

L'ANALISI LINGUISTICA E LETTERARIA

DIPARTIMENTO DI SCIENZE LINGUISTICHE E LETTERATURE STRANIERE
UNIVERSITÀ CATTOLICA DEL SACRO CUORE

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LETTERS TO FATHER, WIFE AND LAST LOVE: VASILII GROSSMAN'S EPISTOLARY LEGACY¹

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The paper presents three important non-published corpora of Grossman's letters that the authors of the article prepare for the publication. First – Grossman's letters to his father Solomon Iosifovich (1873–1956); these are familiar to his biographers but unknown to the general reader. Second – the letters between Grossman and his wife Ol'ga Mikhailovna Guber (1906–1988); this corpus has long been known about, but until now no scholar has had the opportunity to read even a significant part of it. Third – a collection known only to a few people – Grossman's letters to his last love, Ekaterina Zabolotskaia (1906–1997). Through reading the entire corpora of letters readers will, for the first time, be granted the opportunity to get to know Grossman not through the interpretations of scholars, but directly, without any filter.

Keywords: Vasilii Grossman, Correspondence, Archival Research

1. *Introduction*²

The fate of Vasilii Grossman's epistolary legacy is complex and at times confusing. It is well-known that Grossman corresponded with many people throughout his life, but it is still largely unknown which letters have survived and where they are now located. Of course, there are corpora or individual letters the location of which is identified: for instance, the collections of the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI), the State Museum of the History of Russian Literature, Grossman's family archives, Harvard University library, the archive of The University of Notre Dame (Indiana) etc., but much remains to be established. Only a very small part of the correspondence has been published: 1967 saw the publication, with some abridgements, of Grossman's letters to his wife from his trip to Armenia in 1961 (Avakian 1967, 351–362); several letters to his father were published in a collection of the correspondence of Soviet writers during WWII (Go-

¹ We are deeply grateful to Robert Chandler for revising the English text of the article as well as for translating all the quotations from Russian into English. We would also like to thank the Study Center Vasily Grossman for its support.

² This work is the result of the close collaboration between the two authors. However, Anna Krasnikova is responsible for sections 1–3 and Julia Volokhova for sections 4–5.

riaeva et al. 2015), letters to Semën Lipkin were published in 2016 (Grossman 2016). In other publications – the main ones will be mentioned in this article – Grossman’s letters were only quoted, not cited in their entirety or as a whole corpus.

We have been fortunate to gain access to three important non-published corpora of Grossman’s letters. First – Grossman’s letters to his father Solomon Iosifovich (1873–1956); these are familiar to his biographers but unknown to the general reader. Second – the letters between Grossman and his wife Oľga Mikhailovna Guber (1906–1988); this corpus has long been known about, but until now no scholar has had the opportunity to read even a significant part of it. Third – a collection known only to a few people – Grossman’s letters to his last love, Ekaterina Zabolotskaia (1906–1997). It was probably these three people who, at different periods of his life, were the closest to Grossman – were, in effect, his family. They and, of course, his mother Ekaterina Savel’evna, who was killed in Berdichev in 1941 – but very few of Grossman’s letters to her have survived.

We are currently studying and preparing all three corpora for publication, but although the work is still in progress, it is already evident to what extent these documents can change or deepen our perception and understanding of the writer’s personality, the facts of his biography, his inner circle and his relationships to people in general, his attitudes, his values³.

In this article, we will describe these collections, one by one, and try to demonstrate how they may change our views of Grossman’s life and work.

2. *Letters to Solomon Iosifovich Grossman*

The story of the discovery of this collection is remarkable: in spring 1963, before going to hospital for an operation to remove a kidney, Vasilii Grossman gave Ekaterina Zabolotskaia a package of letters wrapped in paper. He said they were letters written by his mother Ekaterina Savel’evna to his father Solomon Iosifovich and asked her to keep them safe and destroy them after his death. Zabolotskaia kept this package, unopened, for many years after Grossman’s death in 1964, and did not dare to burn it. When, in 1990, she finally decided to follow the writer’s will, she called his close friend Semën Lipkin, who advised her to first remove the wrapping and see what was inside.

И вот я раскрыла пакет. Увидя знакомый почерк, была потрясена: это письма Василия Семеновича к Семену Осиповичу!

Любовью собраны и сохранены все письма, незначительные записки, даже обрывок страницы с непонятными записями рукой Василия Семеновича. Конечно я не могла их сжечь⁴. (RGALI, f. 1710, op. 3, ed. khr. 64, p. 1b)

³ The book of Grossman’s correspondence in Russian, as we hope, will be published in the near future by the Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie Publishing House.

⁴ “And so I opened the package. Seeing the familiar handwriting, I was shaken. These were letters from Vasilii Semënovich to Semën Osipovich! Everything – the letters themselves, unimportant notes, even a scrap of paper with some incomprehensible notes by Vasilii Semënovich himself – had been lovingly collected and preserved. Of course I could not burn them.”

Zabolotskaia handed the letters over to the Central State Archive of Literature and Art (now RGALI; F. 1710, op. 3, ed. khr. 64–72). She concluded her cover note of 29 December 1990 with the words: “Оправдываюсь перед Василием Семеновичем Гроссманом тем, что обещала я сжечь письма Екатерины Савельевны, а оказались в пачке письма его” (RGALI, f. 1710, op. 3, ed. khr. 64, p. 1b). [My excuse to Vasilii Semënovich Grossman is that I promised to burn Ekaterina Savel’evna’s letters – not these letters.]

Zabolotskaia also made several copies – for herself, for Semën Lipkin, for Grossman’s daughter Ekaterina Korotkova and for his stepson Fëdor Guber. Since access to these letters in RGALI was restricted by Fëdor Guber (these restrictions were lifted in 2002), she later gave another copy of the complete corpus to the American scholars John and Carol Garrard, who used it for their book *The Bones of Berdichev: The Life and Fate of Vasily Grossman* (Garrard, Garrard 1996)⁵. It was thanks to the Garrards that copies of these letters, as well as certain other documents, ended up in the collections of the Harvard University library⁶ and were thus made available to researchers.

Due to these circumstances, Grossman’s letters to his father were inaccessible, for example, to Anatolii Bocharov, the author of the first serious works on Grossman’s life and work: a critical and biographical essay published in 1970 and a monograph in 1990 (Bocharov 1970; Bocharov 1990). Since the mid–1990s the copies of these letters have been actively used by biographers, and since the late 2000s, researchers have also been working with the originals preserved in RGALI. In fact, all the authors of Grossman’s biographies (Garrard, Garrard 1996; Anissimov 2012; Fel’dman, Bit-IUnan 2015; Popoff 2019) use this source to a greater or lesser extent, as a valuable and often unique source of information enabling the reconstruction of the writer’s early biography, his circle of interests during his student years, his career as a writer, and his personal and family relationships.

Zabolotskaia wrote that the package contained 200 letters (all without envelopes, 180 dated and 20 undated) sent by Grossman to his father from 1925 to 1956: plus one letter from Semën Lipkin and one from Ekaterina Korotkova. But in fact, this collection also contained two letters from Grossman to his mother, two to his father’s wife Ol’ga Semënovna, and one to Zhenni Genrikhovna Genrihson, the nanny of Ol’ga Guber’s children, who lived with their family; Zabolotskaia probably simply failed to notice them. These letters are preserved in the main corpus of the letters to father in the Harvard copies and were filed as three separate units in RGALI (f. 1710, op. 3, ed. khr. 62, 63, 73, 75).

According to our calculations, there are 192 letters and postcards from Grossman to his father, 1 telegram, 7 short notes, 2 letters to his mother, 2 to Ol’ga Semënovna, and 1 letter from Katia to her grandfather. The letters are written on different paper, in different ink

⁵ In 2012 the book was reprinted with the title *The Life and Fate of Vasily Grossman* (Garrard, Garrard 2012). “Among these remarkable people the most important is Yekaterina Vasilievna Zabolotskaya. Without her generous assistance, we would not have been able to draw upon over 200 unpublished letters Grossman wrote to his father at particularly critical moments in his life. Grossman’s stepson Fyodor Guber restricted to his own use access to the originals, which Yekaterina Vasilievna had herself deposited in the Russian State Literature Archive (Grossman bequeathed these letters to her in 1963)” (Garrard, Garrard 2012, 42).

⁶ <https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/24/resources/3705>, last accessed July 29, 2023.

and sometimes in pencil. Many of the sheets are faded and some are so worn on the folds that some words are completely or almost completely erased.

Zabolotskaia attempted to arrange the letters in chronological order, but the letters are ordered differently at RGALI and at Harvard. In both cases, it seems that the order of the documents – especially, the undated letters, or those with no indication of the calendar year – has often been jumbled. Seeing it as important to establish the correct chronological order, we analysed the entire corpus, using established facts and information from archival documents as well as the events Grossman mentions, to try to reconstruct the true chronology.

One of the examples of how the confusion in the archives has influenced researchers' hypotheses and interpretation of facts is related to events of 1928. In a letter dated 26 August 1928, Grossman writes to his father that “after a long journey and sufferings” he has arrived in Odessa (“после долгих странствий и мытарств прибыл в Одессу”) and mentions that his mother is feeling well. Quoting this letter David Fel'dman and IUrii Bit-IUnan conclude that having spent holidays with his father:

Гроссман сначала в Москву вернулся из Криницы, где он, жена и отец вместе отдыхали. Потом отправился в Бердичев – там жила мать, с ней до Одессы доехал. Тогда и впрямь “долгие странствия”. А также “мытарства”, если учесть, что в поездах не менее трех суток провел⁸. (Fel'dman, Bit-IUnan 2015, 82–83)

But if we restore the chronological sequence of the correspondence, before the letter dated 26 August we find two undated letters in which Grossman describes in detail his hard and long trip from Krinitsa to Odessa: he with his wife Galia and a certain Liudmila went by cart to Gelendzhik, then by boat to Novorossiisk (during this trip the ladies got seasick), and then, with a long wait for a train, via Rostov and Yekaterinoslav to Odessa.

Another example concerns not chronology, but the interpretation of the information given in the letters. Tatiana Dettmer and Alexandra Popoff suggest that the prototype of the protagonist of *Life and Fate*, Viktor Shtrum, is Lev Shtrum (1890–1936), a physicist from Kiev – and among the main arguments of their hypothesis they cite two references to this surname from Grossman's correspondence with his father⁹. One of the references occurs in a letter dated 27 June 1933, in which Grossman asks his father: “Почему вдруг Ленинск? Ей богу, ‘Штрумск’ мне кажется более подходящим”. [Why Leninsk all of a sudden? To be honest, ‘Shtrumsk’ seems a better idea to me.]

⁷ In all quotations in this publication, we leave the spelling and punctuation of the original.

⁸ First Grossman returned to Moscow from Krinitsa, where he, his wife and father had been on holiday together. Then he went to Berdichev, where his mother lived, and travelled with her to Odessa. Thus, he really had a “long journey”. And also “travails”, given that he spent at least three days in trains.

⁹ See e.g.: “Recently it was discovered that the model for Grossman's central character was the nuclear physicist Lev Shtrum. The head of the theoretical physics department in Kiev's University, he liaised with Landau. In 1936 Shtrum was arrested and shot as an ‘enemy of the people’. Grossman had known him well as a student. (On February 12, 1929, Grossman wrote to his father of meeting Shtrum in Kiev and borrowing money from him.)” (Popoff 2019). See also Dettmer, Popoff 2018.

The meaning of these words becomes clear if we consider these words in the context of Grossman's other letters to his father and his father's wife Ol'ga Semënovna Rodanevich in June 1933. At the time, Iosif Solomonovich was working as a mining chemical engineer. He was not very happy with his job in Novosibirsk and was probably thinking about moving to another city. On 11 June Vasilii Grossman wrote to Ol'ga Semënovna:

Вы пишете о Днепропетровске. По-моему, за эту возможность следует ухватиться. Это большой, хороший город — Киев, Харьков, Москва, Криница, черт возьми, не так далеко от него. Работа интереснее, вероятно, чем в Сталино и тем более, чем в Новосибирске. Мой вам совет, дорогие мои, держите курс на юг¹⁰.

On 16 June he wrote to his father: "Ты решил ехать в Прокопьевск? Во всяком случае, не связывай себя никакими обязательствами на долгие строки, чтобы можно было уйти оттуда." [Have you decided to go to Prokopyevsk? At the very least, don't commit yourself to any long period of time, in case you wish to leave.] Dnepropetrovsk (now Dnipro) is the capital of the Dnepropetrovsk region of Ukraine; it is a mining and metallurgical region. Prokopyevsk, in the Kemerovo region, is one of the largest coal mining towns in Russia; the Leninsk that Grossman mentions in his letter of 27 June is probably Leninsk-Kuznetsky, a city in the Kemerovo region, a coal mining centre in the Altai. So, returning to "Shtrumsk", in this context it is unlikely that Grossman would have used this occasionalism for Kiev, where Lev Shtrum lived. On the contrary, it seems to us far more likely that he was referring by this name to Stalino (now Donetsk), where Grossman and his father had worked, and where they had a mutual acquaintance – Il'ia Iakovlevich Shtrum (1880–1946), director of the Institute of Occupational Health and Pathology and head of the Occupational Health Department at the Medical Institute (Gosudarstvennomu predpriiatiiu 2015: Pertseva 2020). Vasilii Grossman had worked at both places; through his occasionalism modelled on Leninsk – "Why Leninsk all of a sudden? To be honest, 'Shtrumsk' seems a better idea to me" – he was advising his father to choose the Dnepropetrovsk region rather than the Kemerovo region.

The other (chronologically the first) mention of the name "Shtrum" occurs in a letter dated 12 February 1929: "Был у Штрума и взял у него деньги, ибо сидел уже несколько дней на пище святого угодника" [I went to Shtrum and took money from him, because I had been starving for several days]. Dettmer and Popoff conclude from this reference:

As is apparent from one of Grossman's surviving letters, he and Lev Shtrum had known each other for years. On February 12th, 1929, a young Grossman, then a student in the Chemistry Department of Moscow University, wrote to his father that he saw Shtrum in Kiev and borrowed money from him. At 23, Grossman was hard up and had travelled to Kiev to meet his sweetheart (and future wife), Anna

¹⁰ "You write about Dnepropetrovsk. In my opinion, this is the option you should go for. It's a large, fine city – Kiev, Kharkov, Moscow and Krinitsa are not so very far away. The work is probably more interesting than in Stalino, let alone in Novosibirsk. My advice, my dear ones, is to head south."

Matsuk¹¹. His casual reference to Shtrum suggests that the physicist was a family friend. (Dettmer, Popoff 2018)

All this is questionable. The letter contains no mention of a long acquaintance with Lev Shtrum, nor of his first name, nor of Kiev — and it seems unlikely that this trip to Kiev ever even took place. Judging from their correspondence as a whole, Grossman used to tell his father about all his travels, including his visits to his wife in Kiev, and in the second half of January and in February 1929 he repeatedly wrote to his father that he was in Moscow and studying hard. On 26 January, after returning in Moscow from holidays spent in Ukraine, he reports:

[...] вернулся на “родное пепелище”. Начал заниматься, занятия в университете до сих пор слабо налажены, лаборатории работают, а лекции и семинары начнутся по-настоящему с 1 февраля. Думаю к 1 мая освободиться от последней лаборатории, тогда буду себя чувствовать не связанным с университетом “территориально”¹².

On 30 January, responding to his parents' worries about his studies, he writes with added emphasis:

Я совершенно не намерен бросать занятий, наоборот, я сделаю всё возможное, чтобы закончить их в минимальный срок. [...] Занимаюсь я теперь по 10 ч[асов] в день¹³.

Finally, in a letter of 12 February, a few lines before the mention of Shtrum, he writes explicitly that he has been studying almost round the clock and has not seen his wife for a long time:

Как я живу теперь — занимаюсь днем в лаборатории, вечерами и ночами занимаюсь, готовлюсь к зачету по технич[еской] химии; в промежутках между занятиями да и во время их скучаю по Гале. Ужасно гаупо и тяжело это — влюбился по-настоящему на склоне лет наконец, женился, и неделю, две проживем вместе, а потом длиннейшие месяцы разлуки. Вот и вся моя жизнь¹⁴.

¹¹ In fact Grossman and Anna Matsuk were already husband and wife: the letters testify that most probably they married in the spring or summer of 1928.

¹² “I’ve returned to my ‘old home’. I’ve begun my studies, though the university is not yet fully functioning. The laboratories are working, but lectures and seminars will only properly begin on 1 February. I hope to be done with my last laboratory by 1 May – then I will no longer be tied ‘territorially’ to the university”.

¹³ “I have no intention whatsoever to abandon my studies. On the contrary, I will do everything possible to complete them in the minimum time. [...] I am now studying ten hours a day”.

¹⁴ “My life now – I work all day in the laboratory, I study evenings and nights, I’m preparing for the exam in chemical engineering. In the intervals between studying, and sometimes during them, I long for Galia. It’s stupid and burdensome. I fall well and truly in love when I’m getting on. I marry. We live together for a week or two. And then, endless months of separation. That’s my life for you”.

And then, having already said goodbye to his father, he adds that he went to Shtrum and borrowed money from him. Thus, if Grossman was really in Moscow, as we think he was, it may well have been some other Shtrum who gave a poor student some money.

These are just two of many examples confirming that the publication of the whole corpus of Grossman's letters to his father, even if they are already available in public archives, and making it possible to read these letters in full, in the correct order, is of great importance. It provides firm ground for discussion of researchers' interpretation of matters of events, chronology, and Grossman's relationships with other people.

3. *Letters to Olga Mikhailovna Guber*

The second major corpus of correspondence is Grossman's letters to his second wife, Olga Mikhailovna Guber¹⁵. The first publication of several of these letters took place in 1967: those written from a trip to Armenia in 1961 (and early 1962) appeared in an anthology dedicated to Armenia *Glazami Druzei* (Avakian 1967, 351–362). Their existence became widely known later, through the publications of Grossman's stepson, Fëdor Borisovich Guber (1931–2020), which appeared in periodicals (Guber 1990, Grossman 1997, Grossman 1998, Grossman 2005, Guber 2005). Guber published various excerpts and complete letters from the family archive: Grossman's letters to his father, to his wife, to his mother Ekaterina Savel'evna, individual letters to other writers, as well as letters from readers and Soviet writers to Grossman. Fëdor Guber synthesised his contributions in *Memory and Letters. A Book about Vasilii Grossman* (Guber 2007). He described the materials used for this publication as follows:

Основой для книги послужили мои личные воспоминания о Василии Гроссмане, а также его многочисленные письма к жене, моей матери Ольге Михайловне Губер и отцу Семену Осиповичу Гроссману. [...] Кроме того использованы многочисленные письма Гроссману от писателей, читателей, многочисленные документы, сохранившиеся у меня, а также некоторые материалы, переданные мамой в ЦГАЛИ, но ранее скопированные. Приведены выдержки из книги близкого друга Василия Гроссмана Семена Липкина и из воспоминаний о Гроссмане других писателей¹⁶. (Guber 2007, 7)

Grossman's letters to Olga Guber have remained in his heirs' family archives and have been inaccessible to researchers. John and Carol Garrard explain why they did not use these materials in their monograph:

¹⁵ Olga left her first husband for Grossman in 1935; they married in 1936 and were married for the rest of the writer's life (though separated 1956–1958).

¹⁶ The book is based on my personal memories of Vasilii Grossman, as well as his many letters to his wife (my mother Olga Mikhailovna Guber and his father Semën Osipovich Grossman. [...] I have also used letters to Grossman from writers, readers, as well as many other documents I have preserved, and also materials that my mother copied before handing them over to TSGALI. Excerpts from the book by Grossman's close friend Semën Lipkin, and from other writers' memoirs are also included.

On an initial visit, Guber allowed us to copy portions of a photo album of the Lodz Ghetto that Grossman had brought back after the war. But he insisted that we submit for his approval the portions of our manuscript which used any further materials he might share with us. And he adamantly refused us unrestricted access to any of the Grossman materials in his possession. We therefore were unable to see the letters Grossman sent to Olga Mikhailovna, or even the letters Grossman had received from his own mother, Yekaterina Savelievna. [...] Therefore, after long and painful thought, we have decided not to use in this book either the Lodz album or any of the selected materials Guber showed us during our brief discussion with him in the Grossman apartment. (Garrard, Garrard 2012, 43)

The impossibility of checking the letters against the originals, on the one hand, and, on the other, the absence of clear, systematic editorial principles in the preparation of *Memory And Letters* (the dates of the letters and often the addressee are not indicated, the chronological order is constantly violated, etc.) have led some researchers to follow the Garrards' example and not use the materials published by Guber (e.g., Fel'dman, Bit–IUnan 2015). Other researchers into Grossman's biography (e.g., Popoff 2019) quote them selectively and fragmentarily, without any mention of the details and history of their publication.

In May 2023, thanks to Fëdor Guber's daughter Elena Kozhichkina, to whom we are deeply grateful, we received access to these letters. She handed over to us for inspection and copying three green folders kept in Grossman's memorial study in her flat. These were probably collected and assembled by Fëdor Guber while he was working on his book. We can not be sure that these constitute all the surviving correspondence between Grossman and his wife. Moreover, we know for sure that some parts of the surviving letters are missing. While we continue our search for the missing letters, we are confident that the three green folders contain the main part of the correspondence.

In most cases the letters, envelopes, postcards and telegrams were in blank C5 envelopes, purchased by Guber no earlier than 1988 and marked with his marginalia in pen or pencil. These marginalia generally reflect Guber's attempts to date the letters and place them in chronological order. Next to some dates, we see a "V", presumably indicating those letters which were of greatest interest to him and which he used while preparing his publications. The storage envelopes contained postcards, the letters themselves and envelopes from the letters. Some of the storage envelopes are labelled with dates but do not contain materials; sometimes the letters and the corresponding envelopes are placed separately; in other cases empty envelopes from the letters are found inside the storage envelopes; some letters were stored separately at the end of the folders, apart from the stapled storage envelopes. Although we see that Fëdor Guber attempted to arrange the materials in chronological order, he did not always succeed. Not all the materials were dated and some were dated wrongly; in some cases letters inside the folders were arranged chronologically and in others not.

The earliest materials date from 1937, the latest from October 1963. This is the only corpus available to us at present that contains not only Grossman's letters, but also those of his correspondent. Among them are 34 postcards and 155 letters from Grossman to

Ol'ga, 49 letters and 7 postcards from Ol'ga to Grossman, 1 letter from Ol'ga to Zhenni Genrikhovna, 2 letters from Fëdor Guber to Ol'ga and 1 letter from Grossman to Fëdor. This corpus includes correspondence sent from Berdichev and from the WWII fronts, letters sent by Ol'ga from evacuation, letters from the 1950s and 1960s written by the couple when one of them was on a trip, letters from 1963 that Grossman wrote from a sanatorium in Arkhangel'skoe.

Most of the letters are well preserved, with the exception of Ol'ga Guber's wartime letters; many of these are written in pencil, the folds are hard to read, and several letters contain fragments that are difficult to decipher because of the peculiarities of her handwriting.

Materials from this corpus often contain pencil notes, presumably by Fëdor Guber, which do not complicate the reading of the author's text. Some sentences are underlined. Some passages are marked in the margins. Incomplete dates are sometimes supplemented, and not always correctly.

This collection, which covers more than 25 years, is extremely important for Grossman studies: it contains much previously unknown or partly unknown information about the events of his life, his world and also the life of his family, the people around him.

Reading the continuum of correspondence with Ol'ga Guber allows us to establish for certain who constituted his inner circle, who remained close to him even during the most difficult years. Some of this we already knew; the letters from the 1950s–1960s confirm Grossman's close friendship with Semën Lipkin: almost every letter includes some mention of Lipkin. The importance of other close friends, however, has been underestimated. One such example is Efim Kugel', a friend from university about whom Grossman wrote in his story *Phosphorus*. The correspondence shows that they were close friends throughout their lives. When Kugel' was arrested in the 1950's and sentenced to many years in a labour camp, Grossman and Efim Kugel's brother tried to get the case reconsidered and the sentence reduced. On 6 May 1958, Vasilii Grossman wrote to Ol'ga Guber:

Вчера был у брата Ефима. Есть решение комиссии по помилованию — Ефиму сократили срок на 5 лет.

Так как ему оставалось 11 лет, то, значит, с сокращением осталось ему сидеть 6 лет. Он пишет, что с зачетами один день за три — ему эти 6 лет превратятся в 2 года. Конечно, это не то на что мы надеялись, но всё же значительное облегчение. Брат его радуется и полон благодарности¹⁷.

During Grossman's last years they saw each other every week: “Ефим здоров, вижу с ним, как обычно, по воскресеньям” [Efim is well, I see him on Sundays as usual] (28 May 1962). Along with others especially close to Grossman, Kugel' was regularly at his bedside in hospital during his last weeks.

¹⁷ “Yesterday I visited Efim's brother. The amnesty commission has resolved to shorten Efim's sentence by 5 years. Since he had 11 years left, this means that he now has 6 years of his sentence still to serve. Should one day be counted for three, these 6 years would be further reduced to 2 years. Of course, this is not what we had hoped for, but it is still a considerable relief. His brother is happy and full of gratitude”.

Another example is Fenia – Faina Abramovna Shkol’nikova, a woman written about both by Grossman’s daughter and by his stepson (Korotkova–Grossman 1998; Guber 2007, 34, 36, 154, 156). During the 1930s, Shkol’nikova was on friendly terms with members of the literary group *Pereval* (above all, with Ol’ga and Boris Guber, and also with Grossman) himself; she was also a friend of Evgeniia Khaiutina, the wife of Nikolai Ezhov (head of the NKVD, 1936–1938). Along with many other members of *Pereval*, Shkol’nikova was arrested in the late 1930s. After her release in 1954, she became very close to Ol’ga Guber and Vasiliï Grossman. “Впрочем, с отцом она дружила больше” [Although, she was more friends with my father], writes Ekaterina Korotkova (Korotkova–Grossman 1998, 441).

Numerous letters at our disposal confirm the closeness of Faina Shkol’nikova not only to Grossman and Guber as a couple, but also to Grossman himself, independently. On 8 October 1962, for example, he writes to his wife:

Вчера были с Ефимом [Кугелем. — Ю.В., А.К.] в гостях у Фени. Она нас очень хорошо принимала, богато угощала, радовалась нашему приходу. В благодар-ность за ее гостеприимство мы ее обыграли в 501 — в общей сложности на 2 рубля (новыми деньгами). Это событие всех огорчило: и выигравших и проигравшую. Да ничего, еще выиграет и Феня¹⁸.

It was probably after conversations with Faina Shkol’nikova that Grossman wrote *Mother*, his story about the wife of Nikolai Ezhov and the Ezhovs’ adopted daughter. It is also probable that Shkol’nikova was one of Grossman’s main sources of information about women’s camps. If we consider Grossman’s inner circle, we see that many people close to him during his last ten years, when he was writing *Life and Fate* and *Everything Flows*, had spent time in prisons, camps and exile. Besides Kugel’ and Shkol’nikova, Grossman regularly saw his cousin Viktor Sherentsis and Ol’ga Guber’s brother Nikolai Sochevets¹⁹, who has much in common with Ivan Grigor’evich, the central character of *Everything Flows*. Even Ol’ga Guber herself was arrested in 1937 and spent several months in prison.

This collection, which covers more than 25 years, contains much information – previously unknown or only partly known – about the events of his life and also the life of his family, the people around him, his work. It also reveals much about his relationship with his wife, a subject on which there has been much speculation²⁰. Not being able to go into detail in this article, we can only point out that he wrote long, warm letters to Ol’ga Guber until almost the end of his life. In a letter of 12 February 1958, while living apart from her, he wrote:

¹⁸ “Yesterday Efim [Kugel’. –А.К., Y.V.] and I visited Fenia. She received us very well, was a generous host and was happy to see us. In gratitude for her hospitality, we beat her in 501 – a total of 2 rubles (in new money). This upset all concerned, both the winners and the loser. But that’s okay, Fenia’s turn to win will come too”.

¹⁹ The letters show that Nikolai Sochevets helped to look after the aquarium and came regularly to change the water in it.

²⁰ For an example of false ideas about Grossman’s relationship with his wife during his last years, see Menaker (2007).

[...] я опять и опять хочу сказать тебе, что как бы не сложилась жизнь в дальнейшем, то глубокое, серьезное, важное, что сложилось в наших долгих, честных с тобой отношениях никогда не уйдет из моей души, не может из нее уйти²¹.

4. *Letters to Ekaterina Vasil'evna Zabolotskaia*

Grossman's letters to his father have long been accessible in archives. The existence of his correspondence with his wife was well-known, even if no one had the opportunity to read it except relatives – but the existence of a third corpus – Grossman's letters to Ekaterina Zabolotskaia – was entirely unknown.

We now know that various personal documents from Ekaterina Zabolotskaia's archive were kept by her daughter-in-law Natal'ia Andreevna Dubiago-Zabolotskaia, who in 2014 gave them to the art gallery owner and exhibition curator Il'dar Galeev. This collection includes photographs from Grossman's Armenian journey, a corpus of his letters, Zabolotskaia's short memoirs about Grossman written after his death, several letters from Zabolotskaia to Nikolai Zabolotskii, one letter from Nikolai Zabolotskii to Ekaterina, a collection of photographs of unidentified persons, and dried branches with a commentary by Zabolotskaia:

Это остаток букета осенних веток, которые В.С. Гроссман сорвал в сквере, где сидел после того, как отнес свой роман в редакцию. Ему хотелось, чтобы я сохранила этот букет. Остались две веточки...²²

In an interview we conducted with Il'dar Galeev in July 2023, he explained how these documents ended up in his possession. He came to know Natal'ia Dubiago-Zabolotskaia in 2013 while working on an exhibition of work by artists studying with Pavel Filonov in the mid-1920s; he and Natal'ia soon became friends.

Тесное общение с Натальей Андреевной привело к тому, что в какой-то момент она решила поделиться со мной семейной тайной. Помню волнующий момент, когда она извлекла из комода пачку рукописных материалов. Это были письма Василия Гроссмана, адресованные Екатерине Васильевне Заболоцкой – жене поэта, чьей невесткой Наталья Андреевна приходилась. Кроме писем Гроссмана в этом архиве находились и другие материалы Василия Семеновича, Ольги Губер и Екатерины Васильевны.

Наталья Андреевна Заболоцкая сообщила мне, что она хотела бы передать архив в мои руки, так как не может доверить его государственным архивам и сделать открытым для публикаций и обсуждений. История взаимоотношений двух людей воспринималась ею как нечто личное, не подлежащее огласке. К

²¹ “Again and again I want to tell you that no matter what happens in future, the deep, serious, meaningful things that have developed in our long and honest relationship will never leave my soul. They cannot leave it”.

²² “This is what remains of a spray of autumn branches that V.S. Grossman picked in the park where he sat immediately after taking his novel to the editors. He wanted me to keep this bouquet. Two small branches are left...”

тому же была жива дочь Гроссмана – Екатерина Короткова, которая, как полагала Наталья Андреевна, могла бы реагировать строго на публикацию писем²³.

At the same time, Natal'ia Dubiago–Zabolotskaia, realised that these documents would need to be published sooner or later, and so she chose to leave it to Galeev to decide when the time would be right:

Наталья Андреевна была неизлечимо больна, боролась с недугом и опасалась за сохранность эпистолярного наследия. На мою просьбу определить срок запрета обнародования этих писем и возможность их публикации в обозримом будущем Наталья Андреевна ответила предельно просто: когда сочтете нужным²⁴.

The collection contains: 45 letters, 5 telegrams and 4 notes from Grossman to Zabolotskaia, 1 note from Grossman to Zabolotskaia's daughter Natasha, and one note from Zabolotskaia to Grossman – all the above are dated 1959 to 1962. The corpus also contains 1 letter from Olga Guber to Zabolotskaia dated 1957.

Grossman's letters to Zabolotskaia, full of affection, differ in style and tone from his letters to other correspondents. In his other letters Grossman avoids talking much about himself; in his letters to Zabolotskaia, he expresses his thoughts and states of mind freely and in depth.

Several letters, for example, show his sense of approaching tragedy as he was completing *Life and Fate*. In a remarkable way, everything he says about his work in these letters echoes the words of one of his closest friends, Andrei Platonov: “Вася, ты же Христос!” [Vasia, you are Christ!] (Lipkin 1990, 5) These words, recorded by Lipkin, have been quoted many times by memoirists and researchers. It is clear that when Grossman was working on the book, he knew in advance that he would face hardships, that he was prepared to suffer for his work, and that he consciously chose this thorny path, having no illusions about the fate of his novel. We hope to discuss this in detail in future publications, and here we limit ourselves to three quotations that illustrate both his determination and his sense of sorrow and anguish.

²³ “Our friendship eventually led to her deciding to share a family secret with me. I remember an exciting moment when she took out a pile of handwritten papers from a drawer. They were letters from Vasilii Grossman to Ekaterina Vasil'evna Zabolotskaia, the wife of the poet; Natal'ia Andreevna was the poet's daughter-in-law. This archive also contained other material from Vasilii Semënovich, Olga Guber and Ekaterina Vasil'evna. Natal'ia Andreevna Zabolotskaia informed me that she wanted to hand the archive over to me, since she could not entrust it to state archives and make it accessible for publication and discussion. She saw the history of the relationship between Grossman and Zabolotskaia as something personal, not for the public realm. In addition, Grossman's daughter, Ekaterina Korotkova, was still alive and Natal'ia thought she might disapprove of the letters being published.”

²⁴ “Natal'ia Andreevna was terminally ill, struggling with her illness and concerned for the safety of this legacy. In response to my asking her to give me a date when it would be acceptable to publish these letters, Natal'ia Andreevna simply replied: ‘Whenever you think it is right’”.

We are very grateful to Il'dar Galeev for entrusting the publication of these letters to us.

Though he repeatedly referred to himself as an atheist, he wrote to Zabolotskaia on 7 September 1959:

Работать продолжаю, но видит ли бог мою работу. Хоть бы он глянул на нее, не надеюсь я на людские глаза²⁵.

On 3 October 1959 he wrote:

Нет в моей душе покоя, издергался, а впереди, совсем уже рядом, большие и жестокие испытания, которые связаны с главной моей работой в жизни. Кто поможет, на кого опереться, как писал Гоголь: “Все чужие, враждебные лица”. К ним и пойду²⁶.

On 9 October 1959 he repeated his worries about the future of the book and added that he wrote the novel because he couldn't not write it, and that he hoped to share it with others.

Задумываюсь, как же я расстанусь с людьми, с которыми был связан каждый день в течение почти шестнадцати лет. Как печальна и неясна их судьба, и как печальна и неясна судьба моей работы.

Вот прочел вчера вечером слова индийского мудреца: “Выполняй предназначенную тебе работу, но не пользуйся ее плодами – работай, не имея желания вознаградить себя, работай!”.

Может быть, я не хотел и не хочу, но по этому правилу работал и я. Но ведь не для себя работает человек, и ведь только одного я хотел и хочу – чтобы работа эта была не для меня²⁷.

Many of the letters in this corpus were written in 1961 from Armenia. In them he describes in detail his work on the Russian translation of Rachiiia Kochar's novel *Children of the Big House*, published in Erevan in 1962 (Kochar 1962). We can see that this work was not easy for Grossman and that he had no respite from his sense of anxiety.

Я уж много работаю — как бы контрабандой, — то утром, то днем, то поздним вечером — надо мне спешить. Боюсь я, что затянется и это дело, а я полон

²⁵ “I continue to work, but does God see my work? I wish he would at least glance at it, I can't count on human eyes”.

²⁶ “There is no peace in my soul, I am worn out, and ahead of me, already near at hand, lie cruel and important challenges, linked to my main work in life. Who will help me? Who can I rely on? In the words of Gogol: ‘All around are alien, hostile faces.’ I must confront them”.

²⁷ “I wonder how I will say goodbye to the people with whom I have been in contact every day for almost sixteen years. How sad and uncertain their fate is – and how sad and uncertain the fate of my work. Last night I read the words of an Indian sage: ‘Do the work you are meant to do, but do not expect to enjoy its fruits! Work without any desire to reward yourself. Work!’ Maybe I didn't want to and still don't, but that is the rule I have worked by. A man does not work for himself, and there is only one thing I wanted and still want – that this work should not be for my sake alone”.

какой–то плохой тревоги, не оставляет она меня и под голубым небом, и на берегу синего озера. Тяжело мне²⁸. (7 November 1961)

In his letters to Ekaterina Zabolotskaia (as well as in letters to Ol'ga Guber and Semën Lipkin), Grossman records his impressions of Erevan, of life in Tsakhkadzor, of an Armenian wedding, of Lake Sevan, of the Molokan community, of his meeting with the Catholicos of the Armenian Apostolic Church, etc.). In some instances they correspond to passages from *An Armenian Sketchbook*; in others they provide researchers with completely new material. A comparative analysis of the letters and the sketchbook is therefore an important task for researchers.

5. *Entering the private sphere*

Through reading the entire corpora of letters readers will, for the first time, be granted the opportunity to get to know Grossman not through the interpretations of scholars, but directly, without any filter. They will be able to see one of the greatest Twentieth century writers as a person who experienced joy, excitement, fear, doubt and all the other emotions that we have all experienced. This will be of great value.

It will be all the more valuable because it was widely believed that Grossman was almost a misanthrope, a depressive often quick to resort to sarcasm²⁹. It is indeed true that in these letters he sometimes jokes about his acquaintances and criticises them, and that his closest friend Semën Lipkin is the most frequent target of his mockery. For example, on 4 March 1959, telling Zabolotskaia about staying with Lipkin in Yalta, Grossman writes:

Сема трудится, обложенный таким количеством толстых словарей, что его самого не видно за фолиантами. Он щеголяет в невероятных приюслевых туфлях, взволновавших всю Ялту: старики покачивают головами, молодые говорят “ого”, а мальчишки идут следом³⁰.

But the jokes and sarcasms are few and far between. The most important feature of his letters, throughout his life, is his sincere attentiveness to the addressee – whoever that may be – as well as to other people in his field of vision³¹. Below are just a few examples of the hundreds that could be quoted.

²⁸ “I work all hours – as if I were a smuggler – in the morning, in the afternoon, late at night. I must hurry. I am afraid that this business will drag on for too long, and I am full of bad feelings, which do not leave me even under the blue sky and on the shore of the blue lake. Nothing is easy for me”.

²⁹ Gedda Surits, for example, wrote in her memoirs in 1966: “трудный человек, резкий и неуживчивый” [a difficult man, harsh and unfriendly] (Surits 1998, 431).

³⁰ “Sëma labours away, surrounded by so many thick dictionaries that he cannot be seen behind the folios. He is wearing improbably smart fabric shoes that excite the whole of Yalta; the old men shake their heads, the young men say ‘Wow!’ and the boys follow close at his heels”.

³¹ Among those who insisted that Grossman’s misanthropy was only a myth were Lazar’ Lazarev (Lazarev 2000) and Anna Berzer (Berzer 1990, 255).

Береги себя, дорогой мой. Не переутомляйся. Ты знаешь, теперь я доволен собой, много работаю, устаю (счастливая усталость после долгого безделья) и единственная тяжесть это мамино здоровье и ты. Я себя чувствую, как бы виноватым перед вами. Не знаю почему, но когда думаю о том, что ты так одинок, мне кажется, что я не делаю для тебя того, что могу сделать³². (the very first letter to father that reached us, 12 December 1925)

Папа, очень меня огорчило сообщение твое о Наде, несчастные они, и совершенно беспомощные женщины – одна глухая, вторая слепая [*двоюродная сестра Гроссмана Надежда Алмаз и ее мать Елизавета Савельевна*. – Ю.В., А.К.]. По возвращении в Москву постараюсь их хоть материально поддержать немного (to father, 14 July 1948)³³.

Перехожу к Сёме Липкину. Вышел “Новый мир” с его стихами. У стихов большой успех, много звонят, говорят о них в самых превосходных степенях. Видимо, я очень люблю Сему – счастлив так, словно все это со мной.

Теперь сообщаю тебе печальную новость: у жены Бека – Наташи Лойко – обнаружили злокачественную опухоль прямой кишки. Сегодня ее оперировали в Ленинграде, какой-то знаменитый хирург по полостным операциям. Жалко мне ее, она хорошая женщина³⁴. (to Ekaterina Zabolotskaia, 3 June 1959)

The following quotation presents the concluding lines of one of the last surviving letters that Grossman, sick with cancer, sent to his wife from a sanatorium in the autumn of 1963:

Федя выглядит неплохо — живут они мирно, но по моим наблюдениям у Иры [*Новиковой, жены Федора Губера*. – Ю.В., А.К.] характер кремневый. [...]

Привет Фене [*Файне Абрамовне Школьниковой*. – Ю.В., А.К.], все очень сочувствуют её зубной боли, а я особенно.

Мариам [*Мариам Наумовна Черневич, переводчица с французского, подруга Гроссмана и Губера*. – Ю.В., А.К.] очень хороший человек³⁵. (to Olga Guber, 9 October 1963)

³² “Take care of yourself, my dear. Don’t tire yourself out. I’m at ease with myself now. I’m working hard, getting tired (a happy tiredness after a long period of idleness) and my only worry now is Mum’s health and your own. I feel somewhat guilty before you. I don’t know why, but when I think of you being so lonely, I feel I’m not doing all I could for you”.

³³ “Dad, I was very upset to hear about Nadia. They [*Grossman’s cousin Nadia Almaz and her mother Elizaveta Savel’evna*. – А.К., J.V.] are unhappy and utterly helpless – one is deaf and the other blind. On my return to Moscow I will try to give them at least some financial support”.

³⁴ “And now to Sëma Lipkin. Novy Mir has now come out, with his poems. The poems are a great success. There have been lots of phone calls. People are praising them very highly indeed. It seems I truly do love Sëma – I’m happy as if all this were happening to me. Now for the sad news: Bek’s wife Natasha Loiko has been diagnosed with a malignant tumour of the rectum. She was operated on today in Leningrad, by a famous cavity surgeon. I feel sorry for her, she’s a good woman”.

³⁵ “Fedia looks well – they live peacefully, but from what I’ve seen, Ira is someone very unbending [*Novikova, Fedor Guber’s wife*. – А.К., J.V.]. [...]

Say Hello to Fenia [*Faina Abramovna Shkol’nikova*. – А.К., J.V.], everyone is very sorry about her toothache and especially me.

It is clear from the letters that there is still much to discover about Grossman's relationship with other writers and his appreciation of their work, as well as about his inner circle.

From the letters to Ol'ga Guber and Ekaterina Zabolotskaia we learn, for example, that Grossman thought very highly of the poetry of Slutskii, whom he saw regularly when they were neighbours for some time in the late 1950s and 1960s (Falikov 2018). For instance, on 25 May 1958 he wrote to Ol'ga Guber: “Заходил ко мне Слуцкий, читал стихи, он очень талантлив, — мне он нравится больше всех поэтов нашего времени”. [Slutskii came to see me and read his poetry, he's very talented – I like him more than any other poet of our time.] We also get to know that he met Mikhail Zoshchenko and that he very much liked him: “[Zoshchenko] удивительно милый, особенный какой то человек” [an amazingly nice, special person] (to Ol'ga Guber, 16 February). We also learn that Grossman was fond of Vera Panova and her husband David Dar. We read about his friendships with Andrei Platonov and with Ruvim Fraerman (one of the co-authors of *The Black Book*), about his view of Paustovskii, about his long and complicated relationship with Aleksandr Tvardovskii, and much more.

The letters also tell us a lot about Grossman's interests. We see that Grossman was interested not only in fiction, but also in non-fiction, biographies and memoirs, and that he kept up with new publications. From a letter to Zabolotskaia dated 20 March 1959:

Читаю я сейчас книжку: *Кибернетика и общество* Виннера, она трудная, особенно первая половина, но очень интересная. Прочел большие, двухтомные мемуары *Рузвельт и Гопкинс* [Роберта Шервуда. – Ю.В., А.К.] — тоже очень интересные. Вот приеду, буду тебе немного рассказывать, очень любопытные вещи в виннеровской книжке. [...]

Прочел книжку м-ме Ферми *Атом у нас дома* [Атомы у нас дома. – Ю.В., А.К.] – ее воспоминания о муже, знаменитом физике. Дама-то довольно ничтожная, но книжка исключительно занимательная, интереснее романов, даже приключенческих³⁶.

We know that he eagerly played cards and that, during his visits to *Doma tvorchestva* [Houses of Creative Work], sanatoriums and houses of recreation, he enjoyed going to the cinema. For example, on 20 September 1963 in a letter to Ol'ga Guber he lists all the films that he saw at the Arkhangel'skoe sanatorium:

По вечерам смотрю кино. Видел уже следующие картины: “Три плюс два”, “Каин XVIII”, “Моя жена хочет петь”, “Я хочу танцевать”, “Молодой мальчик”,

Mariam is a very good person [Mariam Naumovna Chernevich, translator from French, friend of both Grossman and Guber. – А.К., J.V.]”.

³⁶ “I am reading a book: *Cybernetics and Society* by Wiener. It is difficult, especially the first half, but very interesting. I read the long, two-volume memoirs *Roosevelt and Hopkins* [by Robert Sherwood. – А.К., J.V.] – also very interesting. When I'll return, I'll tell you a little more. There are some very curious things in Wiener's book. [...] I read M.me Fermi's book *Atom in the Family* [Atoms in the Family. – А.К., J.V.] – her memoirs about her husband, a famous physicist. The lady is rather a non-entity, but the book is extremely entertaining, more interesting than novels, even adventure novels”.

“Банда подлесцов”. Впечатление произвела только одна картина: “Банда подлесцов” — это тяжелая, напряженная драма времен войны³⁷.

And on 30 September he concludes: “Насмотрелся кино так, что год не буду смотреть.” [I’ve now seen so many films that I won’t want to see any more for a year.]

From the three corpora of correspondence we also learn many precious details about Grossman’s work, some of them previously unknown. For instance, the letters (to Ol’ga Guber; 23 November 1941, 29 November 1941, 2 December 1941 and others) show that Grossman originally planned to write the short novel *The People Immortal* together with Gabrilovich, and, moreover, that they shared the initial idea.

Мы здесь с Женей Габриловичем задумали написать совместно повесть, роман на современном военном материале. Составили подробный план, послали его в Москву — если редактор утвердит, приступим к работе. Может получиться очень интересная вещь. И работа эта увлекательна и содержательна и материально может дать порядочно — ведь потом книжку можно будет издать³⁸.

Besides we get to know that the military correspondent Pëtr Illarionovich Kolomeitsev, whom Grossman admired, was a military adviser in the writing of the story:

Должен сказать тебе, что меня уже тянет в поездку, мечтаю поехать с Коломейцевым. Он чудный человек, между прочим он военный консультант по моей рукописи — умный, с большим вкусом, тонкий. Прекрасный, ей-богу, человек³⁹. (to Ol’ga Guber, 23 July 1942)

Other letters confirm assumptions made earlier. For instance, it was already known, above all from Fëdor Guber’s publications, that editors had made changes – sometimes major changes – to some of his war essays without his knowledge and consent and to his great frustration. Now we have more evidence of this. On 8 October 1942 for instance, Grossman wrote to his wife: “На днях (26^{го}) оказывается был напечатан малый кусок моего 2–ого очерка в совершенно неузнаваемом виде, я его не узнал”⁴⁰. [The other day (26th

³⁷ “In the evenings I go to the cinema. I have already seen all the following: *Three Plus Two*, *Cain XVIII*, *My Wife Makes Music*, *I Want to Dance*, *Young Boy*, *No Man’s Land*. Only one picture impressed me: *No Man’s Land* – it is a weighty, tense drama set during the war”.

³⁸ “Zhenia Gabrilovich and I are thinking of writing a novel based on contemporary military material. We have prepared a detailed plan and sent it to Moscow – if the editor approves it, we’ll get down to work. It could be very interesting. The work will be interesting and meaningful, and we could be well paid for it, since in due course it can be published as a separate book”.

³⁹ “I must tell you that I am already tempted to go on this trip. My dream is to go with Kolomeitsev. He is a wonderful man. He is, by the way, my military consultant for my manuscript. He’s intelligent and subtle, with good taste. A wonderful man, honestly”.

⁴⁰ This is an essay that was printed on 26 September 1942 in the newspaper *Krasnaia Zvezda* [Red Star] with the title *In a steppe ravine* (Grossman 1942); and later, in the collections *Stalingrad* and *The Years of War*, with the title *The Company of Young Artillerymen*. This later version is more complete and clearly closer to the author’s original version (Grossman 1943; Grossman 1947).

it turns out that a small part of my second essay was printed in a completely unrecognisable form. I truly didn't recognise it.]

The letters, which cover more than 35 years, trace almost the whole of Grossman's path as a writer. We see the beginner who sent his first works to Gorkii in 1932; we see the popular Soviet writer of the 1930s and 1940s, whose articles about the war were read by millions; we see the writer who works selflessly on the main novel of his life, then falls into disgrace, unable to publish much of his best work.

The letters include frequent mentions of Grossman's difficulties in getting his work published during his last years, of how long he had to wait for answers from editors, and of instances when permission for the publication of a particular work was withdrawn even after it had initially been accepted. From late April to early June 1959, for example, Grossman was engaged in an eventually unsuccessful struggle to get his story *Tiergarten* published in the journal *Znamia*.

К печали своей в этом письме могу, как обещал в телеграмме, дополнительно сообщить о судьбе рассказа, — он с треском снят Главлитом. Правда, редакция не теряет надежды и собирается хлопотать о нем, но, думаю, эти хлопоты помогут, как мертвому банки. Так как события последних дней меня уж подготовили к тому, что рассказ не будет напечатан, я не особенно переживаю всё это⁴¹. (to Ol'ga Guber, 28 April 1959)

С рассказом появились кое-какие просветы. Прочел его наконец Поликарпов, я говорил с ним по телефону, — он за. Однако для снятия запрета нужно, чтобы еще кое-кто прочел. Поликарпов обещал не затягивать. Условились с ним о встрече в ближайшие дни. Буду сообщать тебе, как только появятся новости⁴². (to Ekaterina Zabolotskaia, 3 June 1959)

In a letter to Zabolotskaia dated 18 December 1961 Grossman told her about the preparation of a collection of stories *Old Teacher*, to be brought out in 1962 by the publishing house *Sovetskii pisatel'*.

Получил письмо от редакторши Ивановой, издательство сняло 4 рассказа, те, что именно я хотел особо напечатать, — все делают прямо противоположно моему желанию. Я написал ей, пусть так уж сдают книгу, спорить, находясь за 3

⁴¹ "Sadly, I can now say more, as I promised in my telegram, about the fate of my story – Glavlit [*the State censors*. – R. C.] have put their foot down hard. Although the editors have not given up hope and are still trying to save the story, I think they are wasting their time. Since the events of the last few days have prepared me for all this, I am no longer particularly upset about the story not being published".

⁴² "There are some gleams of hope for the story. Polikarpov has finally read it. I spoke to him on the phone – he is in favour of publication. But for the ban to be lifted, someone else has to read it too. Polikarpov promised not to delay. We agreed to meet in the next few days. I'll let you know as soon as there's any news".

т[ысячи] километров от Москвы нельзя, а в Москву я приеду нескоро. Ну, бог с ними⁴³.

To conclude the presentation of the three corpora, we must not forget that there are other letters without which the study of the writer's correspondence will remain incomplete. Some of them are known and have been published, such as Grossman's letters to Semën Lipkin, edited by Elena Makarova (Grossman 2016). There are various other corpora of letters about which we know very little.

Ekaterina Korotkova has testified that Grossman corresponded both with her and with his first wife Anna Matsuk (Korotkova 2014, 205, 226); according to Korotkova's memoirs, the letters to her were destroyed by her father-in-law Victor Baranov (Korotkova–Grossman 2014, 66). There is also evidence of Grossman's correspondence with his daughter over the years in his letters to other people. For instance, on 25 November 1961 he wrote to Zabolotskaia: "Получил письмо от Кати, — в нем все, что полагается быть в письме дочери — и тревога о моем здоровье, и вопросы о том, как устроен, и вопросы о красоте Армении." [I received a letter from Katia – it contains everything a letter from a daughter should contain – concerns about my health, and questions about my mood, and questions about the beauty of Armenia.] It is still unclear whether all of Grossman's letters to his daughter were destroyed, or whether some survived and are now in private archives and may be discovered one day. The fate of Ekaterina Korotkova's letters to her father, which are of particular interest to researchers, is also unknown.

In some of the letters from the corpora we have studied, Grossman mentions ongoing correspondence with his friends and relatives: with his stepson Fëdor Guber, with his cousin Nadezhda Almaz, with Klara Sherentsis (the wife of his cousin Viktor), with Efim Kugel', Semën Tumarkin, Semën Gecht, Ruvim Fraerman, Faina Shkol'nikova, Mariam Chervich and others. One of the most important directions for future research should therefore be to continue searching for and collecting Grossman's correspondence.

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⁴³ "I received a letter from my editor Ivanova, saying that they have withdrawn four stories – the very ones I most wanted to publish. Everything they do is the exact opposite of what I want. I told her to go ahead and publish the book anyway. It's impossible to argue when I'm 3000 kilometres away from Moscow, and it'll be quite some time before I return. Well, God be with them".

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FRANZ KAFKA E IL *SEMIKOLON*.
L'USO DEL PUNTO E VIRGOLA IN *DIE VERWANDLUNG*
E IN ALCUNE DELLE SUE TRADUZIONI ITALIANE

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The paper examines the peculiar use of the semicolon in Franz Kafka's short story *Die Verwandlung*. Starting from brief considerations, which compare the punctuation practices in German and Italian with regard to this sign, a quantitative and qualitative analysis will be conducted on Kafka's original, in an attempt to define the exact functions of the semicolon with respect to the other punctuation marks, especially the colon. Subsequently, the deformations that the semicolon's (and colon's) use undergoes in seven Italian versions of the classic published in the 20th and early 21st centuries will be recorded (again on a quantitative and qualitative level), in an attempt to quantify, on the one hand, the pressure exerted by divergent or changing punctuation norms and philosophies and, on the other, the more or less pronounced source-oriented approach of the single Italian translators.

Keywords: Franz Kafka, Translation, Punctuation, German language, Metamorphose

1. *Presenze imponenti, assenze rilevanti: le nude cifre*

Chiunque si avvicini al testo di *Die Verwandlung*, la *Metamorfosi* di Franz Kafka, volendo esaminarne la lingua e lo stile, accanto alle tante peculiarità evidenziate da un secolo di studi letterari e linguistici, non può fare a meno di notare la gran quantità di punti e virgola di cui è disseminato il racconto.

Un conteggio rapido ci dice che sono 175 su poco più di 19.000 parole e 120.000 battute. Volendo quantificare il fenomeno nelle cifre dell'analisi testuale e tradurre la presenza del punto e virgola nella lingua dei corpora, dunque in 'occorrenze per milione di *token*' (d'ora in avanti OMT), diremmo che in *Die Verwandlung* il punto e virgola ha una frequenza di 7847 OMT.

Il dato ci dice davvero poco se non rapportato alla frequenza di utilizzo del *Semikolon* nei testi letterari tedeschi in generale. Analizzando un corpus come il *Gutenberg German 2020* (circa 91 milioni di *token*) e prendendo in esame, al suo interno, solo i testi di autori di prosa morti tra il 1900 e il 1950 (Franz Kafka muore nel 1924), la presenza del segno di interpunzione è pari a 4372 OMT. Con tutte le riserve che un conteggio tanto rudimentale

impone, *Die Verwandlung* ha una frequenza di *Semikolons* di oltre il 79 per cento superiore rispetto a un subcorpus comprendente opere di autori tedeschi di prosa vissuti tra la seconda metà del XIX e la prima metà del XX secolo.

Potremmo pure ipotizzare che l'uso del *Semikolon* sia una costante dello stile di Kafka. Una nuova analisi puramente quantitativa, stavolta nel corpus che comprende romanzi e racconti dell'autore boemo, ci dice che il segno ha una frequenza pari a meno di 3000 OMT, ossia due volte e mezzo in meno rispetto al testo oggetto della nostra analisi. I testi letterari, tuttavia, mal si prestano a generalizzazioni, e non possiamo affermare che Franz Kafka utilizzi il *Semikolon* come mezzo stilistico rilevante solo in *Die Verwandlung*. Esempi eclatanti, per il nostro oggetto d'indagine, potremmo trovarli nel brevissimo frammento *Eine kaiserliche Botschaft* (Kafka 1983b, 128), poi inserito nel più corposo *Beim Bau der Chinesischen Mauer* (Kafka 1983a, 51–62), o nel racconto *Ein Landarzt* (Kafka 1983b, 112–117). Tuttavia, nella maggior parte delle opere di Kafka il *Semikolon* è un segno di interpunzione come un altro, a servizio della causa più grande della narrazione.

Altro fenomeno evidente nel testo di *Die Verwandlung* è costituito dalla rarità di un altro segno di interpunzione: il *Kolon*. Nel testo tedesco ne troviamo appena 26, e tutti introducono il discorso diretto. Esaminando un ampio corpus come il *Gutenberg German 2020* limitatamente ad autori più o meno coevi a Kafka (morti tra il 1900 e il 1950), ogni 10 *Kolons* troviamo 11 *Semikolons*; nel testo kafkiano, ogni 10 *Kolons* ci sono 67 *Semikolons*. Il dato più clamoroso, dunque, è la (s)proporzione tra le frequenze dei due segni.

La tabella che segue illustra, per entrambi i segni, i rapporti di frequenza relativi a *Die Verwandlung* e ai tre romanzi di Kafka:

Tabella 1 - Occorrenze totali e relative in *Die Verwandlung* e nei romanzi kafkiani

| Opera (massa testuale in token) | <i>Semikolon</i> occorrenze totali | <i>Semikolon</i> OMT | <i>Kolon</i> occorrenze totali | <i>Kolon</i> OMT |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Die Verwandlung</i> (22.301) | 175 | 7847 | 26 | 1166 |
| <i>Der Prozess</i> (87.782) | 91 | 1036 | 206 | 2346 |
| <i>Das Schloß</i> (105.404) | 154 | 1461 | 201 | 1906 |
| <i>Der Verschollene</i> (106.881) | 135 | 1263 | 210 | 1964 |

Si consideri che, nel subcorpus di opere in prosa scritte da autori contemporanei a Franz Kafka, la frequenza del *Kolon* è di 3951 OMT.

2. I Semikolons dell'ultima ora

Visti i dati appena rilevati, si potrebbe anche ipotizzare che l'uso particolare del *Semikolon* sia dovuto, in certa misura, alle pressioni linguistiche che Kafka subisce in un contesto multilingue come quello in cui vive, dove il *Prager Deutsch* deve fare i conti con le interferenze esercitate dal ceco, e dallo yiddish occidentale, parlato nella comunità ebraica. Già Boris Blahak rileva (esaminando nello specifico i *Romanfragmente*) la tendenza dell'autore boemo a distaccarsi dalla norma linguistica nei testi letterari più di quanto non faccia in quelli personali (diari, lettere) o professionali (Blahak 2015, 138–190).

Tutte queste influenze dovrebbero però evidenziarsi in primo luogo nei manoscritti. Nel manoscritto di *Die Verwandlung*, invece, il *Semikolon* appare solo 20 volte (Reuß, Staengle 2003), che però diventano di colpo 166 nell'edizione pubblicata nella rivista *Die weißen Blätter* nell'ottobre 1915 (Kafka 1915a, 1177–1230) e salgono addirittura a 175 nemmeno due mesi dopo, nella prima edizione per i tipi di Kurt Wolff Verlag (Kafka 1915b).

Davvero Kafka ha aggiunto tanti *Semikolons* in vista della stampa? Che li abbia aggiunti qualcun altro? Magari la redazione di Kurt Wolff Verlag, o forse quella di *Die weißen Blätter*? L'11 ottobre 1915 Georg Heinrich Meyer, che tra il 1914 e il 1916 dirige la casa editrice sostituendo Kurt Wolff, chiamato al fronte, scrive a Kafka:

Es scheint, daß Sie selbst gar keine Korrektur von der „Verwandlung“ gesehen haben. Wenn das der Fall ist, so trifft die Schuld Herrn Schickele. Hier in Leipzig habe ich mit den Redaktionsarbeiten der Weißen Blätter überhaupt nichts zu tun. Sollte Herr Schickele versäumt haben, Ihnen die Korrektur zu senden, so wollen Sie das mit dem gegenwärtigen unsinnigen Zustand entschuldigen. Ganz besonders wollen Sie aber auch berücksichtigen, daß Schickele selbst leidend ist und im Auslande lebt, allem Anschein nach mit häufig wechselndem Domizil. (Wolff 1980, 33–34)

Lo scrupolo con cui Kafka rileggeva e correggeva i testi per la stampa era estremo, ma la lettera di Meyer fa sospettare che il testo di *Die Verwandlung* sia stato rivisto e pubblicato dall'allora direttore di *Die weißen Blätter* René Schickele senza l'approvazione dell'autore. A fugare il dubbio è la risposta di Kafka il 15 ottobre 1915: “Die Korrektur der Verwandlung ist beigeschlossen” (Wolff 1980, 35). La bozza di cui l'autore scrive è la versione ricca di *Semikolons* pubblicata nella collana “Der jüngste Tag” nel dicembre 1915.

A confermare che i *Semikolons* sono di Kafka è uno dei pochissimi lavori sulla punteggiatura kafkiana, il breve saggio del 1981 *Zu Kafkas Interpunktion* di Malcolm Pasley, che sottolinea un particolare indicativo:

Wo es Kafka [...] darum ging, die Gliederung seiner parataktisch gefügten Ganzsätze in rhythmischer oder auch grammatischer Hinsicht für den Leser herauszustellen, stand ihm ja das Semikolon zur Verfügung, – ein Zeichen, das er in seinen Erstniederschriften sehr spärlich verwendet. In den ersten drei Kapiteln des *Schloß* setzt er nur 17 mal ein Semikolon; in den Erstniederschriften der Vergleichstexte ist der Befund ähnlich: im *Hungerkünstler* kommt das Semikolon nur 5 mal vor, im *Ehepaar* 7 mal, in der *Kleinen Frau* 4 mal, in *Josefine* 8 mal. Bei den entsprechenden

Reinschriften bzw. beim Erstdruck hat sich jedoch die Zahl der Semikola in den vier Texten insgesamt auf rund 165 erhöht: la sostituzione di virgole da semikola rappresenta in realtà la più importante forma di modifica interpuntiva, che Kafka adotta nei suoi testi in vista della pubblicazione. Sostituisce infatti per l'uso domestico i suoi segni con un sistema binario di pause (virgola, punto), così che, appena li ha visti, si è subito accorto che, per il sistema ternario, era superfluo. (Pasley 1981, 480–481)

3. *Il Semikolon tra Ottocento e Novecento*

Alla fine del XVIII secolo Johann Christoph Adelung, con la sua *Deutsche Sprachlehre* (Adelung 1781), mette la parola fine a un'impostazione della punteggiatura basata solo sulla retorica e la lega anche alla grammatica. Un concetto in declino nelle trattazioni è quello di *Periode* (periodo), tipico dell'impostazione retorica, che molto doveva a Christian Weise il quale, nel Seicento, aveva teorizzato l'articolazione del periodo in *Vordersatz* e *Nachsatz*, proponendo una punteggiatura di questo tipo: tra *Vordersatz* e *Nachsatz* va il *Kolon*; quando queste proposizioni sono 'di secondo grado' a separarle è il *Semikolon*; quando sono semplici basta il *Komma* (Weise 1691, 238–271). Tutte le grammatiche e i volumi sull'ortografia manterranno a lungo un legame più o meno profondo con il modello di Weise. Quasi un secolo dopo, nella teoria di Adelung si legge:

Das Semikolon stehet zwischen dem vorigen [dem Kolon] und dem Komma in der Mitte, indem es eine stärkere Pause bezeichnet, als dieses, und eine schwächere als jenes. Es wird daher in allen den Fällen gebraucht, in welchen ein schwächerer Unterschied erfordert wird, als das Kolon bezeichnet, und ein stärkerer, als das Komma andeuten kann [...] Es scheidet den Vordersatz von dem Nachsatze in [...] consecutiven, conditionalen, causalen und comparativen Sätzen, wenn sie von mittlerer Länge sind, d.i. nicht so lang, daß sie zu ihrem Unterschiede eines Kolons bedürften, und doch länger, als daß ein Komma hinreichte. (Adelung 1790, 380)

Tra il XVII e l'inizio del XIX secolo si tende a separare *Vordersatz* e *Nachsatz* (qualora non siano di lunghezza eccessiva) con il *Kolon*, che diventa il segno più rappresentativo del 'periodo' tipico dell'impostazione di Weise. Nel XIX secolo, tuttavia, si assiste a una semplificazione dell'espressione scritta e al tramonto della *Periode*. La sua fine si ripercuote sulle funzioni di *Kolon* e *Semikolon* tanto che, nella sua storia della punteggiatura tedesca, il linguista Karsten Rinas parla di "Krise des Kolons" e di "Semikolon als Sorgenkind" (Rinas 2016, 67–68).

Si tende infatti ad abbandonare il *Kolon* come segno di articolazione del periodo per mantenerne la funzione di annuncio e anticipazione. Quanto al *Semikolon*, o *Strichpunkt*, ogni teoria ne propone un uso differente, dalla separazione di *Vordersätze* e *Nachsätze* complesse alla divisione di proposizioni legate da precisi rapporti semantici e fino alla semplice delimitazione di frasi coordinate (Lorberg 1823, 51–52; Rinas 2017, 240–242; Dudenredaktion, Institut für Deutsche Sprache 1973, 32).

Nella seconda metà del XIX secolo si collocano l'unificazione tedesca e soprattutto, nel 1876, la prima conferenza ortografica. Nello stesso anno il docente di ginnasio Konrad Duden firma, in una rivista scolastica, un breve saggio intitolato *Versuch einer deutschen Interpunktionslehre* (Duden 1876, 20–34; Garbe 1983, 161–180), che contiene una teoria molto dettagliata. La sezione sul *Semikolon* si apre così:

Zwei auf einander folgende grammatisch völlig selbständige Sätze sind oft logisch so eng mit einander verbunden, daß man zwischen beiden die Stimme nicht vollständig sinken und nur eine kleinere Pause eintreten läßt; alsdann setzt man statt des Punktes ein Semikolon, um die logische Zusammengehörigkeit beider zu bezeichnen.

Umgekehrt nehmen zuweilen Sätze, die als Glieder einem zusammengesetzten Satze angehören und die nach der Regel durch Kommata von den umgebenden Teilen des Satzganzen gesondert werden sollten, durch die Bedeutsamkeit des Inhalts oder auch durch den Umfang eine größere Selbständigkeit in Anspruch und werden durch größere Pausen vom Ganzen getrennt; diese Pausen sind bei nebengeordneten Gliedern mit einer stärkeren Senkung der Stimme, bei Unterordnung, insbesondere bei Scheidung des Nachsatzes vom Vordersatze mit einer stärkeren Hebung der Stimme verbunden. In beiden Fällen steht statt des Kommas ein Semikolon, in dem letzteren zuweilen auch ein Kolon.

Das Semikolon ist also ein Stellvertreter derjenigen beiden Satzzeichen, aus denen es zusammengesetzt ist, des Punktes und des Kommas. Daraus erklärt sich, daß der Gebrauch desselben nicht für alle Fälle durch Regeln festgesetzt werden kann; er hängt oft von der Auffassung des Schreibenden ab. (Garbe 1983, 168)

A differenza delle teorie precedenti, il *Semikolon* non si trova più tra *Punkt* e *Kolon*, bensì tra *Punkt* e *Komma*. Duden precisa inoltre che l'uso del segno, a differenza degli altri, è molto legato allo stile di chi scrive. Quanto agli utilizzi del *Semikolon*, i punti di riferimento sono proprio il *Punkt* e il *Komma*:

Das Semikolon steht

Bei Aufzählungen, um Gruppen gleichartiger Begriffe von einander zu trennen.

Statt des Punktes, wenn zwei völlig selbständige Sätze als dem Gedanken nach eng zusammengehörig bezeichnet werden sollen.

Statt des Kommas, um koordinierte Sätze, besonders wenn sie von größerem Umfang oder von besonderer Bedeutung sind, von einander zu trennen. So steht das Semikolon besonders oft vor den Konjunktionen *aber*, *doch*, *denn*, u.a. (Zuweilen steht es auch statt des Kommas vor dem Nachsatze). (Garbe 1983, 168)

Nel 1880 Duden pubblica un volume che farà la storia della lingua tedesca: il *Vollständiges Orthographisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* (Duden 1880) vedrà molte edizioni nei decenni successivi. Del 1903 è invece *Rechtschreibung für Druckereien deutscher Sprache* (Duden 1903) contenente norme ortografiche destinate agli stampatori tedeschi, tanto da meritare il soprannome *Buchdruckerduden*. Nel 1915, quattro anni dopo la morte di Konrad Duden e nell'anno di pubblicazione di *Die Verwandlung*, la nona edizione del dizionario incorpora il *Buchdruckerduden* e la teoria della punteggiatura (Wülfing 1915).

Si prospetta dunque un utilizzo del *Semikolon* ora in alternativa al punto, ora alla virgola (oltre che per separare gruppi in un elenco), e l'associazione con le congiunzioni ne rende frequente l'utilizzo con coordinanti avversative (*aber, doch*) e causali (*denn*).

4. Il punto e virgola in italiano

L'Italia è, per così dire, la terra natale del punto e virgola, che compare per la prima volta in un testo stampato in caratteri latini nel 1496 a Venezia, il *De Aetna* di Pietro Bembo stampato da Aldo Manuzio (Baratter 2018, 23–30). Tuttavia la riflessione sull'impostazione sintattico-grammaticale della punteggiatura arriva con qualche decennio di ritardo rispetto alle regioni germanofone. Basilio Puoti, purista, scrive del punto e virgola nel 1835: “Questa sorta di punteggiamento si deve adoperare nello scrivere ogni qualvolta, essendo molto lungo il periodo, fa uopo distinguere un membro di esso da un altro” (Puoti 1839, 82–83).

Altro testo rilevante è la *Grammatica della lingua italiana* di Francesco Zambaldi (1878) in cui si legge, oltre all'usuale classificazione delle pause, che il punto e virgola “segna un distacco un po' maggiore della virgola fra due proposizioni o parti di periodo fra le quali siavi un qualche nesso, come tra la pròtasi e l'apòdosi” (Zambaldi 1878, 135). La teoria di Zambaldi ricorda molto l'impostazione di Weise e la separazione tra *Vordersatz* e *Nachsatz*.

Nel 1895 Pier Camillo Gastaldi scrive in merito al problema della punteggiatura: “A districar l'intricata matassa [...] era necessario non trascurare un elemento [...] quasi completamente negletto, vale a dire l'analisi del periodo” (Gastaldi 1895, 5–6; Baratter 2018, 69). Nel 1905 Giuseppe Malagoli assegna al punto e virgola la funzione di segnare “un distacco più forte fra due o più parti del periodo, di cui ciascuna ha un senso relativamente compiuto” (Malagoli 1905, 131).

In Italia, per la prima posizione integralmente contraria all'identificazione tra pause e punteggiatura, occorre attendere il 1979, anno in cui Rosaria Conte e Domenico Parisi scrivono: “Se si registra un discorso orale e si individuano le pause e la loro lunghezza, si scopre che non vi è alcuna correlazione [...] tra lunghezza delle pause e tipo di punteggiatura usata” (Conte, Parisi 1979, 364).

Tra la fine degli anni Ottanta e l'inizio dei Duemila, a indicare più volte le funzioni del punto e virgola è Luca Serianni. Nel 1989 ne elenca in breve gli utilizzi:

Per separare due proposizioni coordinate complesse.

Nelle enumerazioni di unità complesse (cioè non costituite da singoli vocaboli né da sintagmi elementari).

In luogo della virgola, quando essa possa generare equivoco. (Serianni 2006, 75)

Nel 2001 Serianni cerca nuovamente di classificare i possibili utilizzi del punto e virgola, stavolta in sei punti:

1. separare unità coordinate complesse in sequenza seriale;
2. separare i membri giustapposti di un periodo complesso;

3. segnalare la diversa tematizzazione di una frase giustapposta o coordinata;
4. precedere un connettivo 'forte' per rango argomentativo e sintattico (sia coordinativo, specie di tipo conclusivo o esplicativo, sia subordinativo);
5. sottolineare la ripresa di un elemento della frase precedente;
6. creare una pausa marcata tra due elementi che abitualmente verrebbero separati da una semplice virgola con funzione ritmico-stilistica. (Serianni 2001, 248–255)

Del 2008 è il volume *Storia della punteggiatura in Europa*, a cura di Bice Mortara Garavelli, che descrive le prassi interpuntive di varie lingue in varie epoche (Mortara Garavelli 2008). La curatrice del volume aveva pubblicato nel 2003 anche un *Prontuario di punteggiatura* ricollegandosi alla concezione del punto e virgola indicata da Serianni e riflettendo sui suoi legami con il punto e con la virgola (Mortara Garavelli 2003). Nel 2015 Massimo Palermo sostituisce il concetto di “pausa” con quello di “confine”: il punto e virgola “indica un confine di rango minore rispetto al punto e maggiore rispetto alla virgola” (Palermo 2015, 112).

5. Il punto e virgola nelle traduzioni italiane di *Die Verwandlung*

Ragionando quantitativamente di punteggiatura tra tedesco e italiano, occorre considerare la differenza d'uso di alcuni segni in particolare, uno su tutti la virgola. Nella lingua tedesca l'uso del *Komma* è quasi sempre obbligatorio per dividere una principale da una subordinata. È dunque chiaro che un'osservazione puramente quantitativa del segno nei testi tedeschi e nelle loro traduzioni italiane abbia poco senso, proprio perché l'italiano non prevede situazioni in cui la virgola è altrettanto obbligatoria (Stammerjohann 1992; Ferrari, Stojmenova 2015, 27–43).

Considerazioni differenti valgono però per i due punti, e soprattutto per il punto e virgola, oggetto della nostra trattazione, la quale prende in esame sette traduzioni italiane del classico kafkiano pubblicate dal 1934 al 2012:

- Rodolfo Paoli 1934 (RP 34), Vallecchi (Kafka 1934);
- Anita Rho 1935 (AR 35), Frassinelli (Kafka 1935, 71–140);
- Giorgio Zampa 1957 (GZ 57), Feltrinelli (Kafka 1957, 75–126);
- Emilio Castellani 1966 (EC 66), Garzanti (Kafka 1966, 31–104);
- Franco Fortini 1986 (FF 86), Einaudi (Kafka 1986, 59–124);
- Andreina Lavagetto 1991 (AL 91), Feltrinelli (Kafka 1991, 74–123);
- Enrico Ganni 2012 (EG 012), Einaudi (Kafka 2012).

Ovvi motivi di spazio impongono una scelta nelle versioni analizzate. Ritengo necessario tuttavia sottolineare il prezioso contributo alla ricezione di *Die Verwandlung* apportato dalle altre traduzioni che, in questa sede, non sono state studiate, tra cui quelle di Henry Furst per Longanesi del 1953, di Luigi Coppé per Newton Compton del 1972 e di Giulio Schiavoni per la BUR del 1980, per le quali valgono, a proposito di punteggiatura, considerazioni analoghe.

Trasferendo i sette testi analizzati in un unico corpus, le frequenze del punto e virgola (e dei due punti, altro segno a frequenza anomala) sono le seguenti:

Tabella 2 - *Frequenza in OMT di Semikolon e Kolon nel testo di Die Verwandlung e di punto e virgola e due punti nel corpus delle sue traduzioni italiane*

| <i>Die Verwandlung</i> | | Corpus traduzioni italiane | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Semikolon:</i> frequenza in OMT | <i>Kolon:</i> frequenza in OMT | Punto e virgola: frequenza in OMT | Due punti: frequenza in OMT |
| 7847 | 1166 | 8259 | 3611 |

Il dato è netto: le traduzioni italiane presentano una frequenza di punti e virgola del 5 per cento più alta rispetto all'originale, dunque lo stilema costituito dal segno di punteggiatura è ben restituito al lettore italiano. La frequenza dei due punti (minima in *Die Verwandlung*), però, è pari a più del triplo (309%).

Sono testi differenti, scritti da traduttori diversi in periodi altrettanto diversi. La seguente tabella di frequenze ci aiuta a comprendere le diversità di ciascuna traduzione in relazione al nostro oggetto d'indagine:

Tabella 3 - *Frequenze di punto e virgola e due punti nelle traduzioni italiane di Die Verwandlung e loro differenze rispetto all'originale*

| Edizione | ; | Differenza rispetto all'originale in OMT (e in %) | : | Differenza rispetto all'originale in OMT (e in %) |
|------------------------|--------|--|------|--|
| <i>Die Verwandlung</i> | 7847 | - | 1166 | - |
| RP 34 Vallecchi | 6588 | -1259 (-16%) | 5088 | +3922 (+336%) |
| AR 35 Frassinelli | 10.060 | +2213 (+28%) | 1795 | +629 (+54%) |
| GZ 57 Feltrinelli | 6518 | -1329 (-17%) | 5273 | +4107 (+352%) |
| EC 66 Garzanti | 8146 | +299 (+4%) | 6917 | +5751 (+493%) |
| FF 86 Einaudi | 11.546 | +3699 (+47%) | 2111 | +945 (+81%) |
| AL 91 Feltrinelli | 7518 | -329 (-4%) | 1468 | +302 (+26%) |
| EG 012 Einaudi | 7300 | -547 (-7%) | 2731 | +1565 (+134%) |

Tutti i traduttori italiani riescono a rendere l'elevata frequenza del *Semikolon*, ma nessuno replica l'uso minimalista del *Kolon*. Perché?

A spiegare la disparità potrebbero essere le indicazioni o le prassi d'uso di *Semikolon* e *Kolon* nel periodo in cui Kafka scrive, ma anche le riflessioni su punto e virgola e due punti portate avanti successivamente in Italia.

Per la lingua di Kafka dobbiamo quindi fotografare la teoria della punteggiatura all'inizio del xx secolo. Il *Duden* del 1915, parlando del *Doppelpunkt* (denominazione all'epoca preferita a *Kolon*), indica il seguente utilizzo:

Der Doppelpunkt steht oft vor solchen Sätzen, die als eine Folgerung aus dem Vorhergehenden oder als eine Erläuterung erscheinen sollen, z.B. Zu Hause weil er selten, zu Hofe kommt er nie: man muß im Walde streifen, wenn man ihn fahen will. (Wülfing, Schmidt 1915, XLI)

Nell'edizione del 1929, ai termini "Folgerung" ed "Erläuterung" si aggiungerà anche "Zusammenfassung" (Matthias 1929, 47).

Spesso, in *Die Verwandlung*, a separare una proposizione da un'altra coordinata che, rispetto alla prima, rappresenta una 'deduzione, chiarificazione o sintesi' non è il *Kolon*, ma il *Semikolon*. La sopracitata ricostruzione di Karsten Rinas ci dice che venticinque anni dopo la *Interpunktionslehre* di Konrad Duden, Alexander Elster assegnava a *Kolon* e *Semikolon* lo stesso valore e la stessa forza, distinguendoli soltanto per la funzione di rimando, più marcata nel primo che nel secondo (Elster 1901, 28; Rinas 2017, 272).

La scelta del *Kolon* o del *Semikolon* si gioca su questioni semantiche e logiche sottili, che restano ambigue anche nella IX edizione del *Duden*:

Strichpunkt (Semikolon): steht statt des Punktes, wenn zwei völlig selbständige Sätze als dem Gedanken nach eng zusammengehörig bezeichnet werden sollen.

Doppelpunkt (Kolon): Steht oft vor solchen Sätzen, die als eine Folgerung aus dem Vorhergehenden oder als eine Erläuterung erscheinen sollen. (Wülfing, Schmidt 1915, XL-XLI)

La sfumatura che separa i due segni consiste dunque nel distinguere tra "dem Gedanken nach [...] zusammengehörig[e] Sätze" e "Sätz[e], die als eine Folgerung aus dem Vorhergehenden oder als eine Erläuterung erscheinen sollen". Ma le proposizioni che fungono da deduzioni o da spiegazioni rispetto ad altre non sono anch'esse legate a queste per il contenuto del pensiero?

Le prime pagine di *Die Verwandlung* testimoniano la costante tendenza di Kafka a separare con il *Semikolon* proposizioni che potrebbero essere divise dal *Kolon*. Ecco due esempi:

Die Decke abzuwerfen war ganz einfach; er brauchte sich nur ein wenig aufzublasen und sie fiel von selbst. [...]

Der Rücken schien hart zu sein; dem würde wohl bei dem Fall auf den Teppich nichts geschehen. [...] (Kafka 1993, 57, 67)

In pratica, nella vicenda di Gregor Samsa, al *Kolon* resta il solo compito di introdurre il discorso diretto.

Nelle grammatiche italiane le indicazioni relative a punto e virgola e due punti tra coordinate sono meno ambigue, e la relazione logico-semantica che lega le proposizioni da questi divise si fa più dettagliata solo negli apporti degli ultimi decenni del Novecento (cfr. contributi di Serianni). Ecco alcuni esempi tratti da grammatiche dell'inizio del xx secolo, insieme ad altri molto più recenti:

Tabella 4 - *Utilizzi del punto e virgola e dei due punti in quattro manuali ortografici italiani dal 1905 al 2007*

Giuseppe Malagoli (1905)

Punto e virgola: segna un distacco più forte tra due o più parti del periodo, di cui ciascuna ha un senso relativamente compiuto.

Due punti: si usano 1. quando tra due parti del periodo si tace la relazione che li unisce; 2. Quando una parte del periodo è spiegazione o dichiarazione di un'altra (Malagoli 1905, 131–32).

Demetrio Ferrari (1919)

Punto e virgola: serve a separare i membri d'un periodo e talora si usa al posto della virgola per far meglio risaltare le circostanze principali d'un racconto o d'una descrizione.

Due punti: si mettono dinanzi alle parole che spiegano o ampliano il concetto precedente oppure passando da una materia all'altra, oppure ponendo a riscontro due parti di un periodo senza esprimerne la relazione che le unisce (Ferrari 1919, 234–35).

Giuseppe Patota (2006)

Punto e virgola: si usa quando tra due frasi c'è un'interruzione forte sul piano della forma ma non c'è interruzione forte sul piano del contenuto.

Due punti: si usano per introdurre una spiegazione o una dimostrazione (Patota 2006, 27–28).

Maurizio Dardano, Pietro Trifone (2007)

Punto e virgola: separa frasi coordinate di una certa lunghezza.

Due punti: si usano per introdurre una spiegazione (Dardano, Trifone 2007, 22–23).

È evidente come, rispetto alle norme interpuntive consolidate a inizio Novecento nell'area germanofona, le regole italiane siano più nette (o meno ambigue) nel distinguere tra l'uso del punto e virgola e quello dei due punti. Il che potrebbe spiegare la divergenza tra originale e traduzioni.

Altro elemento ricorrente nel testo kafkiano è il *Semikolon* tra proposizioni in coordinazione sindetica: in *Die Verwandlung*, per 14 volte, la congiunzione *und* tra coordinate è preceduta non dal *Komma* ma dal *Semikolon*:

[...] fand die juckende Stelle, die mit lauter kleinen weißen Pünktchen besetzt war, die er nicht zu beurteilen verstand; und wollte mit einem Bein die Stelle betasten, zog es aber gleich zurück, denn bei der Berührung umwehten ihn Kälteschauer. (Kafka 1993, 58)

[...] er hatte jetzt nichts zu tun, als zu warten; und von Selbstvorwürfen und Besorgnis bedrängt, begann er zu kriechen, überkroch alles, Wände, Möbel und Zimmerdecke und fiel endlich in seiner Verzweiflung, als sich das ganze Zimmer schon um ihn zu drehen anfang, mitten auf den großen Tisch. (Kafka 1993, 88)

L'analisi suddividerà i testi in tre gruppi cronologici: le due traduzioni degli anni Trenta, due degli anni Cinquanta e Sessanta, e tre a cavallo tra fine Novecento e anni Duemila.

5.1 Le *Metamorfosi* degli anni Trenta: Paoli 1934, Rho 1935

L'editore Vallecchi di Firenze è il primo a far tradurre *Die Verwandlung* e affida il compito al ventottenne Rodolfo Paoli. Il volumetto del 1934 comprende il solo racconto, e reca la prefazione dello stesso traduttore.

Nel 1935, due anni dopo *Il processo* tradotto da Alberto Spaini, la torinese Frassinelli pubblica una raccolta di racconti kafkiani intitolata *Il messaggio dell'imperatore*, tra cui *La metamorfosi*. A tradurli è Anita Rho, anche lei ventottenne (Giri 2021). Le frequenze di punto e virgola e due punti nelle due versioni sono le seguenti:

Tabella 5 - Frequenze di punto e virgola e due punti nelle traduzioni degli anni Trenta e variazione percentuale rispetto all'originale

| Edizione | Punto e virgola in OMT (var. in % sull'originale) | Due punti in OMT (var. in % sull'originale) |
|----------|--|--|
| RP 34 | 6588 (-16%) | 5088 (+336%) |
| AR 35 | 10.060 (+28%) | 1795 (+54%) |

La tabella indica che la reazione dei due traduttori è assai diversa e, nel caso di Paoli, tende a ridimensionare la frequenza del punto e virgola (145 in tutto il testo) accrescendo molto quella dei due punti (che diventano 112).

Quasi opposto è l'atteggiamento di Anita Rho, che arricchisce la già nutrita presenza di punti e virgola nel testo tedesco (213 contro 175), mantenendo relativamente bassa quella dei due punti (38 a fronte dei 26 dell'originale).

Insieme a Zampa, Paoli è il traduttore che più cerca di equilibrare le frequenze dei due segni. Riportiamo due dei numerosi esempi:

Tabella 6 - Esempi di compensazione tra punti e virgola e due punti nella traduzione di Rodolfo Paoli (Vallecchi 1934)

| |
|---|
| <i>FK 15¹ (58)</i> |
| [...] schob sich auf dem Rücken langsam näher zum Bettpfosten, um den Kopf besser heben zu können; fand die juckende Stelle, die mit lauter kleinen weißen Pünktchen besetzt war [...] |
| <i>RP 34</i> |
| [...] si spinse lentamente sulla schiena verso una colonnetta del letto per poter alzar meglio il capo: il punto che pizzicava era tutto coperto di puntini bianchi [...] (Kafka 1934, 40). |

¹ Tutte le citazioni del testo originale saranno da ora in avanti tratte da Kafka 1993.

FK 15 (58)

Nun, die Hoffnung ist noch nicht gänzlich aufgegeben; habe ich einmal das Geld beisammen, um die Schuld der Eltern an ihn abzuzahlen – es dürfte noch fünf bis sechs Jahre dauern –, mache ich die Sache unbedingt.

RP 34

Beh, ogni speranza non è perduta: una volta che io abbia raccapezzato del denaro per pagargli il debito dei genitori – ancora cinque o sei anni – questo lo farò senz'altro (Kafka 1934, 40).

In ben 24 delle prime 40 occorrenze, i due punti corrispondono ad altri segni di punteggiatura nel testo originale: prevalentemente *Semikolons*, ma anche *Kommas* (talora seguite dalla congiunzione *denn*) o punti fermi.

Tabella 7 - Esempi di variazione della punteggiatura originale da parte di Rodolfo Paoli

FK 15 (58)

Mit welcher Kraft er sich auch auf die rechte Seite warf, immer wieder schaukelte er in die Rückenlage zurück. Er versuchte es wohl hundertmal, schloß die Augen, um die zappelnden Beine nicht sehen zu müssen, und ließ erst ab, als er in der Seite einen noch nie gefühlten, leichten, dumpfen Schmerz zu fühlen begann.

RP 34

Per quanto si gettasse con tutta la sua forza da quella parte, tornava sempre oscillando, sul dorso: provò ben cento volte, chiuse gli occhi per non vedere le sue zampine dimenanti, e rinunciò soltanto quando cominciò a sentire nel fianco un dolore sottile e sordo, ancora non mai provato (Kafka 1934, 39).

FK 15 (59)

Gregor erschrak, als er seine antwortende Stimme hörte, die wohl unverkennbar seine frühere war, in die sich aber, wie von unten her, ein nicht zu unterdrückendes, schmerzliches Piepsen mischte [...]

RP 34

Gregor si spaventò quando sentì la propria risposta: era indiscutibilmente la sua voce di prima, ma vi si mischiava, quasi salisse dal basso, un pigolio incontenibile, doloroso [...] (Kafka 1934, 44-45).

Paoli, che nella prefazione dichiara di volersi mantenere vicinissimo al tedesco di Kafka, alle prese con la punteggiatura è molto meno rigoroso. La riduzione rispetto ai *Semikolons* è limitata perché molti punti e virgola della sua versione traducono altri segni, o addirittura semplici congiunzioni coordinanti:

Tabella 8 - Esempi di compensazione dei punti e virgola nella traduzione di Rodolfo Paoli

FK 15 (57)

Es stellte eine Dame dar, die mit einem Pelzhut und einer Pelzboa versehen, aufrecht dasaß und einen schweren Pelzmuff, in dem ihr ganzer Unterarm verschwunden war, dem Beschauer entgegenhob.

RP 34

[...] raffigurava una donna seduta, ma ben dritta sul busto, con un berretto e un boa di pelliccia; essa levava incontro a chi guardava un pesante manicotto, in cui scompariva tutto l'avambraccio (Kafka 1934, 38).

FK 15 (58)

[...] und außerdem ist mir noch diese Plage des Reisens auferlegt, die Sorgen um die Zuganschlüsse, das unregelmäßige, schlechte Essen, ein immer wechselnder, nie andauernder, nie herzlich werdender menschlicher Verkehr.

RP 34

[...] e v'è per giunta questa piaga del viaggiare, le preoccupazioni per le coincidenze dei treni, la nutrizione irregolare e cattiva; le relazioni cogli uomini cambiano poi ad ogni momento e non possono mai diventare durature né cordiali (Kafka 1934, 39-40).

L'atteggiamento differente di Anita Rho verso la punteggiatura si nota invece dal fatto che spesso, anche nei casi in cui Kafka utilizza il *Semikolon* tra proposizioni coordinate e legate da un rapporto di spiegazione o deduzione, resiste al richiamo dei due punti.

Tabella 9 - Esempio della tendenza di Anita Rho (Frassinelli 1935) a mantenere i punti e virgola

FK 15 (58)

Man sah vom Bett aus, daß er auf vier Uhr richtig eingestellt war; gewiß hatte er auch geläutet.

AR 35

Dal letto si vedeva che era messa giusto sulle quattro; certo aveva funzionato (Kafka 1935, 73).

In alcune occasioni Rho aggiunge punti e virgola in corrispondenza di virgole (probabilmente perché troppo 'deboli') o punti (troppo 'forti').

Tabella 10 - Esempi di utilizzo da parte di Anita Rho del punto e virgola per tradurre altri segni

FK 15 (61)

Aber als er den Kopf endlich außerhalb des Bettes in der freien Luft hielt, bekam er Angst, weiter auf diese Weise vorzurücken, denn wenn er sich schließlich so fallen ließ, mußte geradezu ein Wunder geschehen, wenn der Kopf nicht verletzt werden sollte.

AR 35

Ma quando poté finalmente tenere la testa al di fuori del letto, sospesa nel vuoto, la paura lo colse; perché se egli si lasciava cadere a quel modo si sarebbe certo fracassato la testa, a meno di un miracolo (Kafka 1935, 77).

FK 15 (65)

Jetzt bin ich aber schon wieder ganz frisch. Eben steige ich aus dem Bett.

AR 35

Ma ora mi sento di nuovo a posto; sto scendendo dal letto (Kafka 1935, 83).

Quanto all'aggiunta dei due punti, comunque limitata, nella versione di Rho fungono da mezzi traduttivi per rendere il *Gedankenstrich* o per alleggerire periodi complessi.

Tabella 11 - *Esempi di aggiunte di due punti per la traduzione di altri segni nella versione di Anita Rho*

FK 15 (62)

Gregor brauchte nur das erste Grußwort des Besuchers zu hören und wußte schon, wer es war – der Prokurist selbst.

AR 35

A Gregorio bastò di udire la prima parola di saluto del visitatore per sapere chi era: il gerente in persona (Kafka 1935, 79).

FK 15 (75)

Dort blieb er die ganze Nacht, die er zum Teil im Halbschlaf, aus dem ihn der Hunger immer wieder aufschreckte, verbrachte, zum Teil aber in Sorgen und undeutlichen Hoffnungen, die aber alle zu dem Schlusse führten, daß er sich vorläufig ruhig verhalten und durch Geduld und größte Rücksichtnahme der Familie die Unannehmlichkeiten erträglich machen müsse, die er ihr in seinem gegenwärtigen Zustand nun einmal zu verursachen gezwungen war.

AR 35

Vi rimase tutta la notte, trascorsa in parte in un dormiveglia da cui la fame tornava sempre a destarlo di soprassalto, in parte tra affanni e vaghe speranze, che conducevano però sempre alla stessa conclusione: bisognava mantenersi calmo per ora, e con molta pazienza e con i massimi riguardi rendere sopportabili alla sua famiglia tutti gli inevitabili fastidi di quella situazione (Kafka 1935, 95).

L'analisi delle due edizioni della *Metamorfosi* degli anni Trenta riguardo a punto e virgola (e due punti), dunque, mostra uno scenario contraddittorio: Anita Rho, più disinvolta nel ricreare in italiano il testo di Kafka (Giri 2021, 77–146), di fronte alla punteggiatura è molto più rispettosa di Rodolfo Paoli, che pone sì grande attenzione al tedesco dell'autore, ma ne altera spesso l'interpunzione.

5.2 Le *Metamorfosi* degli anni Cinquanta e Sessanta: Zampa 1957, Castellani 1966

Nell'ultimo periodo fascista e durante la Seconda guerra mondiale non escono più traduzioni italiane di Franz Kafka che, come altri ebrei, figura tra gli autori sgraditi. La prima edizione postbellica dei racconti esce per Longanesi nel 1953, nella traduzione di Henry Furst (versione che, per motivi di spazio, non esamineremo). Una nuova traduzione arriva nel 1957, a opera di Giorgio Zampa, per Feltrinelli.

Negli anni Sessanta, a pubblicare la *Metamorfosi* è Garzanti, che affida la traduzione a Emilio Castellani. All'inizio del decennio era però arrivata nelle librerie una versione rivista della traduzione di Rodolfo Paoli (non molto rimaneggiata nella punteggiatura e dunque qui tralasciata).

Le frequenze del punto e virgola e dei due punti nelle versioni di Zampa e Castellani sono le seguenti:

Tabella 12 - *Frequenze di punto e virgola e due punti nelle traduzioni degli anni Cinquanta e Sessanta e variazione in percentuale rispetto all'originale*

| Edizione | Punto e virgola in OMT (var. in % sull'orig.) | Due punti in OMT (var. in % sull'orig.) |
|----------|--|--|
| GZ 57 | 6518 (-17%) | 5273 (+352%) |
| EC 66 | 8146 (+4%) | 6917 (+493%) |

La traduzione di Giorgio Zampa è, come la *Metamorfosi* di Paoli, quella che più tenta di equilibrare la punteggiatura eliminando quasi un punto e virgola su quattro (nel testo sono 131 contro i 175 dell'originale) e quadruplicando la frequenza dei due punti (i 26 di Kafka diventano 106).

La trasformazione dei punti e virgola in due punti, come in Paoli, avviene spesso tra coordinate legate da rapporti logici:

Tabella 13 - *Esempi di sostituzione dei Semikolons con i due punti nella versione di Giorgio Zampa (Feltrinelli 1957)*

| |
|---|
| <i>FK 15 (58)</i> |
| Das sollte ich bei meinem Chef versuchen; ich würde auf der Stelle hinausfliegen. |
| <i>GZ 57</i> |
| Ci provassi io, col mio principale: che volo farei! (Kafka 1971, 76) |
| <i>FK 15 (60)</i> |
| Die Decke abzuwerfen war ganz einfach; er brauchte sich nur ein wenig aufzublasen und sie fiel von selbst. |
| <i>GZ 57</i> |
| Buttar via la coperta fu una cosa da nulla: gli bastò gonfiarsi un poco e quella cadde da sola (Kafka 1971, 78-79). |

Inoltre la perdita di punti e virgola avviene per sostituzione con punti o virgole.

Tabella 14 - *Esempi di sostituzione dei Semikolons con altri segni nella traduzione di Giorgio Zampa*

| |
|---|
| <i>FK 15 (65)</i> |
| Ihre Leistungen in der letzten Zeit waren also sehr unbefriedigend; es ist zwar nicht die Jahreszeit, um besondere Geschäfte zu machen, das erkennen wir an [...] |
| <i>GZ 57</i> |
| Il suo lavoro, in questi ultimi tempi, ha lasciato molto a desiderare. La stagione non è propizia, d'accordo, ai grossi affari (Kafka 1971, 83). |
| <i>FK 15 (71)</i> |
| [...] sie gehorchten vollkommen, wie er zu seiner Freude merkte; strebten sogar darnach, ihn fortzutragen, wohin er wollte [...] |

GZ 57

[...] obbedivano a meraviglia, fremevano addirittura dal desiderio di portarlo dove voleva [...] (Kafka 1971, 89).

Nella versione di Zampa il grande aumento dei due punti è dovuto alla trasformazione di molte virgole, talora con riformulazione delle proposizioni, come nella seguente relativa:

Tabella 15 - *Esempio di uso dei due punti per introdurre una relativa in GZ 57*

FK 15 (71)

Gregor erschrak, als er seine antwortende Stimme hörte, die wohl unverkennbar seine frühere war, in die sich aber, wie von unten her, ein nicht zu unterdrückendes, schmerzliches Piepsen mischte

GZ 57

Gregorio si spaventò nell'udire la propria risposta. La voce, senza dubbio, era la sua di prima: ma ad essa si mescolava un pigolio lamentoso (Kafka 1971, 89).

La versione di Emilio Castellani, edita da Garzanti nel 1966, presenta un aumento minimo nella frequenza dei punti e virgola (179) rispetto all'originale, ma anche l'incremento maggiore nella frequenza dei due punti (152 contro i 26 dell'originale). A differenza delle altre due versioni che normalizzano il rapporto punto e virgola/due punti (RP 34 e GZ 57), Castellani mantiene l'uso generoso del primo segno, compensandolo però con la moltiplicazione del secondo. Sono molti gli esempi di *Semikolons* trasformati in due punti, e spesso ciò accade nelle strutture in cui le ambiguità tra i due segni si fanno sentire, ovvero tra coordinate legate da rapporti esplicativi:

Tabella 16 - *Esempi di compensazione tra punti e virgola e due punti nella traduzione di Emilio Castellani*

FK 15 (58)

Man sah vom Bett aus, daß er auf vier Uhr richtig eingestellt war; gewiß hatte er auch geläutet.

EC 66

Dal letto vedeva l'indice ancora fermo sull'ora giusta, le quattro: aveva suonato, non c'era dubbio (Kafka 1966, 33).

FK 15 (71)

Der nächste Zug ging um sieben Uhr; um den einzuholen, hätte er sich unsinnig beeilen müssen [...]

EC 66

Il prossimo treno partiva alle sette: per arrivare a prenderlo avrebbe dovuto correre a perdifiato [...] (Kafka 1966, 33).

Castellani sostituisce molti *Semikolons* con i due punti, ma anche con virgole e punti, o talora con semplici congiunzioni coordinanti. L'edizione Garzanti è forse quella in cui il punto e virgola si trova più spesso in posizioni diverse rispetto al testo tedesco. L'eliminazione dei punti e virgola viene compensata con il loro utilizzo in sostituzione di altri segni. Ecco tre dei numerosissimi esempi:

Tabella 17 - *Esempi della tendenza di Emilio Castellani (Garzanti 1966)
ad aggiungere punti e virgola in traduzione di altri segni*

FK 15 (57)

Er lag auf seinem panzerartig harten Rücken und sah, wenn er den Kopf ein wenig hob, seinen gewölbten, braunen, von bogenförmigen Versteifungen geteilten Bauch, auf dessen Höhe sich die Bettdecke, zum gänzlichen Niedergleiten bereit, kaum noch erhalten konnte.

EC 66

Sdraiato nel letto sulla schiena dura come una corazza, bastava che alzasse un po' la testa per vedersi il ventre convesso, bruniccio, spartito da solchi arcuati; in cima al ventre la coperta, sul punto di scivolare per terra, si reggeva a malapena (Kafka 1966, 31).

FK 15 (58)

Es ist auch eine sonderbare Art, sich auf das Pult zu setzen und von der Höhe herab mit dem Angestellten zu reden, der überdies wegen der Schwerhörigkeit des Chefs ganz nahe herantreten muß.

EC 66

Curioso poi quel modo di starsene seduto lassù e di parlare col dipendente dall'alto in basso; per giunta, dato che è duro d'orecchio, bisogna andargli vicinissimo (Kafka 1966, 33).

FK 15 (59)

Nun, ruhig hatte er ja nicht geschlafen, aber wahrscheinlich desto fester.

EC 66

Via, pacificamente proprio no; ma forse proprio per questo più profondamente (Kafka 1966, 33).

La fioritura di due punti è poi legata a un'altra tendenza di Castellani: utilizzarli per tradurre coordinate legate da *denn*, *und*, da semplici virgole e talvolta anche subordinate.

Tabella 18 - *Esempi dell'utilizzo dei due punti da parte di Emilio Castellani nelle coordinate
con denn e in traduzione di altri segni*

FK 15 (57)

„Wie wäre es, wenn ich noch ein wenig weiterschliefe und alle Narrheiten vergäße“, dachte er, aber das war gänzlich undurchführbar, denn er war gewöhnt, auf der rechten Seite zu schlafen, konnte sich aber in seinem gegenwärtigen Zustand nicht in diese Lage bringen.

EC 66

“E se cercassi di dimenticare queste stravaganze facendo un'altra dormitina?” pensò, ma non poté mandare ad effetto il suo proposito: era abituato a dormire sul fianco destro, e nello stato attuale gli era impossibile assumere tale posizione (Kafka 1966, 32).

FK 15 (58)

Es war halb sieben Uhr, und die Zeiger gingen ruhig vorwärts, es war sogar halb vorüber, es näherte sich schon dreiviertel.

EC 66

Erano le sei e mezzo: le sfere continuavano a girare tranquille, erano anzi già oltre, si avvicinavano ai tre quarti (Kafka 1966, 33).

FK 15 (58)

Vorläufig allerdings muß ich aufstehen, denn mein Zug fährt um fünf.

EC 66

Adesso però bisogna che mi alzi: il treno parte alle cinque (Kafka 1966, 33).

In conclusione, le due traduzioni degli anni Cinquanta e Sessanta tendono entrambe a normalizzare la punteggiatura nel rapporto punto e virgola/due punti, ma con modalità differenti: Giorgio Zampa si pone nei confronti dell'interpunzione kafkiana con un atteggiamento simile a quello di Rodolfo Paoli; Emilio Castellani sceglie spesso di riscrivere la punteggiatura dell'originale cambiandone la disposizione.

5.3 Le *Metamorfosi* di fine Novecento e degli anni Duemila (Fortini 1986, Lavagetto 1991, Ganni 2012)

Del 1972 è la traduzione di Luigi Coppé per Newton Compton, non trattata per limiti di spazio, così come la versione di Giulio Schiavoni del 1980, edita dalla BUR. Nel 1986, nella collana Einaudi "Scrittori tradotti da scrittori", Franco Fortini traduce *Die Verwandlung* in una raccolta intitolata *Nella colonia penale e altri racconti*.

All'inizio degli anni Novanta Feltrinelli ripubblica i racconti di Kafka nel volume *La metamorfosi e tutti i racconti pubblicati in vita*, tradotti da Andreina Lavagetto.

Nel 2012 anche Einaudi ripropone Kafka, ma con la sola *Metamorfosi* tradotta da Enrico Ganni. Ecco le cifre dei tre testi selezionati:

Tabella 19 - Frequenze di punto e virgola e due punti nelle traduzioni degli anni Ottanta, Novanta e Duemila e variazione in percentuale sull'originale

| Edizione | Punto e virgola in OMT (var. in % sull'orig.) | Due punti in OMT (var. in % sull'orig.) |
|----------|--|--|
| FF 86 | 11.546 (+47%) | 2111 (+81%) |
| AL 91 | 7518 (-4%) | 1468 (+26%) |
| EG 012 | 7300 (-7%) | 2731 (+134%) |

La versione di Franco Fortini ha il primato di estremizzare la scansione dettata dai *Semikolons* nell'originale. Aumenta le occorrenze totali del segno di quasi il 50 per cento rispetto al tedesco (in italiano diventano 257). Allo stesso tempo, però, pur accrescendo il numero di due punti (47), non ne riequilibra la frequenza rispetto al punto e virgola.

Questa valutazione, che sembrerebbe conservativa rispetto alla punteggiatura kafkiana, non tiene conto dello 'scrittore che traduce scrittore'. Le rielaborazioni dell'interpunzione da parte di Fortini avvengono con una creatività che si avvicina al *modus operandi* di Emilio Castellani. In pratica il poeta fiorentino tende a spostare i segni in base al suo gusto. E come in alcune delle versioni analizzate, vari *Semikolons* di Kafka divengono punti, virgole o due punti, o persino punti esclamativi. Lo stesso trattamento Fortini lo riserva alle virgole e ai punti, che si trasformano in punti e virgola:

Tabella 20 - Esempi di 'rimescolamento' dei segni di interpunzione da parte di Franco Fortini (Einaudi 1986)

FK 15 (58)

Das sollte ich bei meinem Chef versuchen; ich würde auf der Stelle hinausfliegen.

FF 86

Provassi a farlo io, col mio principale! Mi butterebbe fuori su due piedi (Kafka 1986, 61).

FK 15 (58)

Nun, die Hoffnung ist noch nicht gänzlich aufgegeben; habe ich einmal das Geld beisammen, um die Schuld der Eltern an ihn abzuzahlen – es dürfte noch fünf bis sechs Jahre dauern –, mache ich die Sache unbedingt.

FF 86

Però c'è ancora speranza. Una volta che io abbia messo da parte la cifra del debito dei miei – ci dovrebbero volere ancora cinque o sei anni –, lo faccio senz'altro (Kafka 1986, 61).

FK 15 (57)

Gregors Blick richtete sich dann zum Fenster, und das trübe Wetter – man hörte Regentropfen auf das Fensterblech aufschlagen – machte ihn ganz melancholisch.

FF 86

Lo sguardo di Gregor si rivolse allora alla finestra; e il cattivo tempo – si udivano gocce di pioggia sulla lamiera del davanzale – lo immelanconì affatto (Kafka 1986, 59–60).

Quanto alla limitata aggiunta di due punti, Fortini segue l'esempio di Castellani e tende a usarli per tradurre coordinate con *denn*:

Tabella 21 - Esempi di utilizzo dei due punti da parte di Fortini per tradurre proposizioni coordinate con *denn*

FK 15 (61–62)

Im übrigen wird auch bis dahin jemand aus dem Geschäft kommen, um nach mir zu fragen, denn das Geschäft wird vor sieben Uhr geöffnet.

FF 86

Tanto più che, mandato dalla ditta, qualcuno sarà già venuto a chiedere mie notizie: la ditta apre alle sette (Kafka 1986, 65).

FK 15 (77)

[...] vielleicht wollte die Schwester ihnen auch eine möglicherweise nur kleine Trauer ersparen, denn tatsächlich litten sie ja gerade genug.

FF 86

[...] forse la sorella voleva, in qualche modo, risparmiargli anche il più piccolo dispiacere: di sicuro, pativano già abbastanza (Kafka 1986, 85).

Nella *Metamorfosi* di Fortini troviamo molte caratteristiche tipiche delle traduzioni d'auto-re, che spesso mirano a stimolare nuove letture e a creare nuovi equilibri anziché riprodurre quelli già esistenti.

La traduzione di Andreina Lavagetto per Feltrinelli esce nel 1991. La sua strategia interpuntiva sembra quella di modificare il meno possibile. Considerando le percentuali di

variazione delle frequenze, la *Metamorfosi* di Lavagetto è la più vicina a *Die Verwandlung* (169 contro 175 punti e virgola e 33 due punti contro 26). Accade di rado che la traduttrice renda un *Semikolon* con una virgola. L'unica tendenza comune agli altri traduttori è l'occasionale inserimento dei due punti per tradurre coordinate con *denn*. Ecco uno dei rari esempi di sostituzione del punto e virgola:

Tabella 22 - Esempio di eliminazione del *Semikolon* tedesco nella traduzione italiana da parte di Andreina Lavagetto (Feltrinelli 1991)

FK 15 (58)

Nun, die Hoffnung ist noch nicht gänzlich aufgegeben; habe ich einmal das Geld beisammen, um die Schuld der Eltern an ihn abzuzahlen – es dürfte noch fünf bis sechs Jahre dauern –, mache ich die Sache unbedingt.

AL 91

Bene, non tutte le speranze son perdute, non appena ho messo insieme i soldi per pagargli il debito dei miei genitori – ci vorranno ancora cinque o sei anni –, lo faccio di sicuro (Kafka 1991, 75).

Se la versione di Andreina Lavagetto guarda alla punteggiatura di Kafka come a qualcosa da conservare anche in traduzione, per la *Metamorfosi* di Enrico Ganni le cose sono più complesse. In realtà l'approccio sembra simile a quello di Lavagetto, ma con più libertà. Soprattutto quando la punteggiatura è ridondante (nel testo originale i *Semikolons* si presentano 'a folate' anziché distribuiti uniformemente) il traduttore trasforma qualche punto e virgola in due punti, virgola, o in semplici congiunzioni. Il testo di Ganni contiene 155 punti e virgola (contro 175) e 58 due punti (contro 26).

Tabella 23 - Esempi di eliminazione del *Semikolon* tedesco nella traduzione di Enrico Ganni (Einaudi 2012)

FK 15 (59)

Der nächste Zug ging um sieben Uhr; um den einzuholen, hätte er sich unsinnig beeilen müssen, und die Kollektion war noch nicht eingepackt, und er selbst fühlte sich durchaus nicht besonders frisch und beweglich.

EG 012

Il prossimo treno era alle sette, per raggiungerlo avrebbe dovuto scapicollarsi, ma non aveva ancora messo via il campionario, e lui poi non si sentiva proprio fresco e in forma (Kafka 2012, 5).

FK 15 (62)

Der Rücken schien hart zu sein; dem würde wohl bei dem Fall auf den Teppich nichts geschehen.

EG 012

Il dorso sembrava duro: era prevedibile che cadendo sul tappeto non avrebbe subito danni (Kafka 2012, 9).

L'aumento della frequenza dei due punti si deve al fatto che Ganni usa il segno per tradurre il *Gedankenstrich* o per riformulare le frasi.

Tabella 24 - *Esempi di sostituzione, nella versione di Ganni, di Komma e Gedankenstrich con i due punti*

FK 15 (59)

Gregor erschrak, als er seine antwortende Stimme hörte, die wohl unverkennbar seine frühere war, in die sich aber, wie von unten her, ein nicht zu unterdrückendes, schmerzliches Piepsen mischte [...]

EG 012

Sentendosi rispondere Gregor trasalì: era inequivocabilmente la sua voce di un tempo, ma mescolata a un irrimediabile, lamentoso pigolio che sembrava provenire dal basso [...] (Kafka 2012, 6).

FK 15 (68)

Er war noch mit jener schwierigen Bewegung beschäftigt und hatte nicht Zeit, auf anderes zu achten, da hörte er schon den Prokuristen ein lautes „Oh!“ ausstoßen – es klang, wie wenn der Wind saust [...]

EG 012

Era ancora impegnato in questa complessa manovra e non aveva tempo di badare ad altro, quando sentì il procuratore emettere un sonoro “Oh!”: sembrava di sentire sibilare il vento (Kafka 2012, 17–18).

Nelle traduzioni degli anni Novanta e Duemila di Lavagetto e Ganni pare di scorgere una differente sensibilità nei confronti della punteggiatura, e una minore tendenza a piegarla alle necessità dettate da lingue sintatticamente diverse come tedesco e italiano. La versione di Fortini degli anni Ottanta rimane una traduzione d'autore e risponde, anche dal punto di vista della punteggiatura, a criteri leggermente differenti.

6. Bilancio

L'analisi fin qui condotta può essere letta in diversi modi e permette di individuare varie tendenze. Una prima riflessione riguarda il testo originale di *Die Verwandlung*, in cui Kafka utilizza molto spesso il *Semikolon* mentre il *Kolon* serve solo a introdurre il discorso diretto. L'esame delle teorie e delle prassi linguistico-ortografiche all'epoca del boemo mostra una certa ambiguità tra l'utilizzo del primo e quello del secondo segno, il che porta il Kafka di *Die Verwandlung* a considerare, per le strutture paratattiche, solo l'uso del *Semikolon* (oltre naturalmente al *Komma*).

Questa limitazione del mezzo interpuntivo per la coordinazione pare destabilizzare i traduttori italiani, che tendono non a eliminarla, ma a normalizzare il rapporto punto e virgola/due punti, che però rappresenta un mezzo stilistico rilevante nell'economia del testo kafkiano. In italiano tale normalizzazione (e l'aggiunta dei due punti) viene effettuata soprattutto tra coordinate legate da rapporti logici di esplicazione, causalità o consequenzialità. Nelle grammatiche e nelle teorie interpuntive italiane della fine del XIX e del XX secolo, la distinzione tra punto e virgola e due punti pare escludere sovrapposizioni d'uso in misura maggiore rispetto a quelle tedesche.

Quanto alle traduzioni italiane, le strategie attuate nei confronti dell'interpunzione kafkiana (limitata a punto e virgola e due punti) si possono dividere in due gruppi: norma-

lizzanti e conservative. Una riflessione traduttologica ci porterebbe ad ascrivere le normalizzanti alla categoria del *target-oriented* e dell'addomesticante, le conservative a quella del *source-oriented* e dello straniante. Per distinguere i due sottoinsiemi occorre considerare il rapporto tra le frequenze di punto e virgola e due punti.

Tabella 25 - *Rapporto di frequenza tra punto e virgola e due punti in Die Verwandlung e nelle sue traduzioni italiane analizzate*

| Originale / edizione italiana | Rapporto frequenza “;” / “:” |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Die Verwandlung</i> | 6,7 |
| RP 34 Vallecchi | 1,3 |
| AR 35 Frassinelli | 5,6 |
| GZ 57 Feltrinelli | 1,2 |
| EC 66 Garzanti | 1,2 |
| FF 86 Einaudi | 5,5 |
| AL 91 Feltrinelli | 5,1 |
| EG 012 Einaudi | 2,7 |

Il rapporto di frequenza rappresenta il numero di due punti contenuti nel testo per ogni punto e virgola. Più il valore è basso, più il traduttore normalizza (riporta cioè allo standard interpuntivo italiano) la disparità di frequenza tra i due segni. Tra le versioni normalizzanti figurano senz'altro le *Metamorfosi* di Paoli (1934), Zampa (1957) e Castellani (1966). Le traduzioni che invece conservano la peculiarità stilistica dell'originale legata ai due segni, e che si avvicinano di più al rapporto originale *Semikolon/Kolon*, sono senza dubbio Rho (1935), Fortini (1986) e Lavagetto (1991). In posizione intermedia, tendente a un atteggiamento normalizzante, si colloca Ganni (2012). Ogni traduttore utilizza una strategia leggermente differente a seconda di quanto decida di modificare le frequenze dei due segni.

Leggendo i dati in prospettiva diacronica, invece, dagli anni Ottanta sembra cristallizzarsi una maggiore tendenza a rispettare l'equilibrio originale dei segni, benché il campione di traduzioni analizzato sia troppo ridotto per trarne conclusioni affidabili. In base alla suddivisione per periodi proposta, il risultato sarebbe il seguente:

Tabella 26 - *Rapporto medio di frequenza tra punto e virgola e due punti nelle traduzioni italiane di Die Verwandlung suddivise per periodo*

| Periodo (n. traduzioni analizzate) | Rapporto medio “;” / “:” |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Anni Trenta (2) | 3,45 |
| Anni Cinquanta/Sessanta (2) | 1,2 |
| Fine Novecento/inizio Duemila (3) | 4,43 |

La traduzione di Anita Rho, che in base all'indicatore analizzato emerge come la più conservativa, alza molto la media del primo periodo, mentre scorporando la versione di Ganni dall'ultimo il rapporto medio salirebbe a 5,3.

L'aspetto più interessante che emerge riguarda la possibilità e l'opportunità, nella traduzione letteraria tra tedesco e italiano, di considerare perfettamente equivalenti segni di interpunzione come il punto e virgola (e in seconda battuta i due punti) che non sottostanno a prescrizioni normative stringenti. E lo scopo di questa analisi, fatta di tanti numeri, forse troppi per un testo letterario entrato con il suo enorme carico di suggestione nell'immaginario universale, come tutte le analisi traduttive, in fondo consiste nel misurare le dimensioni di un 'quasi', l'eterno 'quasi la stessa cosa' di Umberto Eco. E nell'invitare a riflettere per capire, proprio grazie alla traduzione, se il segno che chiamiamo punto e virgola e quello (identico) che i germanofoni chiamano *Semikolon* o *Strichpunkt* siano stati, siano e saranno sempre – davvero – la stessa cosa.

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IDENTITÀ POLITICA NEI PROGRAMMI ELETTORALI DEI PARTITI POPULISTI TEDESCHI AfD E DIE LINKE. UN'ANALISI DELLE STRATEGIE LINGUISTICHE

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The present essay proposes to investigate the linguistic strategies that the two German populist parties, the right-wing *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) and the left-wing DIE LINKE, deploy in their electoral programs for the 2021 Bundestag elections as a means of defining their identity with particular reference to three topics: 1. education and formation, 2. immigration and integration and 3. culture. The analysis, methodologically based on the frame semantics (Fillmore 1982; Busse 2012), shares Wodak's (2015) assumption of populism as an empty rhetorical style that becomes either right-wing or left-wing according to the content with which it is loaded, as shown by the two election programs which address these same issues from two perspectives and through partly common and partly different linguistic strategies.

Keywords: Populism, *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD), DIE LINKE, Frame Semantics, Political Identity

1. Introduzione

Il discorso politico, inteso in questo contesto come la comunicazione esterna dei partiti, si declina in modo peculiare nell'uso del linguaggio dei partiti populistici – sia di destra che di sinistra – e contribuisce alla formazione della loro identità politica. È questo un aspetto particolarmente evidente durante le campagne elettorali che rappresentano la fase più intensa del dibattito politico in cui i partiti presentano sé stessi e le proprie idee attraverso contenuti di grande impatto (cfr. Bartels 2015, 39–58; Roock 2011, 98–117).

Al centro del presente lavoro vi è l'analisi delle strategie linguistiche che favoriscono la costruzione dell'identità politica nei programmi elettorali¹ per le elezioni al Bundestag del 2021 dei due partiti politici tedeschi considerati populistici per il loro stile comunicativo, *Alternative für Deutschland* (d'ora in poi AfD) e DIE LINKE, rispettivamente partiti

¹ I programmi elettorali sono reperibili online, quello di AfD al link <https://www.afd.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/20210611_AfD_Programm_2021.pdf>, quello di DIE LINKE al link <https://www.die-linke.de/fileadmin/download/wahlen2021/Wahlprogramm/DIE_LINKE_Wahlprogramm_zur_Bundestagswahl_2021.pdf> (ultima consultazione 25 ottobre 2023).

populisti di destra e sinistra². Si deve innanzitutto considerare che i programmi elettorali dei due partiti presentano molte analogie tematiche con quelli degli altri partiti che concorrono alle elezioni federali, ma concentrano la loro attenzione su alcuni argomenti come quelli anti-migratori, anti-islamici, la politica di austerità dell'Unione Europea ecc. (cfr. Bartels 2015, 59–78; Schaefer 2021, 33–44; Akel 2021, 104–146; Poier et al. 2020, 185–202).

I programmi elettorali contribuiscono alla formazione dell'identità dei partiti in quanto progettano modelli di convivenza culturale (cfr. Feddersen, Gessler 2021, 30–35): essendo testi dinamici testimoniano il cambiamento sociale e il tentativo del rispettivo partito di trovare una risposta a esso (cfr. Kuße 2012, 127, 146–148). Nel processo di costituzione dell'identità di un partito, il programma elettorale ha una funzione sia ideologica che persuasiva e connotativa, oltre che informativa, perché i vari partiti definiscono la propria identità e ideologia politica in opposizione al proprio avversario (cfr. Schaefer 2021, 53–56). Quello di identità è un concetto poliedrico e problematico che necessita di una definizione differenziata in base all'ambito di applicazione³: in politica esso si riferisce sia a un'identità individuale che collettiva, non definita in maniera univoca, bensì dinamica, performativa e in continuo sviluppo (cfr. Brambilla 2007; Girnth, Hofmann 2016, 60–70). Pertanto, il programma elettorale contribuisce nella sua completezza alla costruzione dell'identità politica di un partito: in modo particolare, l'identità politica di AfD e DIE LINKE si manifesta in quei paragrafi che riguardano il rapporto con l'Unione Europea, le politiche familiari, ma anche e soprattutto in quelli che trattano temi quali la formazione e l'educazione, le politiche migratorie e la cultura. Comune è il desiderio di cambiare profondamente la società e lo Stato tedesco che, secondo il loro parere, non può più essere considerato democratico, liberale e pluralistico.

La presente analisi si concentra sulle strategie linguistiche che favoriscono la formazione dell'identità politica di questi due partiti con particolare riferimento a tre tematiche: 1. educazione e formazione (*Bildung*)⁴, 2. immigrazione e integrazione e 3. cultura. Il lavoro è strutturato come segue:

1. definizione cursoria di populismo (§ 2), evidenziandone gli aspetti considerati rilevanti per la parte analitica;
2. definizione del programma elettorale come genere testuale (§ 3);
3. metodologia (§ 4);

² Per un approfondimento sulla storia dei due partiti si veda per l'AfD Kleinert 2018; per la LINKE cfr. Decker 2023.

³ La letteratura critica sul concetto di identità è vastissima: in questo contesto si rimanda – per ragioni di economia testuale – solo ai lavori alla base delle seguenti riflessioni. Cfr. Kick 2018; Appiah 2018, 19–60; Browse 2018; Davis 2019, 3–19; Gadinger, Jarzebski, Yildiz 2014, 3–38.

⁴ Si ricorda in questo contesto che il concetto di *Bildung* assume un significato particolare nella storia della Germania e della Mitteleuropa: *Bildung* si riferisce alla formazione umanistica dell'uomo, indica un processo di crescita e sviluppo e rappresenta il risultato del rapporto tra individuo e mondo esterno. Viene spesso intesa come *Ausbildung*, ossia una formazione professionale. Tale sovrapposizione dei due concetti è presente nel programma elettorale di AfD, mentre la concezione di *Bildung* di DIE LINKE si avvicina di più all'idea di formazione umanistica.

4. analisi degli aspetti linguistici legati ai temi dell'educazione e formazione (*Bildung*), della cultura e dell'immigrazione nei programmi elettorali di AfD e DIE LINKE (§ 5).

Gli obiettivi principali del lavoro sono: determinare a) in che modo e nello specifico in riferimento a determinate tematiche partiti populistici come AfD e DIE LINKE usino il linguaggio in maniera strategica per costruire la propria identità; b) quale effetto sortiscono i programmi elettorali sulla costruzione dell'identità politica, e c) quale contesto politico e sociale agisce sulla costruzione di tale identità.

2. Una definizione di populismo

Il populismo è un fenomeno globale: il concetto, che ha origine negli Stati Uniti con la nascita alla fine del XIX secolo del *Populist Party* – partito sviluppatosi dal movimento contadino contro le conseguenze sociali dell'industrializzazione (cfr. Skenderovic 2017, 45–46; Möller 2020, 55–60) – è utilizzato nella sua vaghezza semantica per scopi diversi (cfr. Moffitt 2020, 1): i politici lo usano per definire i loro avversari; i giornalisti per descrivere discorsi demagogici o popolari; gli studiosi della politica per caratterizzare un certo tipo di partito e di figura politica. Spesso i confini del populismo vengono confusi nel dibattito pubblico con quelli di estremismo, estremismo di destra, fascismo, demagogia, antielitarismo (Niehr 2019, 24–30). Moffitt (2016, 17–20) raggruppa i tentativi di definire il populismo in quattro correnti: 1) ideologia, 2) strategia, 3) discorso o stile, 4) logica del politico. Egli nota anche la grande somiglianza tra i diversi approcci nei seguenti aspetti: a) il popolo come attore omogeneo; b) le élite e/o un altro gruppo come immagine nemica, nonché c) l'enfasi su un elemento particolare, orientato allo scandalo e alla provocazione. Questi aspetti portano a un accordo su chi è un populista e chi non lo è (cfr. Moffitt 2016, 42). Wielenga e Hartleb (2011, 7–16) distinguono inoltre quattro dimensioni del populismo:

1. tecnica: il populismo semplifica e afferma una contrapposizione tra il popolo, inteso come entità omogenea, e un 'esterno';
2. emotiva: il populismo fa appello ai sentimenti e alle paure, solitamente attraverso una figura carismatica che combatte in nome del popolo;
3. mediatica: eventi e persone sono messi in risalto (sia in negativo che in positivo) nella narrazione dei diversi mass media;
4. contenutistica: il populismo si contrappone a un'ampia varietà di questioni e ideologie, come i capitalisti globali, che hanno un ruolo, ad esempio, nelle teorie cospirative della crisi economica a partire dal 2008, i migranti o l'Islam. A queste tematiche si aggiunge la recente crisi causata dalla pandemia di coronavirus (cfr. Kurilla 2021).

2.1 Il linguaggio populista

Come è ben noto, l'azione politica non è sinonimo di azione linguistica, ma entrambe si influenzano vicendevolmente (Girnth 2015, 1–5; Niehr 2014, 11): gli attori politici si servono del linguaggio come strumento per generare disponibilità al consenso poiché esso è espressione di convinzioni e di conseguenza le influenza (Girnth 2015, 5–7). In *Acht*

Anmerkungen zum Populismus (2003), Ralf Dahrendorf collega il populismo a una retorica che si serve di un linguaggio semplice, mediante la quale si riduce la complessità delle tematiche trattate e lo scontro politico è rappresentato come un'opposizione tra amici e nemici.

L'uso del linguaggio da parte dei partiti populistici viene indagato da prospettive diverse: una panoramica dell'eterogeneo campo di ricerca è fornita, in modo particolare, da due antologie della collana *Osnabrücker Beiträge zur Sprachtheorie* (cfr. Januschek, Reisigl 2014a; Römer, Spieß 2019a). Per Januschek e Reisigl l'interesse si concentra sui mezzi, sulla semantica e sulle relazioni tra attori politici e sostenitori (cfr. Januschek, Reisigl 2014b, 10–12); Römer e Spieß (2019b, 7–19) si chiedono invece come il populismo si renda linguisticamente visibile nello spazio pubblico-politico, quali siano le strategie linguistiche tipiche delle azioni degli attori populistici. Per Januschek il populismo è solo di destra (Januschek 2014, 61–62), mentre Wodak ritiene che il populismo, riferito al linguaggio, indichi uno stile retorico che contrappone il popolo al sistema dominante. Si tratta quindi di una retorica che si rivolge al popolo e pretende di parlare per il popolo (Wodak 2015, 32): ogni politico – secondo Wodak – è populista nella misura in cui vuole rivolgersi e parlare a molti: intende pertanto il populismo, a differenza di Reisigl e Januschek, che considerano il fenomeno con riferimento ai temi (Reisigl 2012, 141), come uno stile retorico vuoto in termini di contenuto che diventa populista di destra o sinistra quando si carica di contenuti specifici, ad esempio, le persone reali a cui si appella⁵. Secondo Reisigl, sia il populismo di destra che di sinistra hanno elementi inclusivi ed esclusivi (Reisigl 2012, 143; cfr. anche Stögner, Wodak 2014, 193–196) che dipendono dalle modalità di soggettivazione del popolo: il populismo di sinistra è esclusivo per la sua concezione riduzionista di popolo, quello di destra è inclusivo nell'immaginare quest'ultimo come una nazione che trascende le classi sociali, anche se questo aspetto è accompagnato da pressioni per omogenizzare una nazione all'interno in contrapposizione alle altre nazioni⁶. Il presente lavoro condivide la definizione di Wodak di populismo come stile retorico vuoto che, in base ai contenuti, diventa di destra o sinistra: tale aspetto è particolarmente evidente nei programmi elettorali che appartengono all'ambito istituzionale di azione di un partito del quale cercano di presentare il profilo attraverso la scelta strategica di determinati contenuti.

3. Il programma elettorale

Il programma elettorale è una tipologia testuale redatta da una commissione di esperti che riassume in modo coeso vari aspetti della comunicazione politica: l'espressione dell'identità del partito e le tematiche per esso importanti, il gruppo di elettori a cui rivolgersi ecc. Esso rappresenta un raddoppiamento della realtà (cfr. Edelman 1964, 152) perché mostra la realtà della dimensione politica su due diversi livelli, quello della lotta per il potere e quello

⁵ Il politologo Mudde considera il populismo come un'ideologia che divide la società in due gruppi, il 'vero popolo' e l' 'élite corrotta' e che parte dal presupposto che la politica debba essere espressione generale del popolo (Mudde 2017, 4). Cfr. anche Priester (2012, 32–51); Loch (2017, 76).

⁶ Per una trattazione più esaustiva dello stile comunicativo populista in politica si rimanda tra gli altri a Stegmann (2017, 7); Wodak (2015, 25–26); Cedroni (2014, 40–42).

dell'illusione dell'esercizio concreto dello stesso, ma delinea anche la strategia politica e il valore simbolico del potere politico. È un testo dalla funzione appellativa, il cui scopo principale è quello di influenzare l'azione dei possibili elettori (cfr. Brinker, Cölfen, Pappert 2018, 78). Assolve una funzione obbligatoria nella presentazione del programma elettorale e di autoaffermazione collettiva (inserimento del logo e ripetuta menzione del nome del partito); possiede quindi anche una funzione di contatto e informativa perché fornisce informazioni a giornalisti, possibili elettori interessati ecc. (cfr. Klein 2000, 731–755; Girnth 2015, 40–41), contribuendo alla formazione dell'opinione politica.

Ickes (2008, 16–18) lo definisce come un atto e gioco linguistico: come atto linguistico è sottoposto a un processo di regolamentazione, selezione e organizzazione del discorso prima di essere reso pubblico. Come gioco linguistico rappresenta il rapporto tra linguaggio e azione politica che concretizza il processo comunicativo del mondo politico con la realtà (Ickes 2008, 17). Un programma elettorale è inoltre costituito dalla presentazione e dalla messa in discussione delle problematiche da risolvere, di solito imputate all'incompetenza dei governi precedenti, come anche dalle proposte di possibili soluzioni in un oscillare tra vaghezza e concretezza semantica. È un testo legato al particolare momento storico in cui viene redatto, presenta pertanto degli obiettivi da raggiungere nel tempo di una legislatura. Si basa inoltre sulla polarizzazione tra il proprio partito e tutti gli altri così come sullo screditamento dell'avversario.

I programmi elettorali di AfD e DIE LINKE presentano tutti questi aspetti, ai quali si aggiungono caratteristiche considerate tipicamente populiste (v. § 2) come 1. una marcata polarizzazione nei confronti degli altri partiti e 2. del popolo contro tutto ciò che è estraneo; 3. l'uso di un linguaggio espressivo che fa appello a sentimenti e paure. Inoltre, entrambi i partiti si servono di parole chiave, la cui ripetizione, assieme all'utilizzo di verbi performativi permette la creazione di e/o l'inserimento in *frames* semantici che trasmettono un determinato sapere e visione della realtà.

4. Metodologia

Per analizzare le strategie linguistiche alla base dei due programmi elettorali si assume come base metodologica la teoria della semantica dei *frames* (Fillmore 1982, 112–137) applicata al linguaggio politico (cfr. Busse 2017, 194–200). Il concetto di *framing* usato in questo contesto è quello sviluppato da Entmann (1993, 52): “To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.” Del *framing*, Entmann individua quattro aspetti principali, utili anche per la seguente analisi: 1. la definizione e 2. la causa del problema, 3. la valutazione della situazione e 4. la possibile reazione all'azione.

Il testo del programma elettorale, che rappresenta uno dei tanti mezzi espressivi della comunicazione politica, costituisce lo spazio in cui si sviluppano determinati *frames* che organizzano il contenuto, permettendo così di indagarne non solo la coerenza e la coesione, ma anche lo stile retorico-pragmatico da intendersi come fenomeno testuale e semio-

tico che influenza l'intera modalità della costituzione di un testo e la sua ricezione (Fairclough 2005, 87–96; Foschi 2016, 53–55; 69; 91): l'indagine dello stile funzionale di un testo (Hoffmann 2001, 534; Fairclough 2005, 112–115) permette quindi di studiarne le specificità culturali.

L'analisi semantica dei *frames* favorisce una migliore contestualizzazione dell'agire politico dei due partiti nello spazio ufficiale della campagna elettorale: il programma elettorale si sviluppa in uno o più *frames* che comprendono una varietà di tematiche e stili argomentativi che dipendono dalla concezione che i partiti hanno di sé, della politica e dei propri avversari, legati anche al potenziale emotivo. AfD e DIE LINKE si servono – seppure in modalità e misura diversa – degli stessi *frames*. Costituiscono la base della loro argomentazione e sono peculiari dei programmi elettorali i *frames Worry and Work*, a cui si associano i seguenti *frames*⁷: *Desaster_scenario* per indicare tutti gli elementi non funzionanti della società tedesca, dalla scuola alla politica migratoria passando per la cultura; *Adjusting* e *Attempt_action_scenario* per indicare le azioni che i due partiti vogliono intraprendere in caso di vittoria elettorale. Condividono poi i *frames Attitude_description* quando descrivono sé stessi o i propri avversari e *Identity_scenario* in cui sviluppano e mostrano la propria identità politica. Questi *frames* permettono di individuare la modalità e la selezione del sapere, la possibile relazione tra i livelli attributivi e valoriali e l'uso delle emozioni (cfr. anche Lakoff, Wehling 2008, 73), l'utilizzo simbolico del linguaggio (cfr. Dieckmann 1975, 30–31), come anche di identificare, in modo particolare a livello microtestuale, gli aspetti linguistici pragmatici e performativi del programma elettorale alla cui base giace una sorta di principio cooperativo tra il partito e i possibili elettori. L'analisi semantica dei *frames* mostra tali aspetti a diversi livelli testuali ed evidenzia come le stesse tematiche e il lessico possano rappresentare diverse posizioni politiche e letture dello stesso fenomeno (Busse 2017, 196). Questo diventa particolarmente evidente nei programmi elettorali di AfD e DIE LINKE nella trattazione di alcune tematiche quali l'educazione e la formazione, l'immigrazione e l'integrazione e la cultura: pur partendo da assunti comuni, i due partiti presentano posizioni opposte, in alcuni punti complementari, rispetto alle stesse tematiche, facendo uso di strutture grammaticali e di un lessico diverso. L'analisi di questi temi avviene a un livello micro- (trattazione di determinati concetti e tematiche) e mesotestuale (creazione strategica di legami / relazioni concettuali), mentre non si prende in considerazione il livello macrotestuale che riguarda tutta la campagna elettorale e quindi il rapporto con gli altri partiti⁸.

⁷ Per la descrizione dei *frames* si veda FrameNet, risorsa online <<https://framenet.icsi.berkeley.edu/frameIndex>> (ultima consultazione 20 ottobre 2023).

⁸ Si ritiene doveroso precisare che si è consapevoli delle numerose somiglianze tematiche con gli altri partiti in corsa alle elezioni federali, ad esempio tra DIE LINKE e Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, che non vengono analizzate in questa sede perché non direttamente pertinenti alla tematica principale e per questioni di economia testuale.

5. I programmi elettorali di AfD e DIE LINKE

Si tratta di programmi elettorali lunghi, complessi sia a livello tematico che strutturale: il programma di DIE LINKE è costruito da 68.331 parole, quello di AfD da 23.500. Sono entrambi suddivisi in sottoparagrafi dedicati alle diverse tematiche e nella loro stesura non sempre il linguaggio risulta chiaro, atto a favorire un'ampia comprensione. Ad esempio, sono presenti frasi molto lunghe e articolate, sostantivi composti (cfr. i composti con il sostantivo *Asyl* nel programma AfD), tecnicismi, parole straniere ecc. Dall'analisi complessiva dei due programmi, emerge per entrambi l'uso di un linguaggio totalizzante, carico emotivamente e una retorica fondata sull'opposizione agli avversari politici e di lotta contro le presunte minacce (*frame: Disaster_scenario*): mentre nel programma di AfD la maggior parte dei problemi sembra essere causata dai flussi migratori e da una politica dell'immigrazione incapace di favorire una corretta integrazione, alla base dell'argomentazione di DIE LINKE vi sono le conseguenze dell'epidemia di coronavirus e di una determinata forma di economia.

Vengono di seguito analizzati gli aspetti linguistici dei paragrafi in cui si delinea più nettamente l'identità dei due partiti e che riguardano le seguenti tematiche: educazione e formazione, immigrazione e integrazione, cultura.

5.1 Educazione e formazione

I temi dell'educazione e della formazione vengono affrontati nel programma AfD nel paragrafo *Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung* (AfD 2021, 148–154), nel programma DIE LINKE nel paragrafo *Gute Bildung: Gerecht, gebührenfrei, ein Leben lang* (DIE LINKE 2021, 44–55), anche se alcuni aspetti di queste due tematiche sono presenti in altri paragrafi, ad esempio quelli dedicati alla digitalizzazione o al mercato del lavoro.

Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung è suddiviso in sottoparagrafi che trattano diversi aspetti della formazione e dell'educazione, caratterizzati da titoli che assomigliano a slogan, come ad esempio *Mut zur Leistung statt Akademisierungswahn* (AfD 2021, 148). In questo titolo, il termine *Akademisierungswahn* mostra il *frame Disaster_scenario*, di cui AfD si serve per descrivere la situazione attuale del sistema scolastico, la cui analisi inizia con l'affermazione, "ein leistungsorientiertes, differenziertes Bildungswesen ist die Grundlage unseres Wohlstands und wesentlicher Bestandteil unserer Kultur"⁹ (AfD 2021, 148). AfD connota positivamente l'educazione mediante l'uso di aggettivi quali *leistungsorientiert* (efficiente), *differenziert* (differenziata) e *wesentlich* (essenziale), del sostantivo *Bestandteil* (parte costitutiva) che indica l'appartenenza a un tutto, ma contrappone a questa immagine positiva la situazione critica del sistema educativo tedesco, che, secondo AfD, è minacciato su più fronti: la prima minaccia è costituita dalle numerose riforme susseguites dopo i risultati degli alunni tedeschi al *Programme for International Student Assessment* (PISA), ossia un'indagine internazionale promossa dall'OCSE nel 2000 per valutare la preparazione degli alunni: i risultati degli alunni tedeschi furono al di sotto della media OCSE nelle aree della lettura, della matematica e delle scienze. Per la Germania, come sottolinea AfD,

⁹ Trad.: un sistema educativo efficiente, differenziato, è la base del nostro benessere e parte costituiva essenziale della nostra cultura. [Se non indicato diversamente, le traduzioni sono di chi scrive].

si trattò di uno *Schock* che portò a una serie di riforme del sistema scolastico, secondo AfD non sempre positive perché hanno abbassato il livello di preparazione:

(1) Seit dem PISA-Schock vor 20 Jahren jagt eine Reform die andere, mit ständiger weiterer Absenkung des Niveaus. Die Bildungsstandards aller Schulformen und Bildungseinrichtungen müssen wieder auf das Niveau einer führenden Wissenschafts- und Industrienation gehoben werden. Wir fordern die Abkehr von ausschließlicher Kompetenzorientierung und eine stärkere fachwissenschaftliche Ausrichtung des Unterrichts. (AfD 2021, 148)

[Dallo shock causato dai risultati emersi da PISA vent'anni fa, una riforma segue un'altra a ritmo serrato, con il costante e ulteriore abbassamento del livello di preparazione. Gli standard educativi di tutti gli ordinamenti scolastici e istituzioni educative devono essere nuovamente innalzati al livello di una nazione guida sia in ambito scientifico che industriale. Pretendiamo l'abbandono di un esclusivo orientamento alle competenze e una più marcata direzione tecnico-scientifica delle lezioni.]

Nella prima parte della citazione la dimensione negativa della situazione è evidenziata sia dal termine *Schock* che AfD riprende dal dibattito sui risultati del sondaggio OCSE, sia dal sostantivo *Absenkung*, dall'uso del verbo modale *müssen* che indica la necessità di un cambiamento immediato per il quale si mette in gioco AfD. L'esigenza di un intervento da parte di AfD, inserita nei *frames Adjusting* e *Attempt_action_scenario*, viene sottolineata anche nell'ultima frase attraverso l'uso del verbo performativo *fordern* e di aggettivi come *ausschließlich* e *stark*, quest'ultimo al grado comparativo, che indicano la direzione in cui devono andare le riforme proposte. La positività delle azioni che AfD vuole mettere in atto è accentuata non solo dall'uso del presente indicativo a indicare che l'azione si verifica quasi contemporaneamente all'enunciazione, ma anche dalla presenza di verbi performativi dal significato positivo (*befürworten*, *befähigen*):

(2) Bildungsgerechtigkeit erfordert Differenzierung, nicht Gleichmacherei. Effizientes Lehren und Lernen ist nur möglich, wenn die Leistungsunterschiede zwischen den Schülern innerhalb einer Schulform begrenzt bleiben. Wir befürworten daher ein differenziertes, aber durchlässiges Schulsystem, das den unterschiedlichen Begabungen der Schüler gerecht wird. (AfD 2021, 148–149)

[La parità educativa comporta differenziazione, non livellamento. Un insegnamento e un apprendimento efficiente sono possibili solo se le diversità di prestazione tra gli alunni rimangono confinate all'interno di un indirizzo scolastico. Per questo raccomandiamo un sistema scolastico differenziato, ma permeabile, in grado di tener conto delle diverse capacità degli alunni.]

In (2) la ripetizione dell'aggettivo *differenziert* e il sostantivo *Differenzierung* sottolineano la natura del sistema scolastico secondo AfD che deve tener conto delle diverse capacità (*Begabungen*) degli alunni. L'aggettivo *unterschiedlich*, dal significato sinonimico rispetto a *differenziert*, riferito alle capacità degli alunni, intensifica l'importanza di un sistema scolastico differenziato, sottolineata anche dall'aggettivo *durchlässig*. Inoltre, la ripetizione di

parole considerate chiave è una delle strategie linguistiche maggiormente usate non solo da AfD, ma anche da DIE LINKE (v. ripetizione di *alle* in 5 e 6) per rafforzare le tesi esposte. Un altro aspetto dell'educazione è quello legato all'inclusione (3): nei sottoparagrafi *Keine ideologisch motivierte Inklusion* e *Bildung und Migration*, AfD affronta il tema dell'inclusività scolastica sia per quello che riguarda persone con disabilità che per quelle straniere. La presenza di migranti a scuola rappresenta una sfida (*Herausforderung*) per la loro differenza culturale (*anderen Kulturkreisen*) e l'appartenenza a classi sociali svantaggiate sul piano educativo (*bildungsfernen Schichten*). Il registro narrativo-argomentativo cambia e i *frames* ritornano a essere *Worry* e *Desaster_szenario*: a causa della loro scarsa preparazione e delle poche conoscenze linguistiche, che impediscono loro il raggiungimento di una qualificazione personale, i migranti diventano una minaccia per la società tedesca, come mostra la definizione di *dauerhafte [...] Belastung* loro riferita:

(3) Die Integration von Migranten ist eine Herausforderung für das deutsche Bildungssystem, da viele von ihnen anderen Kulturkreisen und zudem oft bildungsfernen Schichten entstammen. Fehlende Vorbildung und mangelnde Sprachkenntnisse verhindern in vielen Fällen eine erfolgreiche Qualifizierung für den deutschen Arbeitsmarkt. Diese Menschen drohen in Deutschland persönlich zu scheitern und zu einer dauerhaften Belastung für den Sozialstaat zu werden. Die AfD drängt darauf, bei einer zukünftig rational gesteuerten Einwanderungspolitik den Bildungsstand als ein wesentliches Entscheidungskriterium zu berücksichtigen. [...] Der Lernfortschritt einheimischer Schüler darf nicht beeinträchtigt werden. Solange die Migranten nicht hinreichend Deutsch sprechen, um am Regelunterricht teilzunehmen, ist ein Unterricht in ihrer Muttersprache eine Option. (AfD 2021, 150–151)

[L'integrazione dei migranti è una sfida per il sistema educativo tedesco perché molti di loro provengono da altre culture e spesso da classi sociali poco istruite. In molti casi, la mancanza di un'istruzione precedente e di competenze linguistiche impedisce di qualificarsi con successo per il mercato di lavoro tedesco. Queste persone rischiano di fallire in Germania e di diventare un peso duraturo per lo stato sociale. AfD sollecita a considerare il livello educativo in una futura politica migratoria, regolata in modo razionale, come un criterio decisivo essenziale. Il progresso nell'apprendimento degli alunni nativi non deve essere sfavorito. Fino a quando i migranti non parlano sufficientemente tedesco per poter partecipare alle lezioni regolari, un'opzione è rappresentata dalla lezione nella loro madrelingua.]

La situazione attuale del sistema scolastico influisce sulla preparazione degli alunni tedeschi, sfavorendola (*beeinträchtigen*), soprattutto per la scarsa conoscenza della lingua tedesca dei compagni di classe stranieri. La distanza tra gli alunni stranieri e quelli tedeschi viene sottolineata dall'aggettivo *einheimisch* (nativi, locali), con cui si connotano questi ultimi. La fine della citazione mostra tuttavia un'apertura nei confronti degli stranieri, che sembra rimandare all'aggettivo *durchlässig* in (2), perché permette l'uso della loro madrelingua e rappresenta un elemento di inclusività.

In (4) l'attenzione è posta sull'importanza dello studio della storia e delle tradizioni culturali tedesche, definite *immanenter Bestandteil* dell'identità tedesca, qui nominata espli-

citamente: *Bestandteil* costituisce una delle parole chiave del programma elettorale dall'alto valore simbolico perché, avendo il significato di un elemento appartenente a un tutto, trasmette l'idea della cultura tedesca come di un insieme omogeneo, le cui parti si trovano in un rapporto di equilibrio (cfr. Dieckmann 1975, 30–31). L'obiettivo di AfD di contrastare (*entgegenwirken*) tutti i tentativi di eliminare in diversi modi (*entfernen, verfälschen, reduzieren*) tali argomenti dai programmi scolastici, che invece devono essere insegnati già dalla scuola elementare per favorire l'amore per la patria e la consapevolezza delle tradizioni, si inserisce nuovamente nel frame *Attempt_action_scenario*:

(4) Die deutschen Kulturgüter, Traditionen sowie die Geschichte sind immanenter Bestandteil der deutschen Identität. Die AfD wird allen Bestrebungen, dieses aus den Lehrplänen zu entfernen, zu verfälschen oder zu reduzieren, entgegenwirken. Bereits ab der Grundschule müssen diese Inhalte zum Pflichtstoff des Unterrichts gehören. Das fördert Heimatliebe und Traditionsbewusstsein. (AfD 2021, 152)
 [I beni culturali tedeschi, le tradizioni così come la storia sono parte costitutiva immanente dell'identità tedesca. AfD combatterà contro tutti i tentativi di eliminarli dai programmi scolastici, di falsificarli o ridurli. Questi contenuti devono diventare materia obbligatoria delle lezioni già a partire dalla scuola elementare. Questo favorisce l'amore per la patria e la consapevolezza della tradizione.]

Altre parole chiave dall'alto valore simbolico sono *Heimatliebe* e *Traditionsbewusstsein*. *Heimatliebe* è uno dei concetti chiave di AfD: descrive – oltre alla devozione alla patria – il senso di appartenenza e sicurezza che a questa si associa e include quindi anche l'identità, la mentalità e una particolare visione del proprio Paese e del mondo. Rimanda, come *Bestandteil*, all'immagine della cultura e della società come un organismo vivente. Il concetto ha un carattere esclusivo perché si riferisce solo alla propria patria, non necessariamente in relazione alla patria di altri individui che vivono in Germania, come invece è il caso del patriottismo (cfr. Patzelt 2012, 9–11). *Heimatliebe* è quindi un simbolo referenziale che permette un processo di identificazione con i valori considerati tipicamente tedeschi (Dieckmann 1975, 32–33; Dieckmann 1981, 43–50). Già in questi passaggi si nota lo stile argomentativo del partito, connotato sempre in maniera positiva attraverso l'uso di determinati sostantivi in unione con aggettivi e verbi performativi, che si oppone alla politica dominante, incapace di risolvere i problemi che assillano la società tedesca, primo tra tutti gli stranieri.

Pur avendo punti di contatto con il programma di AfD, quali la critica al sistema educativo tedesco, DIE LINKE affronta il tema dell'educazione e della formazione in maniera quasi diametralmente opposta, come si evince sia dal titolo del paragrafo dedicato alla tematica, *Gute Bildung: Gerecht, gebührenfrei, ein Leben lang*, sia dalle citazioni che seguono:

(5) Wir stellen sozialer Spaltung in der Bildung, Leistungsdruck und Unterfinanzierung eine andere Idee entgegen. Durch den Zugang zu Bildung sollen soziale Benachteiligungen abgebaut, nicht noch verstärkt werden. Wir wollen gemeinsames solidarisches Lernen statt Konkurrenz und Notendruck. DIE LINKE setzt sich für ein inklusives Bildungssystem ein, in dem Menschen individuell gefördert werden. [...] Seit Jahrzehnten wissen wir: Der Zugang zu Bildung ist in Deutschland stark

von der sozialen Herkunft abhängig. Die Coronakrise hat Probleme verschärft, die es schon vorher gab. [...] Das deutsche Bildungssystem verstärkt die soziale Spaltung der Gesellschaft, statt ihr entgegenzuwirken. (DIE LINKE 2021, 46)

[Opponiamo un'altra idea alla divisione sociale nell'educazione, alla pressione (psicologica) per il rendimento e al sottofinanziamento. Attraverso l'accesso all'educazione si dovrebbero abolire gli svantaggi sociali, non rafforzarli ulteriormente. Vogliamo un apprendimento comune e solidale al posto della concorrenza e della pressione dei voti. DIE LINKE si mette in gioco per un sistema educativo inclusivo in cui le persone vengono sostenute individualmente. Lo sappiamo da decenni: l'accesso all'educazione in Germania dipende fortemente dall'origine sociale. La crisi causata dall'epidemia di coronavirus ha acuito i problemi già esistenti. Il sistema educativo tedesco rafforza la divisione sociale della società invece di combatterla.]

In (5) DIE LINKE delinea le problematiche del sistema educativo tedesco che, invece di ridurre le differenze sociali, le rafforza, come sottolineano il verbo *verstärken* e il sostantivo *Spaltung*. Presenti sono sostantivi e aggettivi dalla connotazione positiva (*inklusives Bildungssystem*, *gemeinsames solidarisches Lernen*) per descrivere come dovrebbe essere il sistema educativo tedesco. A differenza di AfD, per cui importante è la formazione professionale, per DIE LINKE l'educazione non si riduce all'avviamento professionale, ma deve essere pensata come un compito collettivo che trova il suo fondamento (*verankern*) nella Legge Fondamentale. L'educazione, concepita come educazione umanistica, deve essere garantita per legge a tutti (6):

(6) Bildung ist mehr als die Vorbereitung auf den Arbeitsmarkt. [...] Wir wollen [...] Bildung als Gemeinschaftsaufgabe im Grundgesetz verankern, damit für alle Kinder und Jugendlichen Bildungsgerechtigkeit hergestellt werden kann. (DIE LINKE 2021, 46–47)

[L'educazione è qualcosa di più della preparazione al mondo del lavoro. Vogliamo ancorare l'educazione come compito comune nella Legge Fondamentale affinché sia garantita a tutti i bambini e i giovani la parità dell'educazione.]

La scuola di DIE LINKE deve essere per tutti (*alle*) e combattere le ingiustizie sociali¹⁰ (6): il modale *wollen* e l'uso inclusivo del pronome di prima persona plurale *wir* esprimono tale idea di scuola, connotata anche dall'uso di verbi performativi quali *fördern*, *anbieten*, dalla ripetizione del participio passato *organisiert* con funzione predicativa, nonché dall'uso di avverbi come *individuell*, *umfassend*, *möglichst* che ne danno una descrizione ancora più precisa. L'elemento inclusivo del populismo di DIE LINKE è ben riassunto nella prima frase in (7) dalla presenza dei due pronomi personali (*wir*, *alle*) che descrivono una collettività:

¹⁰ Si potrebbe controbattere che, in conformità agli obiettivi per lo sviluppo sostenibile dell'Agenda 2030, i programmi elettorali di tutti i partiti politici trattano il tema dell'inclusività sociale e scolastica. Questo è sicuramente vero, ma il tema è più evidente nel programma elettorale della LINKE che ne fa uno dei motivi fondanti della propria politica sociale. A tal riguardo si confronti il programma elettorale con il programma di partito, <<https://www.die-linke.de/partei/programm/>><https://www.die-linke.de/partei/programm/> (ultima consultazione 30 ottobre 2023).

(7) Wir wollen eine Schule für alle: Eine Gemeinschaftsschule, die kein Kind zurücklässt und sozialer Ungleichheit entgegenwirkt. Die Gemeinschaftsschule fördert die Kinder individuell und umfassend. Sie ist ganztägig organisiert und bietet alle Schulabschlüsse an. Schule sollte so organisiert sein, dass die sozialen Unterschiede nicht noch verstärkt, sondern möglichst ausgeglichen werden. (DIE LINKE 2021, 48)

[Vogliamo una scuola per tutti: una scuola di comunità che non lascia indietro nessun bambino e combatte l'ingiustizia sociale. La scuola di comunità sostiene i bambini a livello individuale e in modo completo. È organizzata su tutto il giorno e offre tutti i tipi di titolo di studio. La scuola deve essere organizzata in modo che le differenze sociali non vengano rafforzate, piuttosto possibilmente appianate.]

5.2 Migrazione e integrazione

Un'altra tematica comune ai due programmi elettorali è quella che riguarda la questione dell'integrazione dei migranti nella società e nel mercato del lavoro tedesco che presenta, nella trattazione, molte analogie con quella dell'educazione. Il paragrafo del programma AfD unisce già nel titolo gli aspetti principali del tema nelle tre parole chiave e delinea il *frame* narrativo concentrato sul sostantivo *Asyl* e i suoi composti (53 occorrenze vs. 20 occorrenze nel programma della LINKE): *Migration, Asyl und Integration: Human und rational handeln – Deutschland schützen* (AfD 2021, 90–101). La seconda parte del titolo somiglia a uno slogan che riassume le azioni che AfD attraverso l'uso dei verbi performativi *handeln* e *schützen: handeln* è inoltre rafforzato nel suo valore performativo dall'unione con i due avverbi *human* e *rational* che descrivono ancora più dettagliatamente il tipo di azione da intraprendere. Il paragrafo inizia con la disamina degli aspetti che non funzionano dell'attuale sistema d'asilo, descritto attraverso il predicato nominale *dysfunktional* e la similitudine della lotteria, a cui segue l'elenco delle cause di tale malfunzionamento. Sono qui presenti il *frame Worry* nella prima parte della citazione, *Work e Adjusting* nella seconda parte quando si inizia a parlare di integrazione:

(8) Das derzeitige Asylsystem ist dysfunktional und gleicht einer Lotterie. Finanzielle Fehlanreize und unterlassene Abschiebungen führen zu illegaler Migration, Schleuserkriminalität und zahlreichen Todesopfern im Mittelmeer. [...] Die desaströsen Folgen der unregulierten Massenzuwanderung seit 2015 sind unübersehbar und verschärfen sich weiter: überproportionale Zuwandererkriminalität, Terroranschläge und islamischer Separatismus belegen dies ebenso wie dreistellige Milliardenkosten, Wohnraumangel und die hohe Arbeitslosigkeit unter den Zuwanderern. Erfolgreiche Integration kann und wird so nicht gelingen. Unsere Lösung: Ein Schutzsystem des 21. Jahrhunderts in Anlehnung an das australische Modell. Eine existentielle Frage wie die Zuwanderung muss in demokratischer Selbstbestimmung auf nationaler Ebene entschieden werden. (AfD 2021, 90–91)

[L'attuale sistema d'asilo è disfunzionale e assomiglia a una lotteria. I disincentivi finanziari e le mancate espulsioni portano all'immigrazione illegale, ai reati connessi con le organizzazioni dedicate all'immigrazione clandestina e alle numerose morti nel Mediterraneo. Le conseguenze disastrose dell'immigrazione di massa non rego-

lamentata sono immense a partire dal 2015 e continuano ad aggravarsi: la sproporzionata criminalità degli immigrati, gli attacchi terroristici e il separatismo islamico lo dimostrano, così come i costi miliardari a tre cifre, la carenza di alloggi e l'elevata disoccupazione tra gli immigrati. Un'integrazione di successo non può e non accadrà in questo modo. La nostra soluzione: un sistema di difesa del XXI secolo basato sul modello australiano. Una questione esistenziale come l'immigrazione deve essere decisa con un'autodeterminazione democratica a livello nazionale.]

Questo passaggio contiene molti aspetti della politica migratoria e della concezione di inclusione e integrazione di AfD che, oltre a essere inseriti nel *frame Disaster_scenario*, presentano anche elementi del *frame Fear*: le cause e le conseguenze di una politica migratoria sbagliata vengono descritte attraverso un lessico dalla connotazione negativa che provoca una reazione emozionale di ansia e paura; esso indica mancanza (*Fehlanreize; unterlassene Abschiebungen*) di azione a causa di un'incompetenza che porta all'immigrazione illegale e alla criminalità, come pure alla morte dei migranti in mare. La gravità delle conseguenze viene descritta attraverso un climax che ne intensifica la percezione, dagli aggettivi *desaströs, unreguliert, überproportional*, l'avverbio *unübersehbar* e il verbo *verschärfen*, quindi, anche dalle cause concrete definite dai sostantivi *Zuwandererkriminalität, Terroranschläge, Wohnraummangel, Arbeitslosigkeit*. Per risolvere queste problematiche AfD propone un altro tipo di regolamentazione dell'immigrazione atta a favorire una *erfolgreiche Integration* che dipende da una decisione che deve essere presa sul piano nazionale e *in demokratischer Selbstbestimmung*. Quest'ultima unità lessicale unisce due elementi chiave del programma politico di AfD: il valore della democrazia e, in linea con i principi illuministi (v. es. 11), l'autodeterminazione.

In questa citazione, come anche per le seguenti, sia per AfD che per DIE LINKE, si può notare come le emozioni provocate da determinate situazioni (paura, sconcerto, senso di insicurezza) siano strettamente connesse alla disamina della situazione (Busse 2012, 581; Koepf 2019, 149–174). Soprattutto durante le campagne elettorali, le tematiche concettualizzate sono legate alle valutazioni e gli elementi che indicano determinati valori contengono spesso una connotazione deontica come in (8) la criminalità dei migranti che minaccia la società tedesca, oppure espressioni che indicano determinazioni di valore (*das derzeitige Asylsystem ist dysfunktional*). Accanto a questo tipo di argomentazione, AfD si serve di sostantivi composti con *Asyl-* come modificatore, per indicare e criticare i vari aspetti della politica migratoria: a questi composti appartengono sia termini dal significato giuridico come *Asylsystem, Asylrecht, Asylantragstellung, Asylbewerber, Asylberechtigter*, sia anche composti che concretizzano la critica a determinati aspetti: ad esempio, *Asylparadies* indica quello che secondo AfD è diventata la Germania dal 2015; *Asyl-Industrie* critica la macchina di lavori dietro alla politica dell'immigrazione.

La questione dell'immigrazione e della possibile inclusione è trattata in maniera opposta da DIE LINKE che concentra la propria attenzione sul problema della discriminazione, del razzismo e parla di partecipazione invece di integrazione, inserendosi nel *frame Adjusting*:

(9) Um Rassismus und Diskriminierung zu überwinden, braucht es eine gerechte Verteilung von Rechten, Reichtum und Ressourcen. Wir wollen Teilhabe statt Integration. Denn Demokratie setzt Teilhabe im Alltag voraus. Wir wollen, dass alle Menschen, die hier leben, im Rahmen einer Teilhabeagenda rechtlich, politisch und sozial gleichgestellt werden. [...] Antirassismus ist für uns viel mehr als Symbolpolitik. (DIE LINKE 2021, 113)

[Per superare il razzismo e la discriminazione è necessaria un'equa suddivisione di diritti, ricchezza e risorse. Vogliamo partecipazione invece che integrazione. Infatti, la democrazia presuppone la partecipazione nel quotidiano. Vogliamo che tutte le persone che vivono qui siano equiparate nell'ambito dell'agenda partecipativa a livello giuridico, politico e sociale. L'antirazzismo è per noi qualcosa di più della politica dei simboli.]

In (9) DIE LINKE descrive con sostantivi e aggettivi chiave quella che è la propria politica e quindi l'identità di partito: il concetto di *Teilhabe* (partecipazione) indica la politica inclusiva sia a livello giuridico, politico che sociale (*rechtlich, politisch und sozial gleichgestellt*) volta a garantire pari diritti a tutti i cittadini, indipendentemente dalla loro origine. Inoltre, nella frase finale della citazione viene usato in maniera peggiorativa il sostantivo *Symbolpolitik* per indicare un tipo di politica, quella degli avversari (*Attitude_description*), che mette in atto delle determinate azioni per scatenare delle reazioni tra la popolazione, senza tuttavia portare concrete soluzioni al problema da risolvere e dalla quale DIE LINKE prende le distanze. In (10) DIE LINKE oppone in maniera netta la propria concezione politica, connotando il concetto di inclusione e ricollegandolo a quello di partecipazione che include tutti i tipi di persone; fa inoltre riferimento anche alla tutela delle minoranze linguistiche:

(10) Wir verstehen Inklusion als einen Prozess zum Abbau von gesellschaftlichen Ungleichheiten. Er bezieht sich auf all die Menschen, die von Teilhabe ausgeschlossen und an den Rand der Gesellschaft gedrängt werden: Menschen mit Behinderung, alte Menschen, Geflüchtete, Sinti**z*ze und Rom**n*ja, sprachliche und kulturelle Minderheiten, Menschen mit anderen Glaubensbekenntnissen und anderer sexueller Orientierung und viele mehr. (DIE LINKE 2021, 110)

[Intendiamo l'inclusione come un processo di decostruzione delle ineguaglianze sociali che si riferisce a tutte le persone escluse dalla partecipazione e che sono spinte ai margini della società: persone con disabilità, anziani, rifugiati, sinti e rom, minoranze linguistiche e culturali, persone di diverso credo religioso, orientamento sessuale e molti altri.]

5.3 Cultura

Strettamente collegata alle altre tematiche è quella della cultura, intesa per AfD in maniera esclusiva come la cultura tedesca in tutti i suoi aspetti, quindi come elemento costitutivo dell'identità (*Identity_scenario*). Nel paragrafo *Kultur* (AfD 2021, 158–160), AfD connota la Germania come una *Wirtschafts- und Kulturnation* (*Identity_scenario*) e prende in considerazione il tema della cultura sia per quello che riguarda la diffusione e la promozione della stessa all'estero, allo scopo di favorirne una migliore comprensione, sia e soprattutto

to per quello che riguarda la conservazione delle tradizioni e di un certo tipo di memoria culturale. In linea con la propria idea di Stato e nazione, AfD definisce la propria identità proprio attraverso l'importanza, accanto alla lingua e alla storia, connotate dall'aggettivo *deutsch*, della cultura:

(11) Unsere Identität ist geprägt durch unsere deutsche Sprache, unsere Werte, unsere Geschichte und unsere Kultur. Letztere sind eng verbunden mit dem Christentum, der Aufklärung, unseren künstlerischen und wissenschaftlichen Werken. Unsere Identität bestimmt die grundlegenden Werte, die von Generation zu Generation weitergegeben werden. Die deutsche Leitkultur beschreibt unseren Wertekonsens, der für unser Volk identitätsbildend ist und uns von anderen unterscheidet. Sie sorgt für den Zusammenhalt der Gesellschaft und ist Voraussetzung für das Funktionieren unseres Staates. Die gemeinschaftsstiftende Wirkung der deutschen Kultur ist Fundament unseres Grundgesetzes und kann nicht durch einen Verfassungspatriotismus ersetzt werden. Kulturrelativismus und Multikulturalismus führen zu einem Neben- und Gegeneinander von Parallelgesellschaften, denen es an gemeinsamen Werten für das Zusammenleben fehlt. (AfD 2021, 158)

[La nostra identità è plasmata attraverso la lingua tedesca, i nostri valori, la nostra storia e la nostra cultura; queste ultime sono strettamente collegate al Cristianesimo, all'Illuminismo, alle nostre opere artistiche e scientifiche. La nostra identità determina i valori fondanti che vengono trasmessi di generazione in generazione. La cultura guida tedesca descrive il nostro consenso di valori che è costitutivo dell'identità per il nostro popolo e ci distingue dagli altri. Provvede al mantenimento della società ed è presupposto per il funzionamento del nostro Stato. L'effetto creativo di comunità della cultura tedesca è il fondamento della nostra Legge Fondamentale e non può essere sostituito da un patriottismo costituzionale. Il relativismo culturale e il multiculturalismo portano alla convivenza e allo scontro di società parallele alle quali mancano i valori comuni per la convivenza.]

Questo passaggio contiene tutti gli elementi caratteristici del programma politico di AfD e l'idea della propria identità, espressi attraverso la ripetizione dell'aggettivo *deutsch* e dell'aggettivo possessivo *unser*, il pronome *uns* e il sostantivo *Volk* (Akel 2021, 320–325). L'identità tedesca è descritta in reciproco rapporto con i suoi valori fondanti (*grundlegend*) e con il Cristianesimo e l'Illuminismo. Viene definita anche come *Leitkultur* ovvero come la cultura guida che si oppone al multiculturalismo e alle sue conseguenze. Il termine *Leitkultur* ha valore sia denotativo che connotativo in quanto descrive il consenso di valori ed è *identitätsbildend* perché separa i tedeschi da un generale *andere*. Il ruolo costitutivo della cultura è evidenziato da verbi performativi come *prägen*, *sorgen*, attraverso definizioni come *Fundament unseres Grundgesetzes* che la oppongono al relativismo culturale e al multiculturalismo.

Nei paragrafi *Die Demokratie stärken* e *Kultur: Krisenfest, vielfältig und für alle zugänglich*, DIE LINKE pone l'attenzione su altre dimensioni della cultura, innanzitutto

(12) zur Wahrung und Weiterentwicklung der Identität, Sprache und Kultur der ethnischen Minderheiten sowie Minderheitenschutz im Grundgesetz. (DIE LINKE 2021, 119)

[la conservazione e lo sviluppo dell'identità, della lingua e della cultura delle minoranze linguistiche, così come la tutela delle minoranze nella Legge Fondamentale.]

Per DIE LINKE tutte le forme culturali e artistiche devono essere preservate perché *unverzichtbar* und *demokratierelevant*; pertanto, rimanda anche all'articolo della Legge Fondamentale (Art. 5, Abs. 3) che tutela la libertà culturale. Anche per DIE LINKE la cultura e l'arte sono alla base della società, aiutano inoltre la comprensione della diversità. Se per AfD la cultura è *identitätsstiftend*, per DIE LINKE costituisce il presupposto per il superamento delle disuguaglianze sociali ed è descritta da aggettivi quali *fortschrittlich*, *aufklärerisch* (13). Inoltre, attraverso unità lessicali come *unser gesellschaftliches Miteinander* ne viene evidenziata la dimensione dialogica, in netta opposizione all'idea di AfD, secondo la quale la cultura differenzia la popolazione tedesca da tutti gli altri individui (v. 11):

(13) Kunst und Kultur helfen uns, unterschiedliche Perspektiven auf unser gesellschaftliches Miteinander sowie auf Missstände zu werfen, deren Ursachen zu ergründen und sie zu hinterfragen – um uns in die Lage zu versetzen, solidarisch die Bedingungen für alle Menschen zu verbessern. An der Überwindung der sozialen Ungleichheit und aller kulturellen Unterdrückung mitzuwirken ist Aufgabe fortschrittlicher, aufklärerischer Kultur, deren Inhalt und Ziel ein humanistisches Menschenbild und die umfassende solidarische Entfaltung der assoziierten Individuen ist. DIE LINKE tritt für eine vielfältige, emanzipatorische und partizipative Kultur ein, die allen zugänglich und für alle erschwinglich ist. (DIE LINKE 2021, 125)

[La cultura e l'arte ci aiutano ad avere prospettive diverse sulla nostra convivenza sociale come sui fraintendimenti, ad esaminarne le cause e analizzarle criticamente, per porci nella condizione di migliorare in modo solidale le condizioni di tutti. Contribuire al superamento dell'ineguaglianza sociale e di tutta la pressione culturale è compito della cultura progressista, illuminista, il cui contenuto e scopo sono una visione umanistica dell'uomo e lo sviluppo globale e solidale degli individui in società. DIE LINKE promuove una cultura eterogenea, emancipatrice e partecipativa, accessibile e alla portata di tutti.]

6. Osservazioni conclusive

L'identità politica dei due partiti è delineata nei programmi elettorali nella loro intenzione, che sono appunto testi atti a favorirne la costruzione e rappresentazione, ma si mostra soprattutto in relazione a temi quali la formazione, la cultura e la politica migratoria. Le strategie linguistiche usate da entrambi i partiti si possono riassumere come segue:

- vengono utilizzati, seppur in diversa misura, gli stessi *frames* semantici che concentrano l'attenzione sulle azioni che i due partiti intraprenderanno in caso di vittoria elettorale (*Adjusting* e *Attempt_action_scenario*), descrivendo sé stessi in maniera estremamente positiva e incolpando gli avversari politici e l'attuale governo in carica dei vari problemi. Si aggiunge per AfD il *frame Fear* per il tipo di emozioni evocate;
- a questi *frames* è legato l'uso di un lessico carico emotivamente, connotato negativamente quando si descrivono le cause di determinate situazioni (es. 1, 5) o quando si

- parla, anche indirettamente, dei propri avversari politici nel tentativo di screditarli (es. *Symbolpolitik* in 9; *Attitude_description*);
- oltre all'uso di parole chiave, sia AfD che DIE LINKE si servono della ripetizione per rafforzare la propria argomentazione. Le parole chiave hanno una dimensione simbolica che crea inclusione e/o esclusione, contribuiscono alla raffigurazione della società creando in questo modo consenso morale e cognitivo che unisce gli individui permettendo loro di identificarsi in una collettività che li trascende (Koeppetsch 2019, 233–248);
 - nei passaggi di testo analizzati, la sintassi non è particolarmente articolata: accanto all'uso di frasi secondarie finali e consecutive, che sottolineano la dimensione performativa degli enunciati, le frasi sono brevi e assumono la forma di slogan, permettendo così una memorizzazione più veloce delle tematiche trattate da parte di possibili elettori.

Nel presentare la propria identità politica attraverso il programma elettorale AfD progetta un modello di società tedesca ancorata alle proprie tradizioni, alla propria storia e che si distingue nettamente da tutto ciò che non è considerato tedesco (in primis la questione migratoria e la politica dell'Unione Europea): tutti gli ambiti della società, a partire dal sistema scolastico, devono contribuire alla formazione di questa società. DIE LINKE esprime invece la propria identità progettando modelli di coesistenza culturale e una società inclusiva. Entrambi i partiti si considerano un gruppo omogeneo, prestano attenzione alla diversità, AfD attraverso un linguaggio escludente, DIE LINKE per mezzo di un linguaggio inclusivo. Gli aspetti linguistici analizzati mostrano per entrambi i partiti l'uso di una strategia argomentativa basata su un'opposizione dialettica tra positivo (tutto ciò che il partito rappresenta) e negativo (gli altri partiti politici di opposizione, i migranti, il razzismo ecc.). La costituzione della loro identità è legata alla percezione della realtà in un processo di identificazione e demarcazione a livello sociopolitico. Ne deriva un'immagine dell'identità non fissa, ma performativa e presentata nel processo di svolgimento e adattamento alla realtà sociale.

Con riferimento alla definizione iniziale degli obiettivi, si può affermare che: a) sia DIE LINKE che AfD usano un linguaggio retorico basato su una chiara profilazione di se stessi all'interno del panorama politico tedesco; b) sono programmi elettorali redatti in un momento di crisi a livello globale e di sfiducia nella politica, pertanto si prefiggono l'obiettivo di delineare in maniera chiara l'identità dei partiti, di cui c) influenzano i processi di formazione, facendo riferimento a tutti gli ambiti della vita umana.

In una prospettiva più ampia di ricerca, si ritiene interessante analizzare anche il linguaggio degli altri partiti politici tedeschi per vedere quali strategie linguistiche essi mettono in atto per costruire la propria identità, quali *frames*, e quali possano essere le possibili analogie e/o differenze con i partiti populistici.

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VALUE METAPHORS IN FILMS: A CORPUS-BASED ANALYSIS OF THE REPRESENTATION OF CORE VALUES IN AMERICAN MOVIES

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Metaphors are pervasive in everyday communication, shaping our understanding of abstract concepts and reflecting cultural norms. This paper investigates the role of metaphors in conveying values in the American Movie Corpus (Forchini 2021–), a collection of manually transcribed dialogues of 50 movies produced in the United States. Building upon the definitions of values by Kluckhohn (1951) and Schwartz (1992), the study explores how films mirror and transmit cultural beliefs. The study has two main goals: firstly, to reveal the key values that American movies communicate through language, and secondly, to examine how these values are represented through metaphors. To identify the core values, the study employed the Personal Values Dictionary (Ponizovskiy et al. 2020). A corpus-based approach was then used to uncover and analyse metaphorical patterns underpinning those values (Stefanowitsch 2007). The results suggest implications for domains such as intercultural communication, translation and second-language acquisition where deep understanding of the way reality is perceived in a different culture is crucial.

Keywords: Metaphors, Values, Personal Values Dictionary, Film Language, American Movies

1. Introduction

Metaphors – whether in written or spoken discourse, or even in visual representations – are integral components of our everyday interaction. Beyond their linguistic significance, metaphors play a pivotal role in shaping and reflecting the way we comprehend abstract concepts, thereby weaving connections between language, cognition, and culture. As vehicles of meaning, metaphors not only bridge the gap between abstract concepts and concrete understanding but also serve as mirrors that reflect and reinforce cultural norms, beliefs, and ideologies, as highlighted by Winter and Matlock (2017).

This paper focuses on the conceptualisation of values in American movies through metaphors. Kluckhohn (1951, 395) defines a value as “[a] conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action”. In a similar vein, Schwartz (1992) characterises values as desirable goals that a person pursues, and that remain unchanged across different situations that a person may be facing. Ultimately, values concern

motivation, not action and performance; they are the guiding principles in a person's life and each person assigns a degree of importance to each of these principles. Culture contributes to establishing the fundamental beliefs and ideals in an individual's life: culture shapes prescriptive behaviour, determining which actions are deemed commendable or reprehensible within a certain cultural community (Martocchio 2015).

Beyond their role in entertainment, films provide insights into the collective mindset of a society. Movies offer a valuable source for cultural understanding, shedding light on communication patterns, socially accepted conduct, and the foundational aspects of cultural principles. Language learners often turn to films as a means of enhancing language proficiency (Donaghy 2019; Forchini 2013, 2018), as they provide an authentic and engaging context for language use. Yet, films offer more than just a means of acquiring language skills: gaining a comprehensive understanding of the values underlying the movies can not only enhance language understanding, but also deepen cultural awareness (Tomlinson 2019).

This research addresses the crucial yet underexplored aspect of how values are intertwined with language in films. To this end, the study pursues two objectives: firstly, to shed light on the key values that American movies convey through language, and, secondly, to investigate how these values are conceptualised through metaphorical expressions. Understanding how metaphors conceptualise core values in American movies provides a unique lens through which to explore the representation of the cultural and social foundation of American society.

The study relies upon key concepts that stem from research in the fields of metaphor and film language. Section 2 and 3 explore two main dimensions respectively: first, the connection between metaphors and values, and second, the relation between films, values, and language. Section 4 presents the materials and the methods applied to carry out the study. Following that, Section 5 reports on the results of the analysis of key values portrayed in American movies and their recurring metaphorical patterns. Section 6 concludes by drawing final considerations regarding the fundamental aspects of the analysed values.

2. Metaphors and values

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) posits that metaphors serve as fundamental cognitive mechanisms that help us comprehend and reason about abstract concepts. In turn, these metaphors play a pivotal role in shaping our overall understanding of the world. As emphasised by Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 7), metaphorical expressions offer profound insights into the underlying metaphorical foundations of the concepts that underpin our daily activities. This theory contends, therefore, that metaphors extend beyond mere ornamental linguistic constructs; instead, they assume a fundamental role in influencing our thought processes, reasoning abilities, and perceptual experiences of the world.

Due to their abstract nature, values are challenging to define and comprehend directly; therefore, we tend to conceptualise abstract notions like values by mapping them onto familiar and tangible experiences. CMT provides a framework to explore how metaphors

enable us to conceptualise values by grounding them in concrete, embodied experiences through which they can be understood and communicated.

One important aspect of this theory is the concept of source and target domains. The source domain is a familiar and concrete concept that serves as the basis for understanding or conceptualising another, usually more abstract, concept (i.e. the target domain). The connection between a source domain and a target domain is conveyed through an expression structured as TARGET DOMAIN IS SOURCE DOMAIN. For example, in the metaphor TIME IS MONEY (Lakoff, Johnson 1980, 7), *money* is the source domain, which is a concrete and well-understood concept. The target domain is *time*, a more abstract concept that can be difficult to grasp fully. We can understand and reason about *time* by mapping the attributes, experiences, and structure of the source domain *money* onto it. The process of mapping involves identifying correspondences between the source and target domains. In the TIME IS MONEY metaphor, for instance, we map attributes of money (such as value and scarcity) onto the concept of time. This helps us conceptualise time as a valuable resource that should be used wisely and efficiently. The process of mapping enables us to grasp complex concepts by associating them with more readily understandable notions. It permits us to use our familiarity with concrete ideas to comprehend and discuss abstract concepts effectively.

Metaphors not only offer cognitive and linguistic mechanisms for rendering abstract values more concrete but also mirror and reinforce cultural norms, beliefs, and ideologies (Winter, Matlock 2017). As Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 22) remark, “[t]he most fundamental values in a culture will be coherent with the metaphorical structure of the most fundamental concepts in the culture”. Thus, metaphors are not universally fixed but can vary across cultures and linguistic communities; cultural variations play a significant role in shaping metaphorical conceptualisations of values.

Different cultures may prioritise certain metaphors over others or employ different metaphors to understand and express the same values due to variations in experiences, practices, and social norms. This can impact the way values are conceptualised and expressed within those cultures. For example, while the TIME IS MONEY metaphor is prevalent in many Western cultures, it is by no means universal. Another example is the conceptualisation of ‘more as better’, consistently with the MORE IS UP and GOOD IS UP spatialisation metaphors in the American culture (Lakoff, Johnson 1980, 22). This metaphor is grounded in our bodily experience of physical elevation connoting positivity. Generally, the primary orientations such as up-down, in-out, central-peripheral, and active-passive appear to be present across various cultures. However, the specific concepts aligned with these directions and the significance of these orientations can differ from one culture to another (Lakoff, Johnson 1980, 24).

3. *Films, values and language*

The other key consideration for this study concerns the relation between films, values and language. As products of mass culture, movies both reflect and shape social values,

cultural attitudes, customs and concerns (Beard 1994; Cloete 2017; Kubrak 2020). The representation of values in movies has long been a subject of interest within the domains of film studies, cultural analysis, and communication research (Kamei 2019; Jia 2014; Storey 2021; Supiarza et al. 2020). As Supiarza et al. (2020, 217) remark, “[f]ilm has become one of the most effective media in conveying ideological messages, [...] and values”.

Movies also shape people’s perceptions about other cultures (Bhugra 2003; Popa et al. 2021); thus, they can play a key role in the development of intercultural competence. The educational utility of films, particularly in teaching intercultural concepts and theories, has attracted significant attention from scholars (Bhawuk, Brislin 2000; Cardon 2010; Summerfield 1993). Researchers have focused on investigating the educational value of films while also exploring various ways in which films can enhance the process of learning. Cardon (2010, 151) remarks that “[f]ilms can be a valuable intellectual exercise in deciphering other cultures. Students observe plots and characters that can reveal communication processes, socially acceptable behaviours, and underlying cultural values”. As stated by Champoux (1999), films possess the capacity to captivate students, making them a potent tool to introduce complex theories and concepts in an entertaining manner. Films offer students the opportunity to engage with emotionally impactful experiences that diverge from typical classroom simulations. These experiences may even trigger a re-evaluation of personal values and self-perception (Champoux 1999).

Dunphy et al. (2008) emphasise that movies can effectively demonstrate, analyse, and potentially rectify behaviour and management within organisations. For instance, Gallos (1993) has emphasised the value of films in aiding the capacity to ‘reframe’ – that is, to thoroughly explore a situation from diverse perspectives. This concept has increasingly gained significance as a central focus within organisational and management education.

Visual arts and audiovisual media frequently employ metaphors, as demonstrated by various scholars (Bartsch 2010; Coëgnarts 2017; Forceville 2008; Kappelhoff, Müller 2011; Ortiz 2014; Yicai, Xueai 2021; Whittock 1990). In the study conducted by Dunat (2022), the focus revolves around exploring the conceptualisation of time within the context of film. Within the domain of Translation Studies, Alanisa and Munandar (2019) have investigated the translation strategies employed to render metaphors from English into Indonesian in the movies *Mulan* and *Moana*. In their study, Grabowski Aoki and Spagnol Simi dos Santos (2020) analyse the metaphors pertaining to leadership in the film *Chicken Run* and find that notions of freedom, teamwork, resilience, and leadership are conveyed creatively using metaphoric elements. Concerning the utilisation of metaphors in films as a means of conveying values and ideology, Basri and Ibrahim (2004) delve into the representation of women through metaphors in a selection of Malay films. Their work underscores that these films utilise metaphoric language to construct specific perceptions about women. From a communicative standpoint, the authors also contemplate the potential cultural implications of perpetuating metaphors that depict women in a manner that is misaligned with contemporary values.

As numerous studies on metaphors in movies have showcased, the impact of metaphors within films transcends mere verbal expressions. Coëgnarts and Kravanja (2012, 3) posit

that “filmmakers use embodied principles in the form of image schemas and conceptual metaphors to express abstract meaning to the spectator”. Notably, these metaphors are often employed to depict aspects of the human mind, thus offering viewers insights into characters’ thoughts and dreams (Reinerth 2016, 219). However, as the central aim of this paper revolves around examining the representation of values through metaphors in transcribed movie dialogues, this investigation will exclusively address metaphors conveyed through language, omitting other components like imagery and sound.

One key consideration for the present research concerns the relation between the language employed in movies and the language used in real-life interactions. Numerous studies (Al-Surmi 2012; Bednarek 2015; Forchini 2012, 2017, 2019; Quaglio 2009; Zago 2016) have demonstrated the linguistic and textual similarity between the language used in films and that of everyday conversations. Metaphors are a linguistic, as well as a conceptual phenomenon. Consequently, it can be assumed that the similarity existing between movie language and natural language extends to the use of metaphors.

4. *Materials and method*

The analysis was carried out on the American Movie Corpus (AMC) (Forchini 2021-), a corpus compiled by the AMC Team at the Faculty of Linguistic Sciences of Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (Milan). The corpus contains the manual orthographic transcriptions of the complete dialogues (560,473 tokens in total) from 50 movies produced in the United States of America. These films span various genres, including Action, Comedy, Drama, Romance, Fantasy, Thriller, and Animated films, among others, making them appealing to a wide range of audiences. Examples of films in the corpus are *The Blues Brothers* (by John Landis, 1980), *Forrest Gump* (by Robert Zemeckis, 1994), *The Devil Wears Prada* (by David Frankel, 2006), *Cars* (by John Lasseter and Joe Ranft, 2006), *The Avengers* (by Joss Whedon, 2012) and *Wonder* (by Stephen Chbosky, 2017)¹. The selection of movies for the corpus was random, covering a 50-year time span from 1959 to 2019. The chosen films aim to be representative of movie language, which is shaped in the different movies by geographical, cultural, social, and historical factors relating to the narratives and the characters. While American English is the predominant variety used by characters in the films, there are occasional instances of other varieties, such as British English, Indian English, and Australian English.

The analysis was conducted in two steps. First, the key values portrayed in American movies were identified. Subsequently, the metaphors associated with the key values were investigated. In the first step of the analysis, the study referred to the Personal Values Dictionary (PVD) (Ponizovskiy et al. 2020) to identify the key values expressed in the corpus. The basis of the PVD lies in Schwartz’s (1992) theory of fundamental human values. The theory outlines a classification system comprising ten distinct values: security, conformi-

¹ The complete list of the movies contained in the corpus and the transcription conventions are available at <http://www.americanmoviecorpus.net/>.

ty, tradition, benevolence, universalism, self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, and power (Schwartz 1992, 2012). Schwartz (1992, 2012) organises values along two opposite dimensions. The first dimension juxtaposes “openness to change” against “conservation” values (Schwartz 2012, 8). This dimension represents the tension between values that prioritise independent thinking, action, and emotions, as well as a readiness for change (e.g. self-direction, stimulation), and values that favour order, self-restraint, preservation of the past, and resistance to change (e.g. security, conformity, tradition). The second dimension involves “self-enhancement” against “self-transcendence” values and prioritises self-interest, success, and dominance over others (e.g. power and achievement) (Schwartz 1992, 43-44; 2012, 8). Hedonism encompasses elements of both openness to change and self-enhancement (Schwartz 2012, 8).

The PVD contains a total of 1,068 “value-laden words” (Ponizovskiy et al. 2020, 890) referring to the ten universal values identified by Schwartz (1992) and it is based on the notion that the words that refer to a particular value tend to co-occur in natural language when reference is made to that particular value, both explicitly and implicitly. As Ponizovskiy et al. (2020, 891) specify, “the [...] dictionary includes only those words that both theoretically represent the underlying value and consistently co-occur in natural language”. For example, the use and co-occurrence of value-related words such as ‘accord’, ‘adequately’, ‘appropriate’, ‘appropriately’, ‘authorities’, ‘authorization’, all point to the value of conformity (Ponizovskiy et al. 2020). The assumption at the basis of the PVD is that – when speaking or writing – people tend to refer more often to values that they personally consider more important (Bardi et al. 2008; Boyd et al. 2019; Tausczik, Pennebaker, 2010; Ponizovskiy et al. 2020). As Ponizovskiy et al. (2020, 898) point out, “the unprompted expression of values in language is a behavioural indicator of personal value priorities”. The PVD serves, therefore, as a tool for evaluating an individual’s value priorities by quantitatively analysing that person’s reference to values in natural language. The fact that the PVD was developed on American English makes it a particularly suitable reference tool for the present study. Moreover, the dictionary is designed for utilisation with word-counting software, which facilitates its integration with the Corpus-assisted Discourse Studies approach (Partington et al. 2013) used in the study. The online concordancer Sketch Engine (Kilgariff et al. 2004) was used to calculate the frequency of every value word in the PVD in order to identify the core values in the corpus.

To explore the conceptualisation of these core values, the next step of the analysis involved examining the metaphors associated with them. Within the context of CMT, a long-standing methodological concern has centred around the substantial dependence on researchers’ intuitions to compile expressions associated with a particular domain and subsequently categorise them according to their conceptual mappings. In order to limit this methodological weakness, the present study combines two methodological approaches: the Metaphorical Pattern Analysis method (MPA) introduced by Stefanowitsch (2004, 2007) and the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) developed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007). The combination of metaphor identification methods was validated in a

study conducted by Muelas-Gil (2023), which analysed a corpus of economic reports in English and Spanish.

The MPA method is a corpus-based method of metaphor identification that relies on quantitative and qualitative analysis of recurring metaphorical patterns. A “metaphorical pattern” is “a multi-word expression originating from a specific source domain (SD) into which one or more specific lexical item from a given target domain (TD) have been inserted” (Stefanowitsch 2007, 66). This method prescribes that, by means of the analysis of corpus data, instances of the target domain under investigation (e.g. ‘anger’, ‘happiness’, ‘fear’) are extracted and, subsequently, the metaphorical patterns associated with them are identified (Stefanowitsch 2007). The significant advantage of using MPA is that this method enables the researcher to quantitatively assess the significance of specific metaphorical patterns for particular lexical items.

The Word Sketch tool in Sketch Engine was used to identify the recurrent patterns containing instances of value-related words selected on the basis of their frequency and distribution in the corpus. Word Sketch presented patterns comprising modifiers, verbs, and prepositions associated with the target word, along with their respective frequency and typicality score (LogDice). In order to include all the recurrent patterns containing the different word forms of the value-related word, the lemmas were considered.

Since not all multi-word expressions containing lexemes from target domains in the corpus instantiate a metaphor, the recurring patterns also underwent qualitative analysis to identify the metaphorical expressions. The Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) (Pragglejaz Group 2007) was adopted to analyse the linguistic patterns by considering the context around them. To facilitate the extraction of the relevant segments of text from the corpus, the tools employed included the KWIC function within the concordancers Ant-Conc (Version 4.2.0) (Anthony 2022) and Sketch Engine. Following the MIP procedure, the patterns containing metaphors were identified based on semantic tension, i.e. the cognitive discrepancy that arises when a word/phrase is used metaphorically, thus expressing a meaning that conflicts with its literal meaning. The Macmillan and Cambridge English online dictionaries² were consulted for this step of the analysis.

A further qualitative analysis was conducted with the aim of identifying instances of implicit metaphor, wherein the value word was replaced by a pro-form or a generic term. For example, in a sentence from the corpus, “no I think that was the first thing that crossed your mind actually”, the word ‘thing’ is used in place of ‘thought’, so the pattern was considered as an instance of the conceptual metaphor A THOUGHT IS A MOVEABLE OBJECT (see Section 5.3). Finally, for each conceptual metaphor identified, the corpus was investigated again quantitatively, in order to obtain the number of occurrences of each metaphorical pattern instantiating that particular conceptual metaphor. The next section presents the results of the analysis.

² The online version of the Macmillan dictionary is available at www.macmillandictionary.com - <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>. The online version of the Cambridge dictionary is available at <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>.

5. Results

5.1 Core values conveyed in the AMC corpus

The raw frequency in the AMC corpus of each of the value-related word listed in the Personal Values Dictionary (PVD) was calculated. The total hits of all the value-related words referring to each of Schwartz's (2012) values (security, conformity, tradition, benevolence, universalism, self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, and power) was calculated. For example, the sum of the number of occurrences of the words 'afraid', 'alert', 'attention', 'barrier', 'calculation', 'calm', 'careful', 'catastrophic', 'caution', 'consequences', 'crisis', 'custody', 'damages', 'dangerous', etc. (Ponizovskiy et al. 2020) was calculated. The results provided an indication of how often the characters in the movies mention a certain value (e.g. in the case of the words above, to the value of security).

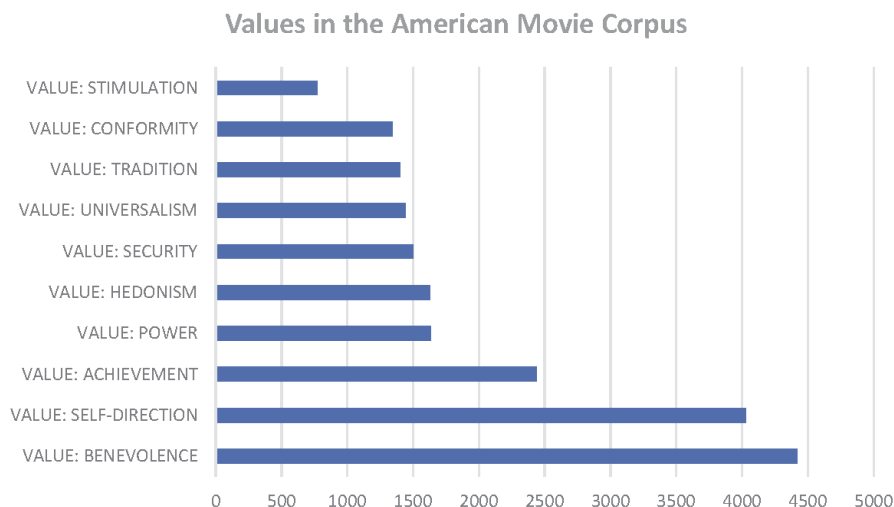
The results for each value based on the number of occurrences of the PVD value-related words in the corpus are reported in Table 1.

Table 1 - *Frequency of PVD words for each of Schwartz's (2012) values*

| <i>Value</i> | <i>Frequency of PVD value-related words</i> |
|----------------|---|
| Benevolence | 4,418 |
| Self-direction | 4,032 |
| Achievement | 2,441 |
| Power | 1,636 |
| Hedonism | 1,631 |
| Security | 1,500 |
| Universalism | 1,441 |
| Tradition | 1,399 |
| Conformity | 1,343 |
| Stimulation | 773 |

Based on the idea underlying the PVD, which posits that the spontaneous expression of certain value-related words is an indicator of individual value preferences, it was possible to calculate the relative significance attributed to each value in the corpus (see Graph 1).

Graph 1 - Reference to values in the American Movie Corpus



As Graph 1 shows, benevolence is the most frequently mentioned value in the corpus, accounting for 22%, closely followed by self-direction at 20%. In Schwartz's (1992, 11) definition, the underlying drive behind benevolence values is to maintain and improve the well-being of individuals with whom one frequently interacts on a personal level. Benevolence represents the higher order dimension of "self-transcendence", i.e. values that go beyond self-interest and advocate for the well-being of both nearby and distant individuals, as well as the natural world (Schwartz 1992, 44). The focus is therefore on the impact of one's actions on others.

As regards self-direction, Schwartz (1992, 5) remarks that "[t]he defining goal of this value type is independent thought and action – choosing, creating, exploring". Self-direction represents the higher order dimension "openness to change". It organises values based on how much they drive individuals to pursue their own intellectual and emotional passions exploring unpredictable and uncertain paths. This is in contrast with the inclination to maintain the existing state of affairs, along with the stability it offers in relationships with close individuals, institutions, and customs (Schwartz 1992, 43). Values oriented towards openness to change signify a need for exploration and embracing new experiences and opportunities.

5.2 Metaphorical patterns for the key values in the corpus

The focus of the subsequent part of the study centred on the values of benevolence and self-direction, given their significance in the corpus. The MPA method developed by Stefanowitsch (2004, 2007) was applied to identify and analyse the metaphors associated with them.

As the MPA method prescribes, words that pertained to the target domain were investigated for recurring metaphorical patterns. Based on the criteria of frequency (occurring 100 times or more) and distribution (occurring in 35 films or more) within the corpus, the PVD value-related words that were selected for further investigation are: ‘need’ (frequency 874; range 50), ‘love’ (f 676; r 49), ‘help’ (f 432; r 50), ‘care’ (f 210; r 49), ‘thought’ (f 436; r 50), ‘idea’ (f 253; r 49), ‘mind’ (f 244; r 47), ‘plan’ (f 130; r 36). The words ‘need’, ‘love’, ‘help’ and ‘care’ express the value of benevolence, while the words ‘thought’, ‘idea’, ‘mind’ and ‘plan’ reflect the value of self-direction. Since the aim was to shed light on the conceptualisation of abstract concepts through metaphors, two words referring to human beings (‘mom’ and ‘friend’) were excluded from the analysis, despite their high frequency in the corpus. The patterns formed by the modifiers, verbs, prepositions of the value-related word were extracted with the aid of Sketch Engine.

A total of 172 different potential metaphorical patterns were extracted for the selected value-related words. These patterns were then examined manually through an in-depth exploration of concordance lines and broader sections of text, in order to identify and analyse the metaphorical mappings. The Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) was applied (Pragglejaz Group 2007), so as to pinpoint instances where semantic tension emerged, enabling a differentiation between a word’s metaphorical and non-metaphorical meanings.

5.2.1 Metaphorical patterns for the key value of ‘benevolence’

As mentioned above, the analysis concerning the conceptualisation of the key value of benevolence was carried out on the following value-related words: ‘need’, ‘love’, ‘help’ and ‘care’. Table 2 illustrates the conceptual metaphors (CM) which were obtained for the value word *need* based on the metaphorical patterns (MP) that were extracted from the corpus (the number of occurrences of the examples is indicated in square brackets).

Table 2 - *Conceptual metaphors for the value-related word ‘need’*

| CM | Examples of MP | Total n. of occurrences of CM |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| A NEED IS AN ILLNESS (FULFILLING A NEED IS CURING AN ILLNESS) | <i>cure a need</i> [1]; <i>in desperate need</i> [5] | 6 |
| A NEED IS AN OBJECT | <i>have no need</i> [1] | 3 |
| A NEED IS A CONTAINER / PLACE | <i>in need</i> [3] | 3 |
| A NEED IS A HUMAN BEING / A SMALL CHILD | <i>childish need</i> [1]; <i>oppressed need</i> [1] | 2 |

The metaphors conceptualising ‘need’ in the corpus portray it as varying in nature, generally as a negative aspect of human experience. The most frequent metaphor expressing the concept of ‘need’ is the metaphor A NEED IS AN ILLNESS, which conveys the idea that needs require attention and care, similarly to how an illness demands treatment. This con-

cept is also conveyed through the A NEED IS A HUMAN BEING/SMALL CHILD metaphor. A NEED IS AN OBJECT exemplifies an ontological metaphor, which represents a manner of conceiving “events, activities, emotions, ideas, etc., as entities and substances” (Lakoff, Johnson 1980: 25) and conveys the idea that a need is something tangible. This idea becomes even more visual through the CONTAINER/PLACE metaphor which suggests that a situation of need is something a person would want to be out of.

Table 3 illustrates the metaphors that conceptualise the idea of ‘love’ in the corpus.

Table 3 - *Conceptual metaphors for the value-related word ‘love’*

| <i>CM</i> | <i>Examples of MP</i> | <i>Total n. of occurrences of CM</i> |
|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| LOVE IS A CONTAINER / PLACE | <i>in love</i> [70]; <i>love is amazing</i> [1] | 71 |
| FALLING IN LOVE IS AN ACCIDENT | <i>fall in love</i> [28] | 28 |
| LOVE IS A HUMAN BEING | <i>keep love alive</i> [1]; <i>love is blind</i> ; <i>love [...] can save</i> [1]; <i>fight love</i> [1] | 5 |
| LOVE IS A HIDDEN OBJECT | <i>lose love</i> [1]; <i>find love</i> [1]; <i>secret love</i> [1] | 3 |
| LOVE IS A NUTRIENT | <i>sweet love</i> [1]; <i>amazing love</i> [1] | 3 |
| LOVE IS AN ACTIVITY | <i>love is about + Verb Phrase</i> [2] | 2 |
| LOVE IS A JOURNEY | <i>all-time love of your life</i> [1]; <i>first love</i> [1] | 2 |
| LOVE IS SOUND | <i>love is [...] a shout</i> [1]; <i>love came to me [...] a voice</i> <i>filled with harmony</i> [1] | 2 |
| LOVE IS WAR | <i>fight love</i> [1] | 1 |
| LOVE IS THE SKY | <i>star-crossed love</i> [1] | 1 |
| LOVE IS A FAITH | <i>believe in love</i> [1] | 1 |

The wide range of ways in which ‘love’ is conceptualised suggests that the corpus includes a diverse array of perspectives on love, possibly reflecting individual viewpoints or varying interpretations of the concept. The metaphor LOVE IS A CONTAINER / PLACE is the most frequent conceptual metaphor with 71 instances. This implies that love is seen as something tangible and a definable space where a person is immersed. The metaphor FALLING IN LOVE IS AN ACCIDENT correlates with this conceptual representation of love. It is the second most frequent metaphor with 28 occurrences, and it implies that the view of love that is conveyed is that of something that happens unexpectedly and a force beyond control. It suggests that the idea of love is perceived as something outside of conscious decision-making, emphasising the element of surprise or chance. The metaphor LOVE IS A HUMAN BEING occurs 5 times, which suggests that some level of agency or personification

is attributed to love. Other metaphors have limited occurrences. A few of these, such as LOVE IS WAR, were also underscored by Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 49).

Table 4 reports on the conceptual metaphors that express the concept of ‘help’.

Table 4 - *Conceptual metaphors for the value-related word ‘help’*

| <i>CM</i> | <i>Examples of MP</i> | <i>Total n. of occurrences of CM</i> |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| HELP IS AN OBJECT/A TOOL | <i>X need help</i> [31]; <i>X use help</i> [3]; <i>get help</i> [2] | 71 |
| HELP IS A POSSESSION / HELPING SOMEONE IS GIVING AN OBJECT / RECEIVING HELP IS BEING GIVEN AN OBJECT | <i>X’s help</i> [1]; <i>your help</i> [24]; <i>our help</i> [2]; <i>my help</i> [2] | 29 |
| HELP IS A CONTAINER; HELPING SOMEONE IS TAKING THAT PERSON OUT OF A CONTAINER | <i>help out</i> [7] | 7 |
| HELP IS A HUMAN BEING | <i>X was a huge help</i> [1]; <i>X has been a [...] big help</i> [1] | 2 |

The most frequent metaphorical patterns realise the metaphor HELP IS AN OBJECT/A TOOL, which maps the abstract concept of ‘help’ onto the concrete domain of objects or tools. The prevalence of this metaphor in the corpus suggests that the understanding of ‘help’ is shaped by our experiences with physical objects and tools that assist us in achieving certain goals. This prominence further underscores that the notion of help is often framed as a practical instrument for resolving issues and overcoming obstacles. As the table shows, ‘help’ is also frequently conceptualised as a possession, thus entailing that help is seen as a valuable resource that can be exchanged between individuals. The metaphor conveys, therefore, a transactional understanding of help, which is represented as something that can be owned, shared and transferred.

The conceptualisation of help as a CONTAINER and the act of helping as removing someone from that container suggests that help is understood as a means of rescue from a difficult situation or constraint and as a way of relieving someone from their troubles. The metaphor HELP IS A HUMAN BEING, albeit less frequent, interestingly provides a different conceptualisation of the idea of help. By mapping the concept of help onto the human domain, this metaphor emphasises the interpersonal nature of assistance, suggesting that help is understood as a personal connection, involving direct interaction between individuals.

Table 5 reports on the conceptual metaphors identified for the value-related word ‘care’.

Table 5 - *Conceptual metaphors for the value-related word 'care'*

| <i>CM</i> | <i>Examples of MP</i> | <i>Total n. of occurrences of CM</i> |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| CARE IS AN OBJECT | <i>take care of</i> [61]; <i>have care</i> [1] | 68 |
| CARING IS GIVING A PART OF SOMETHING TO SOMEONE ELSE | <i>sharing is caring</i> [3] | 3 |
| CARE IS A COMMODITY | <i>afford care</i> [1]; <i>be entitled to care</i> [1] | 2 |
| CARE IS A COVER | <i>under [your] care</i> [1] | 1 |

The prevailing metaphor is CARE IS AN OBJECT, implying that care is perceived as tangible, concrete, and potentially something that can be owned. The entailment for this metaphor is that BENEFITING FROM SOMETHING IS RECEIVING AN OBJECT. This conceptualisation is further reinforced through the metaphor CARE IS A COMMODITY metaphor, which also entails that BENEFITING FROM SOMETHING IS BUYING AN OBJECT. In this sense, care is treated as a transactional commodity, where individuals may expect reciprocation or compensation for providing care.

As regards the metaphor CARING IS GIVING A PART OF SOMETHING TO SOMEONE ELSE, this can be seen as deriving from correlation in experience, whereby GIVING AN OBJECT TO SOMEONE ELSE IS CARING FOR THEM. In this sense, care is understood as a process of sharing, implying that care involves selflessness, empathy, and the act of giving oneself or one's resources to meet the needs or well-being of others. The metaphor CARE IS A COVER reveals that care is sometimes perceived, though not as often, as a protective shield or a mode of protection. It implies that care is a means of shielding someone from harm or providing a barrier against negative experiences.

5.2.2 Metaphorical patterns for the key value of 'self-direction'

This section reports on the conceptual metaphors for the key value of 'self-direction' that were identified in the AMC corpus. As previously mentioned, the analysis focused on the following value-related words: 'thought', 'idea', 'mind' and 'plan'. Table 6 outlines the metaphors conceptualising the concept of 'thought'.

Table 6 - *Conceptual metaphors for the value-related word 'thought'*

| CM | Examples of MP | Total n. of occurrences of CM |
|--|--|-------------------------------|
| A THOUGHT IS A POSSESSION | <i>your thoughts</i> [3]; <i>my thoughts</i> [2]; <i>X had a thought</i> [3] | 8 |
| A THOUGHT IS A MOVEABLE OBJECT | <i>share thoughts</i> [1]; <i>send good thoughts</i> [2]; <i>thought passes through X's brain</i> [1]; <i>thought has crossed X's mind</i> [1] | 6 |
| THINKING SOMETHING IS GIVING AN OBJECT TO THAT THING | <i>give thought to something</i> [3] | 3 |
| KIND THOUGHTS ARE HIGH QUALITY OBJECTS | <i>good thoughts</i> [2] | 2 |
| A THOUGHT IS AN OBJECT MADE UP OF PARTS | <i>a coherent thought</i> [1] | 1 |
| A THOUGHT IS A COMMODITY | <i>it's the thought that counts</i> [1] | 1 |
| A THOUGHT IS A WRITTEN TEXT | <i>read your thoughts</i> [1] | 1 |
| A THOUGHT IS A SOUND | <i>hear your thoughts</i> [1] | 1 |

The most frequent conceptual metaphor is A THOUGHT IS A POSSESSION. This suggests that individuals have ownership and control over their thoughts and are free to shape their own perspectives and decisions. This idea is further strengthened by means of the A THOUGHT IS A COMMODITY metaphor, which indicates that thoughts are viewed as a valuable resource.

The OBJECT ontological metaphor underscores specific facets of the concept of 'thought'. The most frequent, which is brought to the forefront through the metaphor A THOUGHT IS A MOVEABLE OBJECT, conveys the idea that thoughts can be freely manipulated and transported, as individuals have the agency to control and direct their thoughts according to their own will or intentions. Through the metaphor A THOUGHT IS AN OBJECT MADE UP OF PARTS, thoughts are conceptualised as complex entities composed of various elements or components, implying that individuals have the capacity to analyse, dissect, and assemble their thoughts, thus allowing for deeper understanding and independent thought processes.

The WRITTEN TEXT metaphor conceptualises thoughts through written communication. This potentially implies that the ability to think and convey ideas in a coherent and structured manner, similarly to the style of written text is valued. The SOUND metaphor implies that thoughts are also conceptualised as audible sounds, which emphasises the importance of being able to articulate and share one's thoughts verbally.

As regards the value-related word 'idea', Table 7 illustrates the conceptual metaphors that were identified.

Table 7 - Conceptual metaphors for the value-related word 'idea'

| CM | Examples of MP | Total n. of occurrences of CM |
|--|--|-------------------------------|
| AN IDEA IS A POSSESSION | <i>Adam's idea</i> [1]; <i>X got an idea</i> [13]; <i>your idea</i> [7]; <i>her idea</i> [1]; <i>our idea</i> [1]; <i>his idea</i> [2]; <i>my idea</i> [5]; <i>have no idea</i> [86]; <i>whose idea</i> [1]; <i>their idea</i> [1] | 114 |
| REASONABLE IDEAS ARE HIGH QUALITY OBJECTS | <i>good/better idea</i> [27] | 38 |
| AN IDEA IS A LIVING ORGANISM | <i>crazy idea</i> [1]; <i>love the idea</i> [2]; <i>fancy the idea</i> [1]; <i>this whole idea was hatched</i> [1]; <i>like the idea</i> [7]; <i>I'll give that idea a smile</i> [1] | 14 |
| REASONABLE IDEAS ARE BIG OBJECTS | <i>great idea</i> [12] | 12 |
| AN IDEA IS AN OBJECT | <i>like the idea</i> [7] | 7 |
| AN IDEA IS AN OBJECT MADE UP OF PARTS | <i>whole idea</i> [6]; <i>entire idea</i> [1] | 7 |
| AN IDEA IS A COMMODITY | <i>dollar idea</i> [2]; <i>billion dollar idea</i> [1]; <i>stole our idea</i> [1]; <i>idea is [...] worth millions</i> [1] | 6 |
| UNREASONABLE IDEAS ARE LOW QUALITY OBJECTS | <i>bad idea</i> [3]; <i>horrible idea</i> [1] | 5 |
| UNDERSTANDING SOMETHING IS RECEIVING AN OBJECT | <i>get an accurate idea</i> [1] | 3 |
| AN IDEA IS A LIGHT SOURCE | <i>bright idea</i> [1] | 1 |
| AN IDEA IS A SUBSTANCE | <i>cool idea</i> [1] | 1 |

The metaphors conceptualising ideas as OBJECTS/POSSESSIONS/COMMODITIES/SUBSTANCES suggest that ideas have value and can be owned or traded. Self-direction tends to be represented as a way to assert ownership over one's ideas and to take responsibility for their development and implementation.

As the table reports, reasonable ideas are seen as HIGH-QUALITY/BIG OBJECTS, while unreasonable ideas are conceived as LOW-QUALITY OBJECTS; this implies a recognition of the importance of critical thinking and the ability to discern between good and bad ideas. These metaphors are in line with the UP-DOWN spatialisation metaphors which, as described by Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 22), are profoundly ingrained in a certain cultural framework. Here, the idea that "more is better" aligns with the concepts of MORE IS UP and GOOD IS UP.

The metaphor AN IDEA IS A LIVING ORGANISM suggests that ideas are endowed with human-like characteristics, allowing them to be assessed, admired, or even disliked. The

metaphor UNDERSTANDING SOMETHING IS RECEIVING AN OBJECT suggests that knowledge can be acquired and expanded through personal effort. The LIGHT SOURCE metaphor expresses the notion that ideas illuminate and guide individuals' thinking and actions.

Several of the metaphors found in the corpus (AN IDEA IS A LIVING ORGANISM, AN IDEA IS A COMMODITY, AN IDEA IS A LIGHT SOURCE) align with the conceptualisation of 'idea' as delineated also in the work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 47-48).

The conceptual metaphors identified in the AMC corpus for 'mind' are reported in Table 8.

Table 8 - *Conceptual metaphors for the value-related word 'mind'*

| CM | Examples of MP | Total n. of occurrences of CM |
|--|--|-------------------------------|
| THE MIND IS A CONTAINER | <i>come from minds</i> [1]; <i>out of your minds</i> [10]; <i>crossed your mind</i> [3]; <i>in mind</i> [6]; <i>looked inside my mind</i> [1]; <i>go through your mind</i> [1] | 22 |
| NOT BEING REASONABLE IS BEING OUT OF THE CONTAINER | <i>out of your minds</i> [10] | 10 |
| THE MIND IS AN OBJECT | <i>little mind</i> [1]; <i>lost their minds</i> [5]; <i>a lot on my mind</i> [3]; <i>messed with my mind</i> [1]; <i>take my mind off X</i> [1]; <i>read your mind</i> [7]; <i>change your mind</i> [6]; <i>blows her mind</i> [2]; <i>put your mind to it</i> [3] | 9 |
| THE MIND IS A WRITTEN TEXT | <i>read your mind</i> [7] | 7 |
| FORMING A NEW OPINION THAT IS DIFFERENT FROM THE PREVIOUS ONE IS REPLACING AN OBJECT | <i>change your mind</i> [6] | 6 |
| THE MIND IS A HIDDEN OBJECT | <i>lose their minds</i> [5] | 5 |
| THE MIND IS A MOVEABLE OBJECT | <i>take my mind off her</i> [1]; <i>put your mind to it</i> [3] | 4 |
| THE MIND IS A LIGHT OBJECT | <i>blows her mind</i> [1] | 2 |
| CONTROL OF THE MIND IS RIGHT (i.e. NOT LEFT) | <i>get your mind right</i> [2] | 2 |
| THE MIND IS A SUBSTANCE / LEARNING NEW THINGS IS EXPANDING A SUBSTANCE | <i>expand her mind</i> [2] | 2 |

| <i>CM</i> | <i>Examples of MP</i> | <i>Total n. of occurrences of CM</i> |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| THE MIND IS A LIGHT SOURCE | <i>brightest minds</i> [1] | 1 |
| INTELLIGENT MINDS ARE HIGH QUALITY OBJECTS | <i>best minds</i> [1] | 1 |
| DECIDING SOMETHING IS UP / DECIDING SOMETHING IS PRODUCING | <i>made her mind up</i> [1] | 1 |

The CONTAINER metaphor is the most frequent; it emphasises that thoughts and ideas are contained in the mind, thus implying that individuals have control over them. This is consistent with the metaphor NOT BEING REASONABLE IS BEING OUT OF THE CONTAINER, which suggests that the ability to direct one's thoughts in a way that is reasonable and coherent is valued in this culture.

The mind is also frequently conceptualised through the ontological metaphor THE MIND IS AN OBJECT, which has various entailments. Firstly, seeing the mind as an object implies that individuals can exercise control over their own thoughts and decisions. As an object, the mind can also be MOVEABLE, LIGHT, and it can be REPLACED. These entailments convey the idea that adaptability, flexibility in thinking and adjusting one's thoughts and perspectives to new information or circumstances are valued. The orientational metaphors CONTROL OF THE MIND IS RIGHT and DECIDING SOMETHING IS UP, as well as the metaphors REASONABLE IDEAS ARE HIGH QUALITY OBJECTS and DECIDING SOMETHING IS PRODUCING reinforce this conceptualisation. Consistently with the above, not being reasonable is seen as BEING OUT OF THE CONTAINER, and not being able to think logically and coherently is represented through the metaphor of the HIDDEN OBJECT.

Table 9 reports on the conceptual metaphors that were identified in the corpus for the value-related word 'plan'.

Table 9 - *Conceptual metaphors for the value-related word 'plan'*

| <i>CM</i> | <i>Examples of MP</i> | <i>Total n. of occurrences of CM</i> |
|------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| A PLAN IS AN OBJECT | <i>all part of the plan</i> [1]; <i>I don't like the plan</i> [2]; <i>create a [...]</i> plan [1]; <i>make plans</i> [1]; <i>great plan</i> [2]; <i>big plan</i> [1]; <i>little plan</i> [1]; <i>my/your/her/their plan</i> | 43 |
| A PLAN IS A POSSESSION | <i>my</i> [4]; <i>your plan</i> [12]; <i>her</i> [2]; <i>their plan</i> [1] | 19 |
| A PLAN IS A MACHINE | <i>plan has failed</i> [2]; <i>the plan worked</i> [3]; <i>all part of the plan</i> [1] | 6 |

| <i>CM</i> | <i>Examples of MP</i> | <i>Total n. of occurrences of CM</i> |
|-------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| A PLAN IS A HUMAN BEING | <i>genius plan</i> [1]; <i>the plan says</i> [1]; <i>the sanity of the plan</i> [1]; <i>I don't like the plan</i> [2] | 5 |
| A GOOD PLAN IS BIG | <i>great plan</i> [2]; <i>big plan</i> [1] | 3 |
| A PLAN IS A WRITTEN TEXT | <i>misread the plan</i> [2]; <i>an earlier version of the plan</i> [1] | 3 |
| A PLAN IS A PATH | <i>go off the plan</i> [1]; <i>get in the way of your plans</i> [1] | 2 |
| A GOOD PLAN IS A LIGHT SOURCE | <i>brilliant plan</i> [1] | 1 |

The most frequent metaphor is the ontological metaphor *A PLAN IS AN OBJECT*. This metaphor portrays plans as tangible, manipulable objects. This implies that plans can be possessed (*A PLAN IS A POSSESSION* is the second most frequent metaphor), controlled, and modified and suggests that individuals have the freedom to direct and adjust their plans according to their own preferences (e.g. ‘create a plan’).

The *OBJECT* metaphor is elaborated further in the corpus. A plan is also conceived with greater specificity as a machine, which emphasises the systematic and structured nature of plans. The *HUMAN BEING* metaphor suggests that plans are perceived as having human-like qualities such as agency, autonomy, and rationality. This metaphor conveys the idea that individual decision-making and the ability to shape and direct sound plans is valued in this culture. A less frequent conceptualisation of ‘plan’ is *A PLAN IS A PATH*, whereby a plan is understood as a journey or route to follow. The *WRITTEN TEXT* metaphor consistently suggests that plans have an organised structure that provides guidance and direction. A good plan is conceptualised by means of both size (*A GOOD PLAN IS BIG*), aligning with the “more is better” concept as discussed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 22) and illumination (*A GOOD PLAN IS A LIGHT SOURCE*), drawing on the idea – based on experience – that light offers guidance and clarity.

6. Discussion and concluding remarks

The first aim of the paper was to identify the key values expressed through language in American movies. The analysis found that benevolence and self-direction are the most frequently mentioned values in the corpus. They refer to – respectively – the two higher order dimensions of self-transcendence, i.e. prioritising the welfare of others (Schwartz 1992, 44), and openness to change, i.e. favouring independent thought, action, and emotions (Schwartz 1992, 5).

After identifying the two core values, the analysis sought to shed light on the conceptualisation of these values through metaphors. The focus was placed on metaphorical patterns that incorporated words reflective of benevolence and self-direction.

As regards benevolence, the data show that the American movies place an emphasis on personal connection and empathy between individuals, kindness, nurturing relationships, and support for others. Acts of care and assistance are seen as essential and are represented in the movies as powerful sources of support and nurturance.

This was revealed particularly through the analysis of the metaphorical patterns containing the value-related words 'care' and 'help'; these concepts are prominent in the films and the acts of caring and helping are highly regarded. Care and help are both metaphorically conceptualised most frequently as an OBJECT and a TOOL (e.g. "I will take care"; "I could use some help"). The high occurrence of these ontological metaphors indicates that care and help are seen as something tangible that has value, can be offered to those in need, or exchanged and compensated.

Love is represented in the movies as a force that provides protection, and falling in love is seen as a transformative experience. The metaphor LOVE IS A CONTAINER/A PLACE (e.g. "I was never in love") is the most frequent metaphor for love. This suggests that love is also shown as something that can provide containment and, ultimately, a sense of safety and protection.

The metaphor FALLING IN LOVE IS AN ACCIDENT (e.g. "if you hadn't fallen in love") is moderately frequent. This metaphor suggests that love is seen as an unexpected and uncontrollable event. It implies that love can happen spontaneously, without deliberate intention and lies beyond an individual's control. While this may not directly speak to the value of benevolence, it does indicate that love is represented as an unexpected and transformative experience in the American movies.

With relation to the value of benevolence, the metaphor LOVE IS A HUMAN BEING (e.g. "keep love alive") seems to reflect the belief that love has qualities and characteristics similar to those of a person, such as the ability to care, understand, and support. Through the personification of love, the value of empathy, compassion, and interpersonal connection as essential elements of benevolence is accentuated.

The fact that benevolence is seen as essential for an individual's well-being is reflected in the LOVE IS A NUTRIENT metaphor (e.g. "my sweet love"). Just as nutrients are vital for physical health, benevolence is considered necessary for maintaining emotional health and overall happiness, suggesting that it is a fundamental aspect of individual and communal well-being.

At the same time, the metaphor LOVE IS A HIDDEN OBJECT (e.g. "love is simply lost") also points to another aspect of benevolence that is represented in the movies: the idea that it might not always be obvious or openly shown. Just as finding a hidden object takes effort, recognising benevolence could demand observing and understanding subtle cues.

The data also show that benevolence towards needs is valued in this culture to some extent. The metaphors A NEED IS AN ILLNESS/A HUMAN BEING/A SMALL CHILD (e.g. "born of childish need"; "the hardest part was curing that oppressed need of yours") suggest that needs are perceived as something that requires attention and care, similarly to how an illness demands treatment. These metaphors imply that needs are seen as deserving of assistance, but they also suggest that fulfilling somebody's needs may require effort and resources.

Regarding the other core value that emerged from the study, i.e., self-direction, the analysis revealed that American movies tend to emphasise an individual's ability to control and shape their own thoughts and beliefs. Metaphors like *THE MIND IS A CONTAINER*, *THE MIND IS AN OBJECT* and *THE MIND IS A WRITTEN TEXT* (e.g. "I'll keep that in mind"; "this is blowing my mind"; "I can read your mind") underscore that the mind is conceptualised as a repository for thoughts and ideas, while the metaphor *CONTROL OF THE MIND IS RIGHT* (e.g. "what you need is time to get your mind right") suggests that American films promote a positive perspective on individuals' autonomy and self-control in governing their thoughts and actions. Consistently with this view, the metaphors *REASONABLE IDEAS ARE HIGH-QUALITY/BIG OBJECTS* (e.g. "I've got a better idea"; "it's a great idea") and *DECIDING SOMETHING IS UP/PRODUCING* (e.g. "when she made her mind up about something") also place an emphasis on the importance of critical thinking and sound reasoning. Conversely, through the metaphors *NOT BEING REASONABLE IS BEING OUT OF THE CONTAINER* (e.g. "you're out of your mind how are you gonna get away with this") and *UNREASONABLE IDEAS ARE LOW QUALITY OBJECTS* (e.g. "that's a horrible idea please don't do that") the American movies suggest that deviating from rationality is undesirable.

The data also show an emphasis on understanding (*UNDERSTANDING SOMETHING IS RECEIVING AN OBJECT*) (e.g. "so that you know everyone here could uh get an accurate idea of what we're talking about") and forming new opinions (*FORMING A NEW OPINION THAT IS DIFFERENT FROM THE PREVIOUS ONE IS REPLACING AN OBJECT*) (e.g. "for some reason you change your mind"). This suggests that the movies emphasise the significance of personal drive and self-direction when it comes to acquiring knowledge, growing intellectually, and remaining open to new viewpoints. The metaphors conceptualising a plan as *AN OBJECT*, *A MACHINE*, *A PATH*, *A WRITTEN TEXT*, and *A LIGHT SOURCE* (e.g. "we need a plan"; "my plan is working"; "when you're gonna go off the plan"; "there's no misreading the plan when it comes to you"; "your brilliant plan has failed") consistently convey the idea that individuals are expected to actively shape their own lives, set goals, and proactively work towards achieving them. Overall, the data reveal that the key aspect in the concept of self-direction is a sense of control and independence; this places the responsibility on individuals to proactively guide their decisions and actions.

It is important to acknowledge that the outcomes of the present study have been inherently shaped by the composition of the AMC corpus. This corpus includes the dialogues from movies designed for various target audiences and spanning diverse cinematic genres, historical periods and socio-cultural settings. All these elements can potentially influence the values that are communicated in a movie, as well as their conceptualisation through metaphors. Studies conducted on more narrowly focused corpora, whether in terms of time frame, setting or genre, may, therefore, provide partly diverging results. Moreover, the AMC includes films spanning a fifty-year period that were examined in the present study from a synchronic perspective. Future research adopting a diachronic approach could provide valuable insights into changes over time regarding the prominence of certain values over others.

While recognising these limitations, the present study offers an insight into core cultural aspects of American society as reflected in cinema. The prominence of benevolence underscores the importance of personal bonds, empathy, and the act of providing care and support to others. The fundamental role of love in individual and communal well-being is also emphasised, along with its portrayal as a transformative phenomenon. Additionally, the focus on self-direction, critical thinking, and personal drive sheds light on the ideal of autonomy and control over one's thoughts and actions represented in American movies. These insights can provide a foundation for further exploration of value metaphors in other cultural contexts and languages, which could also reveal whether there is a certain degree of universality across languages concerning the conceptualisation of values. In an audience studies perspective, further research could explore and compare the perceptions of value metaphors among viewers with different cultural backgrounds.

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LANGUAGE CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY PALESTINIAN POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS IN ACADEMIC WRITTEN DISCOURSE

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This study aims to examine the challenges posed by academic written discourse encountered by postgraduate students at a Palestinian university. It mainly addresses the challenges that students face from their own perspective and from that of the faculty members. Data were collected from 87 postgraduate students enrolled in postgraduate programs from various disciplines. A 14-item questionnaire was used to answer the two research questions of the study. The data extracted for the questionnaire were complemented by semi-structured in-depth interviews with faculty members. Responses to the questionnaire were statistically processed using the (SPSS) software, while a thematic analysis approach was adopted to analyze the data. The questionnaire's results revealed that postgraduate students find academic style the most challenging aspect of academic writing. Moreover, the study revealed that there are no statistically significant differences in the level of the challenging aspects of academic writing based on the variables of academic degree type, year of study, and gender. The interviews' results demonstrated that the most problematic aspects of written academic discourse include insufficient proficiency in grammar, inappropriate academic style, and weak argument.

Keywords: Writing Challenges, Postgraduate Students, Academic Written Discourse, Academic Style

1. Introduction

Higher education in Palestine has witnessed vital changes during the last few years. The number of students joining postgraduate studies is on the rise. According to the Higher Education Statistical Yearbook (2019, 2020), the number of Palestinian postgraduate students that were enrolled in higher degree studies for the academic year 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 is 9,516 and 9,902 respectively. However, the number has remarkably increased to reach 16,348 and 17,571 in the academic years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 respectively (Higher Education Statistical Yearbook, 2021 and 2022). This increase has been met by a mounting tendency for Palestinian universities to grow vertically through opening new programs (master's and doctoral) in different subjects.

In an attempt to meet international standards and accreditation, higher graduate programs, particularly the doctoral ones, offer academic subjects taught in English. Thus, students are required to write in English in response to the written tasks they are requested to submit. As English is the second language in Palestine, English language skills, particularly writing skills, pose a real challenge for postgraduate students. When it comes to writing, it can be argued that this skill is considered to be a difficult one for native speakers. Krashen (Krashen, Sy-Ying 2004), for example, referred to what he calls “writer’s block”, where writers get stuck in the writing process. Similarly, learning to write in another language is considered to be more difficult. In the latter case, the learner needs to exert more effort in acquiring linguistic proficiency in the second language (Hinkel 2004, 7).

Academic writing challenges can be mitigated by applying different strategies, with practice being one of the most recommended solutions. In this vein, Lin and Morrison (2021, 60), for example, argue that postgraduates are required to engage in more complex writing tasks, including writing journal articles, where they develop their critical thinking and writing skills. Interestingly, the principles of academic writing can be learned. Reading high-quality texts in one’s own field, for instance, can enhance writing skills by imitating the texts being read. Hyland (2016, 61), argues that “academic English is no one’s first language” in the sense that this genre can be learned rather than acquired. This actually holds true if we learn the conventions and norms of such a genre through deliberate teaching.

The ability to conduct research, write academically, think logically, and evaluate critically is among these skills. Writing in English for academic purposes is considered a vital aspect that postgraduate students are required to learn. Students are usually required to write academically for their research, theses and dissertations, and journal articles. However, these students encounter language-related challenges when engaging in a written task. This will limit their success in their postgraduate studies and hinder the university’s ability to achieve competitive ranks locally and internationally.

1.1 Significance of the study

The study aims at exploring the challenges encountered by Palestinian postgraduate students (both master’s and doctoral students) when writing academically in English. This study is the first of its kind conducted on second language writing in postgraduate studies in Palestine. More importantly, the current study examines the academic writing challenges from the perspective of postgraduate students as well as from that of their instructors. With the rise in the number of postgraduate academic programs and the enrollment of students in Palestinian universities, it is crucial for researchers to understand the challenges faced by postgraduate students in their writing. Besides, the academic staff and university administration will gain valuable insights into one of the most important issues that concerns both parties, enabling them to provide the necessary writing support effectively. If properly improved, not only will postgraduate students achieve greater academic success, but the faculty members and the university will also enhance their reputation by increasing the possibility of publishing research articles from postgraduate students’ theses and dissertations.

1.2 Research Questions and Study Organization

To achieve the intended study's goals, the following questions are addressed:

1. What are the most challenging aspects of academic writing that postgraduate students encounter, as perceived from their own perspective?
2. Are there any differences in the level of the challenging aspects of academic writing that postgraduate students encounter with respect to the variables of academic degree type, year of study, and gender?
3. What are the most challenging aspects of academic writing that postgraduate students encounter, as perceived from the perspective of heads of postgraduate departments, and what are the reasons and solutions for them?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Krashen's View on Second Language Writing

Writing in a second language has been widely examined by language scholars and researchers. Notably, the works of renowned linguist and theoretician Stephen Krashen have significantly contributed to the field of second language acquisition and have greatly influenced researchers and scholars in the realm of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) research. Among Krashen's five hypotheses of second language acquisition, the monitor hypothesis is concerned with the two main systems through which a second language is learned: language acquisition and language learning. The Monitor Theory posits that "adults have two independent systems for developing ability in second languages, subconscious language acquisition and conscious language learning. The subconscious acquisition appears to be far more important" (Krashen 1981, 1); while language acquisition necessitates naturally occurring communication subconsciously, conscious language learning requires a deliberate learning process through which learners intentionally exert effort to acquire language knowledge and skills.

Krashen addresses second language writing extensively in his works (1993; 2004; 2021). He argues that writing in a second language is primarily associated with language acquisition rather than explicit learning; according to Krashen, the style of writing is acquired through extensive reading and exposure to authentic written texts, rather than solely relying on explicit instruction (Krashen 1993, 27). Thus, according to Krashen, reading in the second language plays a critical role in improving one's writing skills. However, he also emphasizes the importance of writing itself as it significantly contributes to cognitive development (Krashen 1993, 33). Interestingly, Krashen argues that reading in the first language also contributes to second language writing. He believes that reading has significant influence on writing. He claims that this exposes the writer to the language used in writing, including grammar as well as the various writing styles employed by other writers (Krashen 2004, 1).

In a recent work titled 'The Composing Process', Krashen (2014) discusses the components of the writing process. First and foremost, the writing process includes revising the

written content. According to Krashen, this stage is crucial for identifying and addressing any problems or issues. Writers should engage in proactive planning, creating a flexible outline that can accommodate new ideas. The third component involves rereading the written text, not only to maintain continuity but also to critically evaluate and reassess the writing. Editing is the next step in the writing process where the text is carefully reviewed and revised after the final draft. Krashen also emphasizes the importance of incubation as a significant component of the writing process. He suggests that writers benefit from taking breaks and allowing their subconscious mind to work on the ideas. Finally, Krashen argues that regularity is crucial for developing strong writing skills regardless of the amount.

2.2 State-of-the-Art

A considerable number of studies have examined the challenges encountered by postgraduate students when writing in English academically. A thorough survey of the existing literature shows that these studies were conducted in a different setting and used various methodologies offering an insightful view of this phenomenon. Basturkmen and Randow (2014), for example, qualitatively examined the notion of coherence in postgraduate students' academic writing in New Zealand, where writing samples were taken from doctoral students across different disciplines including Arts, Engineering, Education, and Business. Following a narrative approach, Langum and Sullivan (2017) studied the experience and needs of six first-year doctoral students in academic writing in English at a Swedish university. The participants in this study were asked to write about their journey in developing academic writing skill in English. The results of these narratives revealed two major interesting themes: deficit and commonality. Whereas the former term refers to the students' weaknesses in writing, the latter refers to the students' beliefs that writing in academic English has the same features of native academic writing. Focusing on the experience of doctoral students in writing the discussion section of their theses, Shen et al. (2019) conducted a study using a questionnaire to collect data from two hundred and ninety-five doctoral students in New Zealand, aiming to identify the main challenges encountered by students in that section. The major findings revealed that students find it challenging to avoid mixing the discussion with the results. Another important result revealed that language status, discipline, writing stage, and research type impact on students' views. A further study objective was to examine the preferred support needed for doctoral students during their studies. Participants reported that the feedback they received from the supervisors and advisors was the most valuable form of support. Besides, they emphasized the importance of discipline-specific support in order to effectively address their unique writing challenges.

With the aim to shed light on the support provided for doctoral students, Ma, L.P. (2017) evaluated the effectiveness of individual consultations for doctoral students at an Australian university. The data were collected from semi-structured interviews with those students and the results showed that individual consultations provided by the university can be operated in various formats and can be beneficial in addressing the specific needs of students. Another study with similar goals was conducted by Jeyaraj (2020) in the Malay-

sian context, where postgraduate research students were interviewed regarding their academic writing needs. The study used the semi-structured interview as the primary research tool. The results showed that students need more support in language-related aspects of writing, greater guidance from their supervisors, and greater access to ICT writing tools. Lin and Morrison (2021) examined the academic writing challenges – and the strategies to address them – encountered by Engineering graduate students and faculty members at three major universities in Hong Kong. The results showed that seeking external support ranked second as a strategy for managing writing challenges. Interestingly, this suggestion was recommended more by the faculty members than by the students.

A more recent study, closely aligned with the current research, was conducted by Gupta et al. in 2022. This study explored the academic writing challenges faced by 114 doctoral students and sought insights on the necessary support from the perspectives of their 31 supervisors. The results revealed that the majority of doctoral students (90%) believe they need to improve their academic writing skills. The results specifically demonstrated that, according to students' perspectives, the writing process presents the greatest difficulties, while sentence and paragraph organization are considered to be the least troublesome elements in the academic writing. However, the faculty members reported that grammar is the most challenging part of academic writing, while the writing process was considered among the least challenging aspects of academic writing.

2.3 Lack of Literature in the Palestinian Context

It could be argued that there has been a shortage of research addressing academic writing challenges faced by both undergraduate and postgraduate students within the Palestinian educational context. Previous studies have predominantly focused on assessing language proficiency across the four language skills. However, there is a notable gap in the literature when it comes to investigating language proficiency specifically within the context of postgraduate studies. With just a small number of studies addressing writing challenges at the postgraduate level, there has not been a comprehensive study to date that examines the writing challenges in such context. Abu Alyan's (2022) study, which investigated thesis writing challenges among EFL master's students, is the sole study that addressed academic writing at this study stage. Therefore, the current study will not only address this gap but also lay the foundation for future studies.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a mixed-method approach combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to have a deeper understanding of the problem being addressed. Creswell (2014) argues that the mixed method approach offers a more complete understanding of the research problem. A questionnaire consisting of 14 items was adopted from a previous study by Evans and Morrison (2011) to collect the quantitative data. Qualitatively, structured

interviews were separately conducted with six heads of departments of the faculty of graduate studies. The interview questions addressed three main domains: the most challenging aspects of academic writing faced by students, the reasons behind these challenges, and the solutions to address them.

3.2 Data Collection Instruments

3.2.1 The Questionnaire

A questionnaire was adopted from a previous study conducted by Evans and Morrison (2011), which has been used by subsequent studies with similar research objectives. It was originally developed in English and used in the same language in this study. The questionnaire, which originally comprises 45 items assessing the four language skills, contained only those items related to writing skills to meet the current research objectives. The introductory section of the questionnaire includes demographic information such as specialization, study stage, year of study, and gender. The questionnaire items all relate to different aspects of academic writing skills including coherence, cohesion, academic style, writing paper sections, ideas organization, and citation. The questionnaire was administered online to the population of postgraduate studies at the university. The responses to the 14 items were generated on a seven-point Likert-type scale, ranging from very difficult (1) to very easy (7). Upon distribution, and to achieve the intended study objectives, the participants were instructed to fill it out in case they used English for the writing tasks they were assigned. Furthermore, the participants were informed that writing tasks included the development of theses/dissertations, research papers, and journal articles.

3.2.2 The Interview

The questionnaire data were complemented by qualitative data from interviews conducted with the heads of the postgraduate departments who also work as faculty members. Six heads of postgraduate departments were interviewed to obtain in-depth responses about the writing challenges encountered by the students from the perspective of their supervisors who enjoy long teaching experience. Some of the interviews were conducted online to meet the interviewee's availability. Each interview lasted around 15-20 minutes and previously structured questions were asked. However, other sub-questions were raised during the interview to get a fuller understanding of the points being reported. The main focus of the interview questions was on three aspects: the most challenging aspects encountered by postgraduate students in academic written discourse, as perceived by the heads of departments, as well as the underlying reasons for these challenges and potential solutions to address them.

3.3 Participants

The study population comprised all postgraduate students enrolled during the academic year 2021-2022. The faculty of graduate studies contacted them via email to participate in the study. Eighty-seven postgraduate students (31 males and 56 females) enrolled in the

university master's and doctoral programs successfully completed the questionnaire. The participants varied in terms of their study stage, study year, and gender as stated in Table (1). Additionally, they came from diverse academic backgrounds, encompassing fields such as social, educational, and health sciences. Arabic is their first language, while English is their secondary language. Researchers purposefully examined the students' perspectives since they have a more comprehensive insight into their writing challenges. Besides, it is an excellent opportunity for the decision-makers, at all levels, to hear from postgraduate students about one of the most significant issues in the higher education sector.

Table 1 - *Distribution of the study sample according to the study variables*

| <i>Variables</i> | <i>Levels</i> | <i>N</i> | <i>%</i> |
|-----------------------------|------------------|----------|----------|
| <i>Academic Degree Type</i> | Master's Student | 58 | 66.7 |
| | Doctoral Student | 29 | 33.3 |
| <i>Year of Study</i> | First Year | 46 | 52.9 |
| | Second Year | 29 | 33.3 |
| | Third Year | 12 | 13.8 |
| <i>Gender</i> | Male | 31 | 35.6 |
| | Female | 56 | 64.4 |

Structured interview participants included six heads of postgraduate departments at a Palestinian university representing different scientific fields. These department heads also serve as faculty members who instruct academic courses in English and require their students to submit written assignments in English. To have a representative sample, the researchers contacted all the department heads to conduct the interviews. Six out of seven of them responded and were interviewed. For privacy reasons, the participants involved in the interviews were identified by their initials to maintain confidentiality.

3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

The data obtained from the questionnaire were generated using Google Forms, where the responses were reviewed. The data were processed using (SPSS) software to extract the participants' demographics, mean and standard deviation of questionnaire items, and t-test values for the variables (academic degree type, study year, and gender). As for the qualitative data obtained from the interviews of the heads of postgraduate departments, they were thematically analyzed. Similar ideas were grouped under a topic and direct quotations were provided from the participants where appropriate.

4. Results

The present study was driven by three main questions. To enhance clarity, the results are organized in this section based on the sequence of the study's three questions and the tools

that were used in the study. The first two questions were answered through a 14-item questionnaire, whereas the third question was answered by interviews.

4.1 Results of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in the current study comprised items related to different aspects of academic writing skills. These aspects include coherence, cohesion, academic style, writing paper sections, ideas organization, and citation. Specifically, the questionnaire included the following items: Planning written assignments, Revising written work, Using appropriate academic style, Writing a bibliography/references section, Proofreading written work, Referring to sources in written work, Summarizing/paraphrasing ideas in sources, Organizing ideas in coherent paragraphs, Expressing ideas clearly and logically, Linking ideas from different sources, Writing the introduction to an assignment, Writing the body of an assignment, Writing the conclusion to an assignment, and Linking sentences smoothly. Administered online to the study population, the responses to the fourteen items were generated on a 7-point Likert-type scale, ranging from very difficult (1) to very easy (7).

Research Question # 1: What are the most challenging aspects of academic writing that post-graduate students encounter, as perceived from their own perspective?

Participants were asked to reflect on the questionnaire items to gain more information about the most challenging aspects of academic writing. As seen from Table (2), the established level of challenges is medium which confirms that there is difficulty when writing for academic purposes. Writing aspects related to style, proofreading, ideas organization, and linking (items # 3, 5, 8 and 10) rank among the most prominent ones. Following an appropriate academic style in writing is perceived as the most challenging aspect of academic writing, averaging a score of (3.02). Similarly, with a lower mean of (3.01), the task of proofreading is positioned as the second most challenging. Conversely, revising the written works, referring to previous sources, and writing the introduction and conclusion of a given work are considered the least challenging aspects of academic written discourse. Interestingly, the aspect pertaining to conclusion writing ranked last with a mean of (2.69) followed by an introduction writing aspect, which achieves a score of (2.72).

Table 2 - Means and standard deviations for the challenging aspects of academic writing

| <i>N</i> | <i>Sentence</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Degree</i> | <i>%</i> |
|----------|---|-------------|-----------|---------------|----------|
| 3 | Using appropriate academic style | 3.02 | 1.045 | Medium | 60.4 |
| 5 | Proofreading written work | 3.01 | 1.017 | Medium | 60.2 |
| 8 | Organizing ideas in coherent paragraphs | 2.98 | 1.056 | Medium | 59.6 |
| 10 | Linking ideas from different sources | 2.91 | 1.117 | Medium | 58.2 |
| 9 | Expressing ideas clearly and logically | 2.89 | 1.072 | Medium | 57.8 |
| 14 | Linking sentences smoothly | 2.89 | 1.016 | Medium | 57.8 |
| 1 | Planning written assignments | 2.87 | 0.974 | Medium | 57.4 |

| <i>N</i> | <i>Sentence</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Degree</i> | <i>%</i> |
|----------|---|---------------|----------------|---------------|-----------|
| 12 | Writing the body of an assignment | 2.87 | 0.974 | Medium | 57.4 |
| 4 | Writing a bibliography/references section | 2.82 | 1.084 | Medium | 56.4 |
| 7 | Summarizing/paraphrasing ideas in sources | 2.78 | 1.061 | Medium | 55.6 |
| 2 | Revising written work | 2.72 | 1.042 | Medium | 54.4 |
| 6 | Referring to sources in written work | 2.72 | 0.985 | Medium | 54.4 |
| 11 | Writing the introduction to an assignment | 2.72 | 1.031 | Medium | 54.4 |
| 13 | Writing the conclusion to an assignment | 2.69 | 1.004 | Medium | 53.8 |
| | Average | 2.8498 | 0.80186 | Medium | 57 |

Research Question # 2: Are there any differences in the level of the challenging aspects of academic writing that postgraduate students encounter with respect to the variables of academic degrees' type, year of study, and gender?

To examine the potential impact of the different variables on the outcomes derived from the first question, a t-test value was calculated. Thus, the study's subsequent question examined whether the variables of academic degree type, year of study, and gender affect the extent of challenges encountered in academic written discourse. First, the academic degree type was considered as a variable. The researchers aimed to know if the study stage (master study or doctoral study) affects the level of writing challenge. As shown in Table (3) the value of "t" is (1.075), with a corresponding significance level of (0.286). This means that there are no differences in the level of challenging aspects of academic writing that postgraduate students encounter due to the academic degree type variable.

Table 3 - Results of the "T" test for the level of challenging aspects of academic writing according to the academic degree type variable

| <i>Academic degree type</i> | <i>N</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>Std. Deviation</i> | <i>Value of "t"</i> | <i>Sig</i> |
|-----------------------------|----------|-------------|-----------------------|---------------------|------------|
| Master's Student | 58 | 2.7845 | 0.70323 | 1.075 | 0.286 |
| Doctoral Student | 29 | 2.9803 | 0.97039 | | |

Regarding the potential influence of the variable of study year on the level of challenging aspects of academic writing, Table (4) reports differences in the level of challenging aspects of academic research writing that postgraduate students encounter due to the year of study. To know the significance of the differences, a one-way analysis (ANOVA) was performed as shown in Table (5). Kothari (2004) defines ANOVA (which stands for 'analysis of variance') as "a procedure for testing the difference among different groups of data for homogeneity" (P.257). Notably, the value of P for the total score (0.407) and the level of significance (0.667) is greater than the level of significance ($\alpha \geq 0.05$). This outcome indicates that there are no statistically significant differences in the level of challenging aspects of academic research writing that could be attributed to this variable.

Table 4 - Means and standard deviation for the level of challenging aspects of academic writing according to the year of study variable

| Year of Study | N | Mean | SD |
|---------------|----|--------|---------|
| First year | 46 | 2.8804 | 0.79825 |
| Second year | 29 | 2.7488 | 0.86257 |
| Third year | 12 | 2.9762 | 0.69141 |

Table 5 - One-way ANOVA analysis for the level of challenging aspects of academic writing according to the year of study variable

| | Mean Square | df | Sum of Squares | Value of "F" | Sig |
|----------------|-------------|----|----------------|--------------|-------|
| Between Groups | 0.531 | 2 | 0.265 | | |
| Within Groups | 54.765 | 84 | 0.652 | 0.407 | 0.667 |
| Total | 55.296 | 86 | | | |

Similarly, in the analysis conducted for the last variable of gender, there is no statistically significant difference. Table (6) shows that the value of "t" is (0.341), and the level of significance is (0.734).

Table 6 - Results of the "T" test for the level of challenging aspects of academic writing according to the gender variable

| Gender | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Value of "t" | Sig |
|--------|----|--------|----------------|--------------|-------|
| Male | 31 | 2.8894 | 0.89914 | | |
| Female | 56 | 2.8278 | 0.75036 | 0.341 | 0.734 |

4.2 Results of the Interviews

Research Question # 3: What are the most challenging aspects of academic writing that postgraduate students encounter, as perceived from the perspectives of heads of postgraduate departments, and what are the reasons and solutions for them?

The results of this question were analyzed thematically according to the interview questions sequence. The subsequent headings reflect the sequence of the interviews' questions.

4.2.1 Most Challenging Aspects of Written Academic Discourse

The faculty members agreed that the following academic writing aspects can be considered as the most challenging for postgraduate students.

4.2.1.1 Insufficient Proficiency in Grammar and Syntax

Grammar is central in any type of writing. When it comes to academic writing, the issue of clarity in the academic text is emphasized. Such clarity would not be achieved without the use of proper grammar. Accurate English grammar is not only needed for enhancing

readability and communication, but it is also required in every piece of writing including academic writing. Grammatical competence in the English language was reported as the most challenging aspect for the students in their academic writing by the faculty members. In this regard, NQ who enjoys a long experience in postgraduate teaching mentioned that “the language of postgraduate students is generally weak, particularly the grammar”. Similarly, HA who is a faculty member, besides being the head of one of the postgraduate departments, stated that “postgraduate students cannot structure the sentence well and they write too long sentences”. He added “this is attributed to the fact that these students follow the language structure of their mother tongue”. He further declared that there is a “cultural influence” on the writing practices among these students.

4.2.1.2 Inappropriate Academic Style

As regards the notion of style in academic writing, one would think of formality, objectivity, organization, precision, and hedging. The interviewees showed great concern about academic writing style. They reported that postgraduate students cannot organize their ideas and paragraphs according to academic writing conventions. They repeat ideas, sentences, and paragraphs throughout a given academic text. The interviewees also declared that postgraduate students have difficulties with both sentence and paragraphs structures. Specifically, postgraduate students write long sentences with many sentence fragments when expressing their ideas in the academic text. At the paragraph level, the interviewees confirmed that postgraduate students cannot structure the paragraphs appropriately. Besides, they use punctuation marks inappropriately. Most importantly, the interviewees agreed that postgraduate students do not use the special language and terminology of academic writing which is meant as “scientific language”. In this vein, RB, one of the interviewees, said, “postgraduate students follow the Arabic style when it comes to writing in academic English”. He added, “in fact, they even cannot express their ideas in Arabic and tend to use slang”. For him, these students do not know how to write academically.

4.2.1.3 Poor Referencing Skills

This theme was also reported by the faculty members as a challenging aspect. Citing the existing literature is central in academic writing. Postgraduate students need to cite ideas, words, and data from previous related works. However, achieving such objective is quite demanding, as students are required not only to locate a relevant and current work but also to grasp its content, rephrase the borrowed ideas accurately, and provide appropriate citations. In this vein, HA mentioned that dealing with other authors’ ideas is a challenge for students. Similarly, NQ argued that citation skills are one of the most problematic aspects of academic writing. She confirmed that “students do not know how to find good sources for their writing”.

4.2.1.4 Weak Argument

In academic writing, researchers should take their stance regarding the subject matter. They need to think and interpret deeply. The notion of argument was also reported in

the interviewees' responses. MO, for example, considered students' argument in academic texts as the top problematic aspect. For him, students "lack deep thinking and suffer from ideas loss". He further argued that their "science is based on memory and students have poor rhetorical competence". Most importantly, he clearly mentioned that students have "poor rhetorical skills when it comes to writing". This opinion holds true also for HA who reported the weak argument as a challenging manifestation in the written discourse. He stated that "students' ideas are weak".

4.2.2 Reasons for Challenging Aspects in Academic Written Discourse

In an attempt to better examine the challenges posed by academic written discourse among the segment of postgraduate students from the perspective of the faculty members, the latter were asked to provide reasons for the most problematic aspects in academic written discourse. For readability and clarity purposes, the reasons are presented thematically in the following sections, which include ideas shared by the interviewees.

4.2.2.1 The Traditional Education System (Schools and University)

In Palestine, English is introduced as a second language to students starting from the first grade. Moreover, English is a compulsory course that all students must pass for the General Secondary Certificate Exam. Subsequently, at the undergraduate level, students are taught English in form of level-based courses. However, when it comes to postgraduate studies, students' academic English skills are found to be poor. This is because both stages (school and university) focus on the four skills generally without paying much attention to a specific genre. This view was shared by the interviewees of this study. The heads of departments confirmed that schools do not appropriately enhance the English language skills of the students. HA, for instance, argued that "English is partially taught at schools and it is not taught as a foreign language at all." Likewise, RB mentioned that "school teachers do not speak English well and do not know about the foreign culture". As for the role of universities in the undergraduate level, NQ referred to the traditional approach of the existing educational system regarding the research culture. She stated "the academic writing challenges are due to the traditional educational system of the BA level, where there is no opportunity to conduct research." She added: "the courses are theoretical and there are no workshops or courses in research at this level".

4.2.2.2 Postgraduate Students' Self-Development

The academic programs across various fields assume that postgraduate students possess the essential qualities of researchers. Nevertheless, postgraduate students do not make sufficient efforts to enhance their skills including writing. Confirming this perspective, the interviewees affirmed that postgraduate students do not work hard toward developing their academic writing skills. MO connected writing skills development with reading. For him, postgraduate students do not read other articles where they can learn writing techniques. Similarly, MO mentioned that postgraduate "students are restricted by indoctrination methods and lack deep meditation and thus there is no good representation of their ideas".

RB agrees with the former two heads of departments in their accounts of the academic writing challenges for postgraduate students. He clearly stated that “postgraduate students are lazy and do not make the needed efforts as postgraduate students”. NQ mentioned that “students are not curious to develop their skills in the MA stage. They just want the certificate. They see it as a ‘trend’”.

4.2.2.3 Postgraduate University Courses

Palestinian universities offer both specialized university courses in different subject matters and some other elective courses. Unfortunately, no courses are provided on academic writing skills though there are courses about research methods. The absence of such courses prevents the building of the capacity of postgraduate students’ writing skills. Such concern was emphasized by the interviewees who confirmed the need to have such courses in the programs’ academic plans. RB mentioned that “the current courses do not enhance the writing skills in English”. MA, on the other hand, suggested making such courses available for student enrollment. He added: “the relevant courses offered by the university need to be reconsidered and organized”.

4.2.3 Solutions for the Challenging Aspects in Academic Written Discourse

To gain a more comprehensive insight from experienced and well-informed individuals, the departments’ heads were asked to suggest solutions to tackle the problematic aspects of academic writing from their own perspectives. The following sections summarize the recommended solutions for overcoming academic writing challenges encountered by postgraduate students.

4.2.3.1 Offering University Courses and Training on Academic Writing

Since the absence of specialized university courses emerged as a major reason for writing challenges, the interviewees recommended including university courses on academic writing in the program’s academic plans. MO suggested having what he called “parallel support courses in writing, grammar and reading” for postgraduate students.

In addition, the interviewees recommended conducting specialized training courses, workshops, and webinars on topics related to academic writing. HA emphasized the importance of having such courses and workshops held. He mentioned that “there is an urgent need to have specialized courses in writing and not general ones”. He further recommends establishing “a center for language development”. Similarly, RB confirmed the need for these courses and workshops saying “the solutions for overcoming writing challenges are to conduct academic writing courses for postgraduate students”.

4.2.3.2 Exerting More Effort by Postgraduate Students

Given that the primary responsibility lies on the students themselves, the interviewees suggested that postgraduate students need to work hard to enhance their academic writing skills. MO said that “to tackle the weakness in academic writing, students need to read more in their field”. He advised that students need to utilize technology-based tools de-

signed for the purpose of writing. He added “using supportive tools like Google Translate and Grammarly facilitate the writing process for postgraduate students”. MA agrees with this and refers to the process of academic writing as an experiential journey. He stated, “postgraduate students need to try this experience more and more”. NQ suggested that the culture of education needs to be changed. She added, “postgraduate students need to search for the information themselves”.

4.2.3.3 Offering Exchange Visits with Foreign Universities

Learning from other universities, particularly those that adopt English as a medium of instruction, is another solution suggested by the interviewees. HA, for example, highly recommended conducting such exchange visits in an effective manner “where the whole process is monitored from A to Z.” WQ went further and recommended the instructors to conduct research with their students and connect them with “educational institutions to conduct research visits”.

5. Discussion

5.1 Discussion of the Questionnaire Results

Through the questionnaire, the researchers aimed to examine the most problematic aspects of written discourse based on postgraduate students’ experiences. The results of the study revealed that the statement “using the appropriate academic style” ranked first followed by the statement “proofreading written work”. Statements related to ideas organization (“organizing ideas in coherent paragraphs”) and ideas connection with external sources (“linking ideas from different sources”) held the fourth and fifth ranks respectively.

As for the most problematic aspect of academic writing, the use of the appropriate style was found to be the most prominent challenge for postgraduate students. Indeed, Palestinian postgraduate students are not accustomed to the style of English written discourse. Only a few students write research papers or academic texts during the undergraduate stage. They are, however, familiar with the Arabic written discourse more than the English one. This finding broadly supports the work of other studies in this area investigating writing challenges in English written discourse. Lai (2020), for example, found the rhetorical differences in the first language and second language the second most frequent challenge in the academic written discourse. The participants of her study with different mother tongues reported that the English writing style differs from their first language style.

Proofreading the written texts was also considered challenging for postgraduate students. A possible explanation for this result is that postgraduate students originally have poor academic writing and cannot write effectively. Thus, they do not have the skill and knowledge to check the syntactic and linguistic errors in a given text upon the submission of the final draft. As for revision, which is part of proofreading and a main component in the composition process, Krashen (2014) argues that poor writers regard it as a sign of weakness.

Organizing ideas in coherent paragraphs was reported as a challenge for postgraduate students. Dontcheva-Navratilova et al. (2017, 10) define coherence as “the interpretative perception of semantic unity and purposefulness derived from a text, which encompasses conceptual connectedness, evaluative and dialogical consistency, and textual relatedness”. Coherence is considered the rhetorical aspect of the writing process and requires a logical sequence of ideas within a paragraph or between paragraphs. The issue of sentences or paragraphs organization was also reported by the doctoral students in the Gupta et al. (2022) study.

Linking borrowed ideas from other sources to one’s own academic text was another result reported from the postgraduate students’ perspective. Undoubtedly, this aspect of writing is not an easy process as it requires a precise understanding of the borrowed ideas as well as suitable citing in the text in hand. Nonetheless, citation skills are considered among the prominent features of academic writing. Citation is not only needed to support the researchers’ ideas and argument but it is also important to reveal existing gaps in the current literature as well as to show the researcher’s stance and voice on the subject matter. The result of this study regarding citation skills is not surprising, however. It is consistent with that of Lamptey and Atta-Obeng (2012), who found that postgraduate students encounter problems in mastering reference formats and they were found less confident when referring to other sources. Similarly, Jomaa and Bidin (2017) found that doctoral students have inadequate knowledge of using citations.

Moving to the least problematic aspects of academic writing, the results revealed that writing the introduction as well as the conclusion of a given assignment is almost not seen as a challenge for postgraduate students. Actually, this result was not surprising and suggests that both the introduction and conclusion sections are in one way or another easy to write. Both sections do not require much effort on the writers’ side. The introduction is usually written after writing the whole academic work once the picture is completed. Besides, it contains some background information that the author can easily write about in clear and simple language. It is also clearly divided into subheadings including the statement of the problem, the significance of the study, and the questions of the study. The conclusion, on the other hand, is seen as a restatement of some parts of the whole work. Moreover, it might be attached to the discussion section as a concluding paragraph.

Concerning the study’s second question which examines the possible relation between the academic writing challenging aspects and other factors including academic degree type, year of study, and gender, the study demonstrated that such relation does not exist. The researchers believe that the weakness in the different aspects of academic writing is not restricted to master’s students’ or doctoral students’ academic degree. The traditional teaching system adopted in the undergraduate study stage, where less attention is based on research, does not help the students enrolling for a master’s degree. Similarly, and as indicated by the heads of the departments, the academic writing skills of the master’s students are still considered to be weak and need further enhancement from the university, faculty members, and the student. Thus, the student comes to the doctoral stage with problematic academic writing skills.

As for the year of study which showed no significance as a variable, the problematic aspects in the academic writing were reported to be the same regardless of the year of study. This variable actually was examined in the study as the researchers believed that the students do better in terms of academic writing in their second or third years. The writing challenges that these students encounter in their first year is somehow justified due to lack of past experience and absence of research related courses in that year. In the later years, however, the students are expected to take research courses, participate in research projects, read advanced books, and write short academic texts at least. In fact, such result was expected by the researchers and it might be due to the following reasons: first of all, postgraduate students used to think of themselves as students rather than researchers. If the opposite is true, then the student would exert greater work in developing their skills, including academic writing ones, since their enrollment. In addition, the absence of specialized courses on academic writing during the whole postgraduate program creates no difference in any of the years of study.

Concerning the gender variable, the study revealed that it has nothing to do with the most problematic aspects of academic written discourse. Surprisingly, this result did not meet the researchers' expectations. Females are generally believed to outperform males in different aspects of writing, particularly fluency, and thus face fewer writing challenges. However, the unexpected result of the study in this respect can be due to the fact that both male and female postgraduate students share almost similar backgrounds in terms of education quality at the school and university levels alike. English is considered the second language in Palestine, and both males and females receive the same quality of education. In addition, both male and female postgraduate students work in the same environment where English is used as their second language. The current result is consistent with that of the study by Qadir et. al (2021) who investigated writing apprehension among postgraduate students. Similar to our results, the gender variable in their study has nothing to do with writing.

5.2 Discussion of the Interview Results

The results of the second tool provide a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon being addressed. The insights of the heads of departments were informative and of high significance for understanding the writing challenges from a well-informed and experienced party.

To begin with, the results of the thematic analysis revealed that the heads of departments agreed on four major challenges that postgraduate students encounter when writing academically. Insufficient proficiency in the English grammar and syntax was a challenging aspect that was reported as an obstacle in academic written discourse. Grammar and syntax are central to any piece of writing. Correct grammar requires well-formed sentences through which a paragraph is built. Once the grammatical rules in any academic text are met, then the fundamental requirement of writing is ensured. This result was also reported by Lai (2020) where the participants mentioned that they encountered difficulties in using the right grammar when writing academically. Likewise, this finding corroborates those by Gupta et al. (2022), who surveyed the perceptions of both doctoral students and faculty

supervisors. According to this study, it was found that the faculty supervisors consider grammar as the most problematic aspect of academic written discourse.

Following an inappropriate writing style was also confirmed by the respondents as a problematic aspect in the academic written discourse. Undoubtedly, the writing style is of great concern for the majority of faculty members who have adequate teaching experience through which they can assess students' writing skills. Postgraduate students often exhibit an informal writing style by incorporating slang or spoken words and phrases into their written texts. In addition, they tend to write unclearly and imprecisely, violating the conventions of academic writing style. For example, postgraduate students tend to mix up ideas, express their thoughts redundantly, or report facts imprecisely. Interestingly, this perspective was shared by the students themselves, signifying a strong consensus on the problem. Such shared concern should lead to collaborative efforts in addressing the problem.

Another problematic aspect of academic writing that was revealed from the interviews is students' inability to refer to other sources appropriately. In fact, this is true for many postgraduate students as it not only requires good search skills but also paraphrasing and citation competencies. Such abilities are usually acquired individually with less intervention from the faculty members due to their workload and sometimes due to the large numbers of postgraduate students they teach or supervise. Again, this result is shared by the students themselves as previously discussed, where the citation and referencing skills are identified as a challenge in academic written discourse. This shared apprehension implies the need to improve this aspect of writing, thus striving towards the higher standards expected in academic discourse.

As for the postgraduate arguments being another challenge for successful academic writing as perceived by the heads of departments, it seems that postgraduate students indeed have weak arguments when it comes to ideas presentation and development. This might be due to the fact that students with poor argumentation skills do not read the model papers to carefully examine how ideas are developed and the arguments built throughout the whole text. If we accept that reading enriches our thoughts, then we need to read relevant books and articles on the subject matter. Considering them as researchers rather than students, the ideas of postgraduate students need not be intuition-based. Instead, arguments should be logical and evidence-based.

Remarkably, the results that state the reasons behind the problematic aspects of academic writing from the view of heads of departments hold the educational system, postgraduate students, and the university responsible for academic writing challenges. Indeed, the three parties contribute to such writing challenges during postgraduate studies. The interviewees were found to be honest in their diagnosis of the underlying causes of the most problematic aspects of academic writing. Likewise, the solutions that were proposed by the heads of departments on academic written discourse could be seen as practical steps towards eliminating the writing challenges in academia. Adding writing courses to the existing plans, delivering specialized training courses on academic writing, and exerting more effort by the students are all solutions that are recommended by well-informed faculty members and they could be applied if taken seriously.

6. Conclusion

This study has examined the academic writing challenges encountered by postgraduate students. It has investigated the most problematic aspects from the perspective of the students and the faculty members occupying the heads of departments. The findings highlighted that writing in an academic style has emerged as the most prominent obstacle in academic writing as perceived by both students and instructors. Additionally, the study's investigation of potential variations in the challenging aspects of academic writing based on various variables including the academic degree type, year of study, and gender showed no statistically significant differences.

6.1 Pedagogical Implications

Since postgraduate students are the target beneficiaries of academic writing development, we refer to them first. They are recommended to take the following steps so that they enhance their writing competency. Postgraduate students are encouraged to seek out available language support resources such as workshops, webinars, and training courses. Students are also recommended to join peer groups on writing, where they can exchange experiences and learn best practices. Finally, they can benefit from technology, particularly from AI-based tools and programs, in order to enhance their language competencies outside the traditional writing classrooms.

The other type of implication concerns postgraduate faculties in general and the faculty members in particular. As revealed from the interviews, there is a great need for a course on academic writing specifically designed for postgraduate students. The course could be an elective one being available only for those students who want to improve their academic writing skills. Once adopted in the academic programs' plans, the universities would achieve the first practical step. Moreover, postgraduate faculties are recommended to hold regular workshops and short courses for postgraduate students during the academic semester. These activities could be voluntarily run by faculty members or expert-paid trainers. Finally, postgraduate faculties are recommended to carefully assess the writing skills of postgraduate students upon their acceptance into the different postgraduate programs. Once the students' writing levels are assessed from the beginning of their postgraduate studies, proper remedial actions could be taken accordingly.

6.2 Limitations and Recommended Future Research

The study was limited to postgraduate students and faculty members in one Palestinian university. While this university offers a wide variety of academic postgraduate programs and attracts students from different locations in Palestine across various disciplines, it is crucial to note that the results of this study might not be applicable to students and faculty from other universities, thus limiting their generalizability. Accordingly, the researchers recommend that future studies apply the same questionnaire used for this study to other postgraduate studies. With the rise in the number of postgraduate students worldwide, it

will be of high interest to compare the results of the current study with other future ones to get a deep insight into the academic writing challenges at the international level.

Further, the current study examined the teachers' perceptions towards the potential reasons of the most problematic aspects of academic writing and their suggested solutions through the interviews, where meaningful insights were achieved. However, postgraduate students' perception towards the solutions were not examined in this study and rather limited to the potential reasons. Future studies need to qualitatively examine the students' perceptions regarding the solutions of the written academic discourse. This would complement the results of the current study, where the data are obtained from all parties.

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Appendix (A): The Academic Writing Challenges Scale

Part 1: Background Info

- Q1) What is your specialization?
- Q2) Are you a master’s or doctoral student?
 - a) Master’s Student.
 - b) Doctoral Student.
- Q3) What is your year of study?
 - a) First year.
 - b) Second year.
 - c) Third year
- Q4) What is your gender?
 - a) Male.
 - b) Female.

Part 2: Questionnaire Items

Please answer each item by selecting the appropriate item on the scale from very difficult (1) to very easy (7).

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------------------|---------|------------------|------|-----------|
| Very Difficult | Difficult | Somewhat Difficult | Neither | Somewhat Easy | Easy | Very Easy |

Academic Writing Skills

- 1) Planning written assignments
- 2) Revising written work
- 3) Using appropriate academic style
- 4) Writing a bibliography/ references section
- 5) Proofreading written work
- 6) Referring to sources in written work
- 7) Summarizing/ paraphrasing ideas in sources
- 8) Organizing ideas in coherent paragraphs
- 9) Expressing ideas clearly and logically
- 10) Linking ideas from different sources
- 11) Writing the introduction to an assignment
- 12) Writing the body of an assignment
- 13) Writing the conclusion to an assignment
- 14) Linking sentences smoothly

RECENSIONI

Cornish, Francis, dir. 2021. « L'anaphore revisitée ». Special Issue, *Langue française* 210.

Ce numéro de *Langue Française* s'inscrit dans le prolongement des travaux consacrés aux phénomènes discursifs du français parus dans cette même revue en 2017 (*Langue Française* 193, « La deixis en français: explorations multimodales » ; *Langue Française* 195, « Les chaînes de référence »). Il s'inscrit encore en complément du volume de Marion Fossard et Marie-José Beguélin « Nouvelles perspectives sur l'anaphore: points de vue linguistique, psycholinguistique et acquisitionnel » (2015). L'objectif capital de ce numéro, publié en juin 2021 et composé par Francis Cornish, est non seulement de porter un éclairage nouveau sur le mécanisme de la référence anaphorique, en suggérant une révision fondamentale de son fonctionnement par rapport au cadre conceptuel fourni par les travaux antérieurs, mais aussi d'ouvrir le champ de recherche aux aspects épistémologiques, discursifs et interactionnels. Le point de mire est de pointer les aspects du phénomène anaphorique qui nécessitent des investigations récentes du fait que l'anaphore est omniprésente dans tous les textes et dans tous les discours.

Dans leur éditorial, Jacques Bres et Céline Vaguer mettent en exergue ces aspects novateurs de l'anaphore, en soulignant que l'approche cognitivo-mémorielle est la plus développée dans ce numéro, qui s'appuie sur des corpus oraux et multimodaux. Les six contributions favorisent la réflexion sur l'essence du discours, sur la co-construction, par le locuteur en interaction avec l'interlocuteur, de la référence aux objets dont il est parlé.

En guise d'introduction à ce numéro, Francis Cornish « L'anaphore revisitée: fonctionnements discursifs et interactionnels » rappelle que la réflexion sur l'anaphore est presque aussi vieille que le monde de la pensée grammaticale et que moult travaux se cristallisent autour de la notion anaphore/deixis, qui a évolué en anadeixis. Cette dernière notion peut être scindée en trois sous-types à savoir, 'l'anadeixis stricte', 'l'anadeixis de reconnaissance' et enfin 'la deixis du discours'. En vue de clarifier son cadre conceptuel, Cornish aborde les deux approches concurrentes traitant ce phénomène discursif à l'antiquité grecque et à l'époque moderne. La première demeure l'approche textuelle, où l'anaphore marque la continuité avec un référent focalisé précédemment ; la seconde, qui fait florès, est l'approche cognitivo-mémorielle, dans laquelle l'assignation d'un référent à l'anaphore se fait par l'intermédiaire de la représentation mentale construite à partir du discours et non par la recherche à un endroit du discours où est localisé l'antécédent. Pour atteindre la complétude référentielle exigée de l'interprétation, l'interlocuteur va fouiller dans son esprit, dans sa mémoire discursive.

Dans la lignée des travaux sur l'anaphore revisitée, le principal objectif de l'article « Anaphore et temps verbaux » de Denis Apothéloz est d'étudier les différents mécanismes anaphoriques auxquels sont soumis les temps verbaux. Il s'agit de mettre l'accent sur l'intérêt que présentent les notions de référence et d'anaphore pour l'analyse du système verbal dans le discours. L'auteur reprend cette problématique ancienne et distingue dans l'actualisation verbale trois processus anaphoriques, à savoir l'ancrage temporel, le repérage et le relais. Il analyse le fonctionnement de quelques temps verbaux relativement à ces trois processus. Il résulte de son étude que le repérage anaphorique ne concerne que les temps composés et le conditionnel ; quant à l'ancrage temporel et le relais, ils concernent tous les temps verbaux. Une attention particulière est réservée au plus-que-parfait dans les analepses, au conditionnel d'ultériorité ainsi qu'aux situations dans lesquelles un temps verbal proroge un contenu médiatif. *Grosso modo*, la question générale de l'anaphore et de la deixis, particulièrement de leur coexistence dans un même terme 'anadeixis', présente deux caractéristiques : la première est que ces deux modes de localisation y sont agencés de façon logique, vu que le repérage déictique y devance le repérage anaphorique. La seconde est relative aux traits distinctifs entre

anaphore et deixis : le fonctionnement de temps verbaux comme le plus-que-parfait ou le conditionnel d'ultériorité ne saurait être spécifié en ayant recours à un continuum anadéictique.

La contribution de Walter de Mulder « Le déterminant démonstratif *ce* : d'un marqueur *token*-réflexif à une instruction contribuant à la construction de référents » s'inscrit dans la foulée des études récentes sur le phénomène anaphorique et a pour visée principale d'établir dans quelle mesure on peut faire appel à des idées sous-jacentes à l'approche socio-cognitive de la référenciation appliquée aujourd'hui à l'étude des SN démonstratifs complexes *ce N-ci* et *ce N-là*. A ce propos, le démonstratif proximal indique que le référent doit être situé dans la sphère du locuteur, alors que le démonstratif distal annonce précisément que le référent doit être situé dans la sphère de l'interlocuteur ou dans une sphère partagée entre le locuteur et l'interlocuteur. Ces particules suffixales fournissent des indications supplémentaires sur la manière dont il faut construire leur référent. L'article présente les stratégies référentielles mises en place dans le but de mieux comprendre comment les interlocuteurs arrivent à compléter le sens *token*-réflexif incomplet du déterminant démonstratif lors de l'identification du référent du SN démonstratif en construisant le contexte nécessaire pour l'interpréter. De surcroît, les interprétations construites pourraient aussi élucider dans certains cas les raisons pour lesquelles les locuteurs recourent à un SN démonstratif plutôt qu'à une autre expression référentielle. En somme, l'approche socio-cognitive concourt non seulement à compléter le sens incomplet du déterminant démonstratif mais aussi à en expliquer l'interprétation finale.

Le dénominateur commun des trois articles qui suivent demeure la réflexion sur l'analyse des différents fonctionnements de l'anaphore en interaction verbale orale. Premièrement, Anne Grobet « *Ça et là* : formes privilégiées de la reprise métadiscursive dans l'interaction orale » cherche à approfondir l'étude de fonctions spécifiques remplies par ces formes dans les interactions spécifiques en raison de leur fréquence à l'oral. La chercheuse analyse les particularités et la fréquence d'usage de ces marqueurs en adoptant une perspective cognitive sur l'anaphore et en se fondant sur l'étude minutieuse d'extraits d'interaction : les deux marqueurs objet de son étude partagent la notion d'anadéictique, toutefois ils diffèrent sur un autre palier : si '*là*' opère un fléchage sur le discours antérieur ancré dans un changement de topique ou de cadre participatif, '*ça*', au contraire, opère un pointage indexical communiquant une forte topicalité, en étroite relation avec l'implication du locuteur. Les résultats de cette étude confirment la possibilité de préciser la description des anadéictiques '*Ça et là*' utilisés dans les interactions orales en mettant en relief leurs points convergents et divergents du fait de la nature temporelle de l'oral et des contraintes rievées à la gestion de l'interaction, la prise en compte de l'antécédent, et même du référent, paraît moins pertinente pour saisir le fonctionnement de l'expression référentielle que la description des effets interprétatifs qu'elle génère lors de son contexte de réalisation.

Deuxièmement, Laurent Camus et Lorenza Mondada « L'anaphore à distance : enjeux multimodaux, épistémiques et normatifs en interaction » considèrent l'anaphore comme un procédé accompli, un problème rendu manifeste et pertinent par les participants eux-mêmes et résolu de façon pratique dans le cours de leur activité. Cette perspective aide à porter un regard nouveau sur l'anaphore. Cette expérience gravite autour de la commande d'un fromage dans un restaurant. Ce fait apparaîtrait comme une activité ordinaire consistant à faire référence à un objet. Or les clients montrent qu'ils ne considèrent pas comme équivalentes les ressources référentielles possibles et disponibles, ce qui génère des contraintes d'ordre pratique et mémoriel. Cette étude porte sur une situation naturelle rendant particulièrement saillants les enjeux épistémiques et normatifs de l'anaphore, en proposant de les analyser comme des problèmes pratiques résolus *in situ* par les participants dans le cours de leur activité. En adoptant l'approche conversationnaliste, interactionniste et multimodale pour étudier les phénomènes de reprise anaphorique à distance, ces auteurs font

appel à des vidéos d'interactions entre serveurs et clients dans un restaurant gastronomique. Ainsi, les auteurs mettent en évidence les enjeux mémoriels inhérents à la reprise anaphorique rendue visible, explicite par les participants eux-mêmes et traitée par eux dans le formatage multimodal de leurs tours. Deux apports découlent de cette investigation : le premier est la mise en évidence de la dimension multimodale de l'anaphore et le second demeure l'adoption d'une perspective émique et contextuelle pour étudier les phénomènes cognitifs inhérents aux procédés anaphoriques.

In fine, la contribution qui clôt ce numéro de *Langue française* est celle de Ioana-Maria Stoenica et Simona Pekarek Doehler « Fonctionnement macro-syntaxique et dimension anaphorique des relatives produites *post hoc* : une analyse interactionnelle et multimodale ». L'étude porte des éclairages sur les régularités et les motivations fonctionnelles derrière l'emploi des structures souvent appréhendées comme non-standard. A cet égard, les autrices examinent des usages de la relative localisés dans une base de données audio et vidéo dans lesquels le pronom relatif introduit une proposition autonome, analogue à l'unité macro-syntaxique relative autonome. L'angle d'attaque a été l'usage conversationnel des relatives auto et hétéro incrémentées, produites *post hoc*, après des tours de parole éventuellement complètes. Pour les étudier, le recours au phénomène de la co-construction s'avère crucial. L'analyse des résultats a révélé que ces relatives forment des énonciations autonomes, munies de leur propre potentiel praxéologique à effet structurant sur la séquentialité de la conversation. Ainsi, si le rôle crucial des relatives auto-incrémentées est d'effectuer la réparation d'un problème d'identification référentielle, celui des relatives hétéro-incrémentées demeure au contraire de mettre en place les actions de revendication d'un savoir lié à un référent ou de demande d'une clarification conceptuelle. Il est donc question d'une réinterprétation de la dimension anaphorique de ces relatives à fonctionnement macro-syntaxique. Leur portée anaphorique ne se borne pas à un SN antécédent mais englobe toute une énonciation précédente. Le pronom introducteur des relatives passe d'un statut de subordonnant à un statut autonome de connecteur macro-syntaxique qui articule deux actions conversationnelles distinctes, l'une réalisée par la relative et l'autre par l'énoncé qui la devance.

Ainsi, grâce à ces études novatrices d'une grande richesse, les contributeurs de ce numéro sont parvenus à explorer des pistes de recherche en friche. Il est indéniable que le phénomène discursif de l'anaphore demeure un champ dynamique de réflexion et d'investigation.

Moulay Mohamed Tarnaoui

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