about the risks of ecosystem changes. This article explores the environmental issues connected with Atwood's claim for sustainable nutrition in *The Year of the Flood* (2009) and (more marginally) in *Oryx and Crake* (2003).*

Keywords: gene revolution, foodstuffs, nutrition, Atwood, Oryx and Crake, The Year of the Flood, Ecosophy

Food as a Metaphor for Love, Sex and Life in Woody Allen's Movies

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Abstract

In Woody Allen's works, the role of gastronomy is not only marginal, as food becomes a metaphor for love, sex, ethnicity, and the attitude of the protagonists towards life. This paper deals with Allen's moviemaking and finds links between food and relationships (including the purely physical ones), demonstrates how dysfunctional relationships are reflected in food, and points out that the desire for food corresponds to the desire for life shared by Allen's life-affirming characters. Food also reveals the ethnic identity of Allen's characters and contrasts them with Gentiles. The protagonists of Woody Allen's movies also use food to become assimilated into their environment, and the wrong choice of food often proves that they are outsiders.

Keywords: Woody Allen, food, (dysfunctional) relationships, love, sex, intimacy, ethnicity, Jewish identity, Alvy Singer, Annie Hall, Ike Davis, Allan Felix, Love and Death, Sleeper, Bananas, Play It Again, Sam

The Puzzle Novel and Richard Powers' *Prisoner's Dilemma*

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Abstract

*This study seeks to establish a new type of novel: the "puzzle novel". It relies on the groundbreaking, and still valid, theories of the novel from Gyorg Lukács and Mikhail Bakhtin. The puzzle novel construct tries to provide a new direction for novel criticism: it should follow certain broad characteristics, but is open to more specific definition for certain analytical purposes. Just such a specific definition is provided to guide a particular reading of an excellent example of a puzzle novel, Richard Powers' *Prisoner's Dilemma* (1988). The general conclusion of the reading is that the novel highlights the question "who is the author?" on many different levels.*

Keywords: theory of the novel, novel, Richard Powers, Prisoner's Dilemma, Gyorg Lukács, Mikhail Bakhtin, postmodern literature, 20th century literature, American literature

Does blackness still matter? : Black Feminist Literary Criticism Revisited

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Abstract

In the last few years, scholars within the field of Black studies have sought to assess the current state of the field, addressing its objectives, shifting paradigms as well as the political stakes of their own theorizing. On both sides of the Atlantic, debates have taken place giving rise to new observations of blackness, new trajectories in research, and new perspectives on knowledge production. This essay seeks to contribute to this debate by examining, retrospectively, the ways in which black feminist literary critics, ever conscious of the political stakes of their theorizing, have engaged in and grappled with the issue of race and/or “blackness.”

Keywords: black feminist criticism, blackness, Christian, ideology, Joyce, McDowell, poststructuralism, practice, race, Smith, Spillers, theory

Sexuality Today: Contemporary African American Women Writers' Chick Lit Novels

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Abstract

Firstly the paper explains how sexism and racism have been intertwined for African Americans, as well as taking into consideration the resulting importance of gender and class-specific approaches even today. Secondly, the paper deals with how hidden power relations operate in the third millennium from the viewpoint of sexuality, as depicted in the case of the major characters in two selected books, namely What a Sista Should Do (2005) by Tiffany L. Warren and The Other Side of the Game (2005) by Anita Doreen Diggs, which represent two distinct subgenres of chick lit.

Keywords: Black, sexual politics, gender, sexuality, contemporary African American women writers, chick lit, Sista lit, Christian lit, sisterhood, romance

On the Categorical Properties of English and German Modal Verbs

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Abstract

Considering the prototypical properties of English and German verbs, this paper analyzes the categorial status, i.e. the part of speech, of core modal verbs in both languages. Illustrating the morphological and syntactic properties of modal elements in both languages, the paper demonstrates that English modals do not exhibit verbal properties and therefore cannot be considered to be verbs, despite the frequently held view. Furthermore, the paper illustrates that German modal verbs possess the majority of prototypical verbal properties, and therefore are to be considered legitimate members of this part of speech.

Keywords: Modal verb, lexical verb, part of speech, subcategorization, agreement, English, German

Representation of Social Actors in the Genre of the Institutional Press Release: a Study of Headlines

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Abstract

The paper aims to investigate the relationship of self-reference to other-reference in the discourse of institutional press releases focusing on headlines. For the purposes of the study, two key political actors were selected – the European Commission and the British government, namely their environmental departments. Corpora of more than 70 press releases from each organization have been compiled to compare the degree of self-centredness as demonstrated by foregrounding and backgrounding linguistic techniques, with particular focus on how syntactic-semantic structures are allocated to social actors. The analysis shows that while there is a significant level of similarity as far as allocation of agency and prominent linguistic structures related to self-reference is concerned, there are stark differences in terms of the space and prominence of linguistic structures allocated to the other social actors, personality and directness of reference, and the intensity of self-promotion by frequent repetition.

Keywords: Institutional press release, self-reference, social actors, linguistic actors

English Canonical Antonyms in Non-Native Speakers

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Abstract

This paper deals with non-native speakers' perception of the structure of antonymy in English. It concentrates on the notion of canonical antonyms – conventionalized pairs of words with contrastive meaning. To compare the perception of native and non-native speakers, the elicitation experiment designed by Paradis, Willners, and Jones is used. The results suggest that the nature of antonymy in English is perceived in the same way by both native and non-native speakers. Moreover, the set of adjectival canonical antonyms is very similar for both studied groups, while certain differences can be observed in the group of less strongly related antonyms.

Key words: antonymy, canonical antonyms, adjective, native speakers, non-native speakers